



May 31, 2022

Dear Holy Angels School Families,

As previously announced, our current principal Nicole Merz is moving on to a new role at the end of the school year. We are grateful for her leadership at Holy Angels and for the dedication she demonstrated during her time here.

After learning of Ms. Merz's decision, we took the opportunity to reflect on the needs of the school community and our future goals. A principal search committee comprised of staff members, parents, community members, Big Shoulders Fund representatives, Fr. Tom and the Office of Catholic Schools was formed to interview candidates and offer recommendations on hiring. We are thankful to that group for their time and support. After interviewing candidates, we were able to extend an offer and we are pleased **to announce that Maria Brown will be the new leader of Holy Angels School.**

Ms. Brown currently serves as the Assistant Principal at St. Barnabas School. The principal search committee was particularly impressed with Ms. Brown's extensive experience in a variety of administrative roles in both Catholic and public schools and her emphasis on curriculum development and her ability to cultivate a strong school culture.

Previously, Ms. Brown worked as an Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction, Assessments, and Professional Development at Thornwood High School in South Holland, IL (from 2018-2021). A proud Catholic, Ms. Brown grew up in the Wrightwood and Aurburn-Gresham neighborhoods in Chicago. She graduated high school from St. Ignatius College Prep and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and Secondary Education from Saint Xavier University, a Master of Arts in English from DePaul University and a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Administration from Saint Xavier University.

The search committee was particularly impressed not only by Ms. Brown's extraordinary résumé, but also by her commitment to faith formation and academic excellence. Her energy, enthusiasm and passion were evident throughout the interview process and her leadership will build on the excellent legacy that exists at Holy Angels School.

We know you will all join us in welcoming Ms. Brown into her new position as principal, and we are all looking forward to a wonderful 2022-23 school year and beyond. Please see below for a longer bio about Ms. Brown and stay tuned for a meet and greet after her official start date on July 1st.

Blessings,

Dr. Bridget de la Peña, Regional Director, OCS

Danielle Robinson, Big Shoulders Fund

Eliza Bryant, Big Shoulders Fund

Maria Brown Profile

Ms. Brown has been involved in education for over 17 years, and most recently served as Assistant Principal of St. Barnabas School in Beverly (2021-2022), and as Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction, Assessments, and Professional Development at Thornwood High School in South Holland, IL (from 2018-2021).

A proud Catholic, Ms. Brown hails from the Wrightwood and Aurburn-Gresham neighborhoods on Chicago's Southwest side. She graduated high school from St. Ignatius College Prep and student taught at Mother McAuley. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and Secondary Education from Saint Xavier University, a Master of Arts in English from DePaul University and a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Administration from Saint Xavier University.

Ms. Brown taught English at all grade levels at Thornwood High School in South Holland, IL for 10 years. While at Thornwood, she was involved in various Thornwood, District 205, and teacher and teacher leader positions, including International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, AVID, MTSS, and curriculum and assessment writing and development. Maria Brown was also involved in District 205 community, having served as part of Thornwood's Parent Advisory Committee, Thornwood High School's Safety Committee, District SAT Professional Development co-chair, and Coordinator, before moving into administration and becoming the Division Leader for English, Reading, Speech, and Library, and moving into serving in her most recent administrative role as Assistant Principal.

Prior to her tenure at Thornwood High School, Ms. Brown served as English teacher (at all grade levels), Prom Sponsor, Cheer Coach, and Senior Class Sponsor at St. Francis DeSales, located on Chicago's Southeast Side, and as a teacher for Zion Benton Township High School in Zion Illinois. Ms. Brown is excited and honored to begin her new journey as the proud Principal of Holy Angels and is eager to serve the school and parish community that spiritually and academically supported generations of Chicago families.

