



Dear Marist School Family,

Unlike most Catholic secondary schools in the United States, Marist School has long been blessed with the presence and leadership of Marist Fathers and Brothers. Their ministerial service has created a strong foundation that protects the charism, spirituality, and Catholicity of the school. However, the Society of Mary has not been immune to the diminishing number of priests. In fact, it's something we've seen coming for quite some time and have strategically prepared to address.

Twenty years ago, we put a plan in place at Marist School to respond to this eventuality, which includes the creation and implementation of the Marist Way program to educate the school community on the charism, values, and teachings of the Society of Mary. The second part of the plan involves the creation of a new position at Marist School, which would be occupied by a Marist Father, with responsibility for religious oversight of the school but none of the day-to-day school operations. We don't envision this position being a full-time role. School operations would continue to be the responsibility of the school President, who will not be a Marist priest, because Marist Fathers and Brothers with the required experience for the role of school President are just not available.

We are confident the combination of the Marist Way Program, as well as the Marist Identity Program for schools owned or sponsored by the Society of Mary, and the above new position to be filled by a Marist Father will all ensure Marist School remains Marist and Catholic.

We will implement the new role of a Marist Father along with a lay President beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. Current Marist School President Fr. Bill Rowland, S.M. has expressed an interest in stepping down from the President role in June 2023, but he has agreed to serve in the dedicated religious oversight role at Marist School. We profoundly thank Fr. Rowland for his exceptional leadership over the years as President and for his continued spiritual leadership at the school in his new role. His involvement will most certainly ensure a smooth leadership transition, and we will all continue to benefit immensely from his knowledge and experience.

We have begun the process to find the next appropriate and highly qualified President to lead Marist School and help continue to build upon the Catholic and Marist identity of the school.

We have formed a President Search Committee which will be led by Mike Cote, Vice-Chair of the Marist School Board of Trustees. Mike's committee will work hand in hand with the Board of Trustees and the Society of Mary. The Search Committee consists of 11 people representing a balanced (in terms of gender, race, and experience) cross-section of Marist constituents including faculty, staff, parents, and alumni. It will be reassuring to know that two members of the Society of Mary, former Marist School Principal Bishop Joel Konzen, S.M. and former Marist School President Fr. John Harhager, S.M., will both serve on the Search Committee. The Committee's role will not be

to select the President but rather to assist the Board in identifying qualified finalists for the Board of Trustees to consider and select, with ultimate approval residing with the Society of Mary.

We have enlisted the help of a consultant—Dr. Patrick Slattery, Executive Director of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools—who has extensive experience in this process. We also have engaged a renowned national Catholic school leadership search firm, Partners In Mission. We will conduct a national search and also ensure internal Marist School candidates will be carefully considered for this role of President.

In the coming weeks, Dr. Slattery will conduct online surveys and on-campus listening sessions to seek input from Marist stakeholders on the necessary traits and qualifications of Marist School's next President. Throughout the search process, we will provide community-wide updates regarding the position profile, when candidate interviews begin, when we reach the finalist stage, and ultimately when the new President is named.

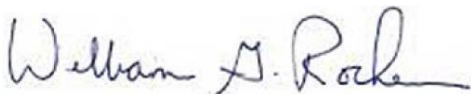
The transition to lay leadership throughout Catholic education has been evolving over the past 20-30 years. We are fortunate to have had Marist Fathers in leadership roles at Marist School for over 120 years. Recent data from the National Catholic Education Association shows 87% of all Catholic schools in the United States are led by a lay leader; only 13% are led by a Religious (Brother, Sister, Deacon, or Priest). And in high schools alone, only 7% are led by a priest. So, Marist's situation is not unique.

Please feel free to reach out to one of us or to Father Rowland if you have any questions, and please keep Marist School and this important search in your prayers. Please also pray for vocations to religious life and the priesthood, especially vocations to the Society of Mary.

In the name of Mary,



Very Rev. Father Joseph Hindelang, S.M.
Provincial Superior, Society of Mary, USA



William G. Roche '76
Chairman, Marist School Board of Trustees