

Growing DISCIPLES



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE of DES MOINES



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CONTINUOUS CURRICULUM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

During the summer break, nine early childhood education (ECE) teachers from schools across the diocese gathered to align curriculum, review assessment systems, and create an implementation plan for a continuous early childhood curriculum.

"Recognizing that the earliest years of a child's life are some of the most formative, the Diocese of Des Moines believes children should have access to high-quality educational opportunities as early as possible," says Donna Bishop, Superintendent of Schools. "Research suggests that when provided with stimulating classroom environments and supportive relationships, children - especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds - experience better academic outcomes and improved social-emotional development. Providing the necessary age-appropriate skill sets is a crucial step in closing the persistent achievement gap and setting children on a path toward success."

Click [here](#) to learn more about ECE.



Pictured (left to right): Heather Gunson (St. Francis of Assisi), Sarah Mohrfeld (St. Theresa), Lisa Smith (St. Augustin), Abbie McKasson (St. Malachy, Creston), Ashley Hutcheson (Saint Albert, Council Bluffs), Kari Howard (St. Anthony), Lynn Ernst (St. Anthony), Missy Himrich (St. Anthony), and Andrea Carmichael (Holy Trinity). Not pictured, Tracy Pigott (Sacred Heart School).

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



There's always something new and exciting happening at our Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools. Like us on Facebook @dmdioceschools, follow us on Instagram @dmdioceschools, and follow us on Twitter @CatholicDes for the most current school information, events, and activities.



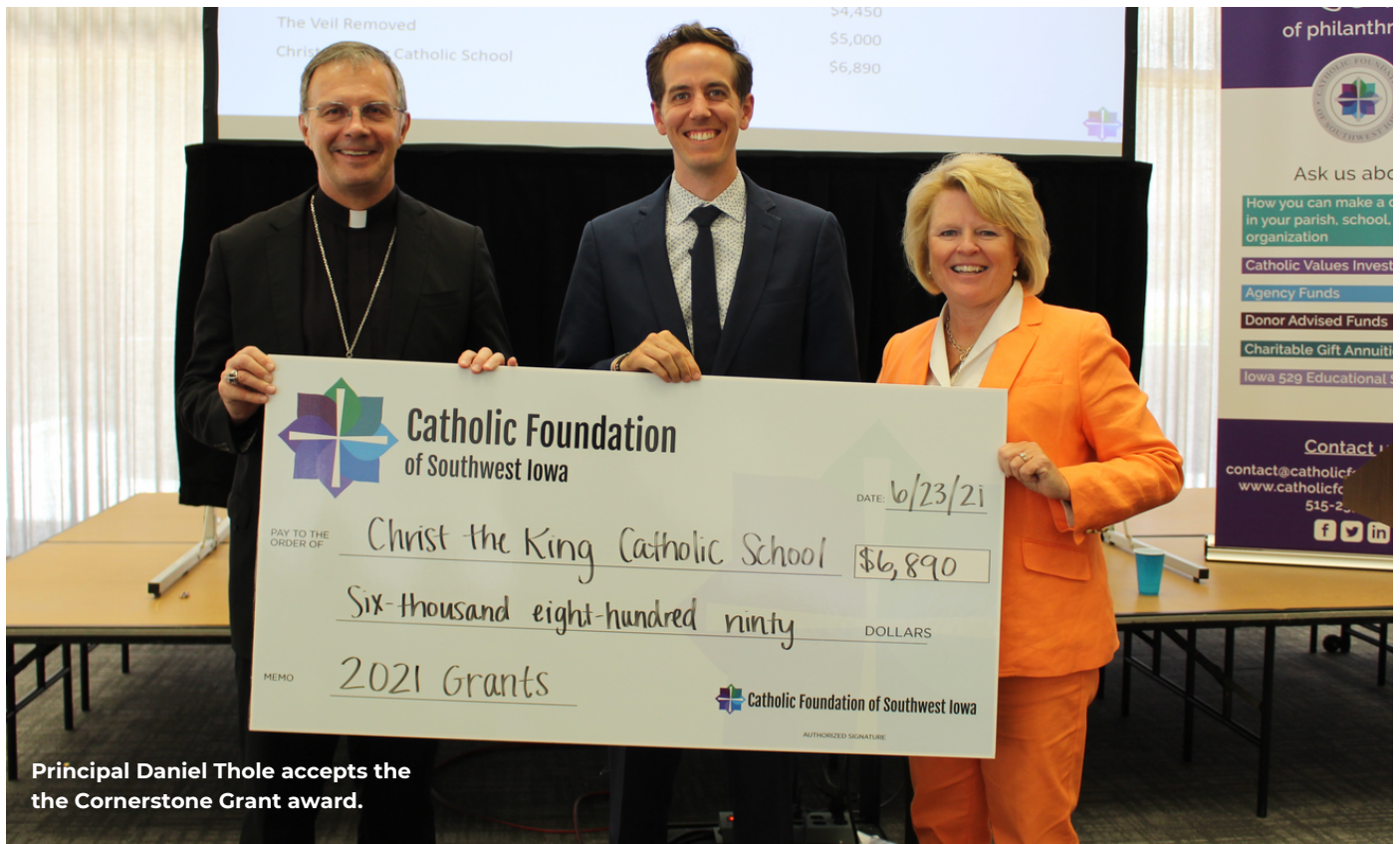
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT

The challenges faced during the last school year have changed education in the Diocese of Des Moines for the better. Our schools are more agile, collaborative, compassionate, and inspired. Our faculty and staff continue to find new ways to support the overall wellbeing of our students and sustain academic progress. As a result, Diocese of Des Moines students demonstrated continued academic growth despite the barriers presented by COVID-19. Download a copy of our 2020-2021 Annual Report [here](#) to learn more.

NEW MEMORIAL AT DOWLING CATHOLIC

Dowling Catholic recently added a beautiful memorial to its campus to honor the faithfully departed members of its school community. All are welcome to visit this sacred space for quiet prayer and reflection.





Principal Daniel Thole accepts the the Cornerstone Grant award.

FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANTS TO THREE DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

Three Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools were recently awarded grants from the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa (CFSWIA). The CFSWIA received a total of 29 applications for this year's grant cycle from area parishes, schools and other entities. The three diocesan schools were notified of their awards in May and have spent the summer months planning to implement the programs funded through the generosity of the CFSWIA and its board of directors.

"Our Catholic Schools are a vital part of what we do within the Diocese of Des Moines. While all of our grant submissions had very worthy projects, these schools we selected for awards that stood out," said Sue McEntee, Executive Director of the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa. "Our goal is to help create immediate change and hopefully that change can be replicated elsewhere. These grants showed the ability to create an impact. Including impact on students, families, and our Catholic community as a whole."

Click [here](#) to learn more about the CFSWIA and how these grants will support student learning.

Faculty member Ashley Mitchell explores the human genome at Drake University.



HUMAN GENOME PROJECT COMES TO ST. THERESA

Faculty members Ronda McCarthy and Ashley Mitchell explored the human genome at Drake University this summer. McCarthy and Mitchell used genetic sequencing and genomic concepts to isolate cancer cells. A STEM Scale-Up grant from the Governor's STEM Advisory Council awarded to St. Theresa Catholic School made this continuing education possible.

This fall, the teachers will take this knowledge back to the school and instruct eighth-grade students on the human genome using all-new lab equipment supplied through the grant. This program is just one of many STEM initiatives underway at St. Theresa. Click [here](#) to learn more.

IOWA 529 PLANS

Did you know that you can set aside funds now to help pay for your child's Catholic school education with an Iowa 529 plan? A 529 plan is a type of investment account you can use to save for qualified education expenses, including K-12 Catholic school tuition. With a 529 plan, you can save on taxes while you save for your child's or grandchild's education. Click [here](#) to learn more.





New administrator Stephen Eubanks collaborates with fellow administrators during the Catholic Schools Office monthly Administrator meeting.

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS WELCOME NEW LEADERSHIP

Elizabeth Brott - Holy Trinity, Des Moines

Brott brings more than eight years of educational experience from both public and Catholic schools to the role. Since 2014, she has served as the middle school social studies teacher at Holy Trinity along with a number of instructional leadership committees designed to improve student outcomes.

Stephen Eubanks - Saint Albert, Council Bluffs

Saint Albert Catholic School announced Stephen Eubanks is its new 6-12th grade school principal for the 2021-2022 school year. Eubanks brings more than 32 years of educational leadership experience to the role having served as a science teacher, coach, student assistance team coordinator, assistant principal, director of athletics, principal and director of curriculum instruction and support.

Susan Battani - Sacred Heart, West Des Moines

Sacred Heart announced Susan Battani is its new assistant principal for the 2021-2022 school year. Battani has 17 years of educational experience in both public and private schools. Since 2015, she has served as a kindergarten classroom teacher at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School in Ankeny.



DIOCESAN SCHOOLS WELCOME NEW LEADERSHIP (CONT.)

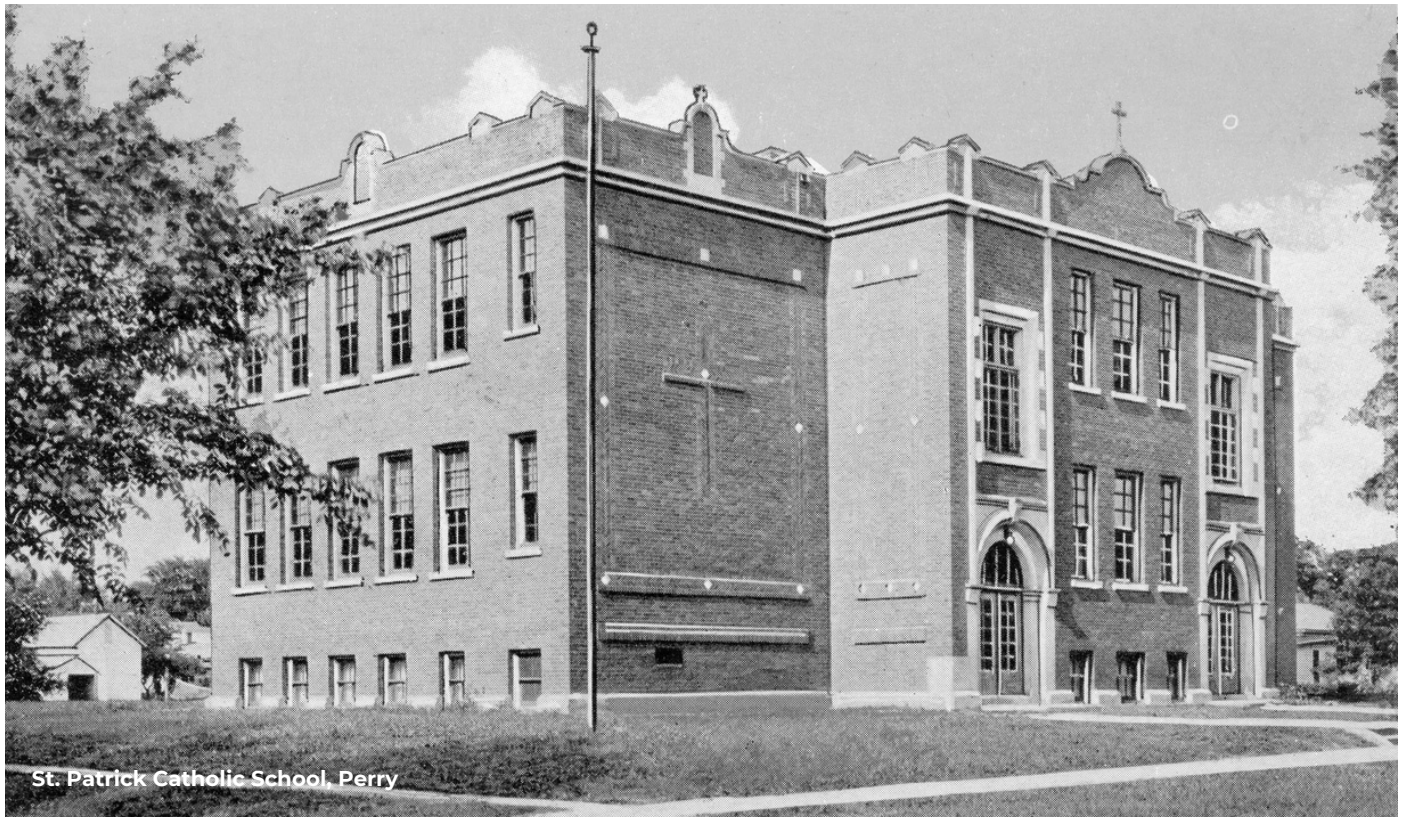
Scott Elhinger - Sacred Heart, West Des Moines

Sacred Heart announced Scott Elhinger is its new principal for the 2021-2022 school year following the retirement of long-time principal Jane Kinney. Elhinger brings more than 20 years of educational experience to the role of principal. He is adept at school leadership having served as an assistant principal, athletic director and instructional leader in both public and Catholic schools.

Reverend Augustine Clement Owusu - Shelby County Catholic, Harlan

Shelby County Catholic School announced that Reverend Augustine Clement Owusu is its new Canonical Administrator. Father Clement will also serve St. Michael Parish in Harlan, St. Joseph Parish in Earling, and St. Peter Parish in Defiance.

Father Clement, a former pastor and spiritual director in Ghana, Africa arrived in the United States on Sept. 21, 2019. Upon joining the Diocese of Des Moines, he served a number of parish communities in rural Iowa, served as a chaplain, celebrated Mass and reconciliation, offered spiritual advice, and was a spiritual presence among the students at Saint Albert in Council Bluffs.



ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

St. Patrick Catholic School in Perry celebrated 100 years in faith-filled education this July and to honor this milestone, the school hosted a special Mass and semi-formal dinner for members of the Perry community.

The school is the result of one mother's dream to provide her sons with a Catholic education. Nora O'Malley campaigned diligently to bring a Catholic school to the community of Perry. Click [here](#) to learn more about the school's historic journey.

UPGRADED LEARNING SPACES AT THREE DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

Three diocesan schools began campus improvements this past year. Saint Albert renovated and relocated its restrooms, concession stand, spirit store, and athletic training facility. The school also installed new flooring, furniture and opened up the main entrance. St. Pius X will add a new multipurpose space, additional classrooms, and upgrade its kitchen and parish center. Finally, St. Luke the Evangelist completed a much-anticipated capital project that includes six new classrooms, a multipurpose meeting room, expanded parking, storage, and a storm shelter.

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools includes 16 schools in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa. Catholic schools in the Des Moines Diocese build Christ-centered, collaborative, inclusive partnerships with parents, students, and parishes to provide innovative academic excellence and inspirational faith formation. To learn more about the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools, visit dmdiocese.org/catholic-schools or email ExpectMore@dmdiocese.org.

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