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Archdiocese of Hartford Appoints New Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Hartford, Conn. (June 1, 2016) -- The Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford has appointed Dr. Michael S. Griffin, Ph.D., from the Diocese of Fall River, as the new superintendent of Catholic schools. Effective July 1, Griffin who has strong ties in the Archdiocese, will serve as acting superintendent. He will officially begin his tenure as Superintendent of Catholic Schools on August 3, 2016.

“With Dr. Griffin, we are blessed with a new superintendent who not only possesses a wealth of talents and experience, but one who has a proven track record in our Archdiocese. We are happy to welcome him home,” said Archbishop Blair.

As the new superintendent, Dr. Griffin will report to and collaborate with Provost for Education, Evangelization and Catechesis Sr. Mary Grace Walsh, ASCJ, Ph.D. He will be responsible for the general administration and supervision of the Catholic schools within the Archdiocese and will work with the staff of the Office of Catholic Schools in an effort to strengthen the Catholic identity and academic excellence of the schools. He will also provide leadership and guidance for school administrators and pastors in their efforts to improve the organizational effectiveness, efficiency and financial position of the schools.

Dr. Griffin has been the superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Fall River since 2011, where he is responsible for Catholic elementary and secondary schools and does extensive work within the diocese to collect and analyze data related to local Catholic school governance, finances, enrollment, academics and Catholic identity with a goal of developing courses of action to strengthen Catholic schools across the diocese. He has worked with individual schools to address their governance and guided budget development, review and analysis. He has upgraded professional meetings for school leaders and faculty. During his years as superintendent, Dr. Griffin served as treasurer for both the New England Chief Administrators of Catholic Education (NECACE) and the Parents Alliance for Catholic Education (PACE). He chaired the Joint Committee of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and NECACE to develop Catholic Identity Standards for the accreditation process which are now widely used by Catholic schools throughout New England.

Dr. Griffin’s prolific career in Catholic school education includes 26 years at Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford, where he served as a Religion teacher, chair of the Religion Department and then Vice Principal for Academics. In 1987, he was appointed principal of Northwest Catholic, and later served as president from 1996-2005.

During his years at Northwest Catholic, Dr. Griffin effectively articulated and implemented the Catholic identity and vision for the school, resulting in significantly increased enrollment (50%), large growth in financial support, which included a capital campaign to create new arts, athletics and library facilities. He was known to be an excellent collaborator with area priests and elementary schools as well as an effective leader in strategic planning with the Northwest Catholic School Board.

Dr. Griffin said he is looking forward to joining the Office of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford where he and his family have lived for many years.

“Catholic schools across the country face many challenges today, but their mission has never been more vital to the future of our Church, our world, and the young people we serve. The Archdiocese of Hartford has been a leader in its strong support of Catholic schools, recognizing their significant role in the educational ministry of our Church,” said Dr. Griffin. “I am deeply honored to be appointed to this role of leadership and service to the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford. I am grateful for the confidence Archbishop Blair has placed in me and I look forward to working under the guidance of the Provost for Education, Evangelization, and Catechesis, Education Sr. Mary Grace Walsh, ASCJ, Ph.D.”

Prior to becoming the superintendent in Fall River, Dr. Griffin was principal of Holyoke Catholic High School in Chicopee, MA from 2009-2011; and from 2005-2009 served as director of planning and development as well as a Theology teacher for four years at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden. Early in his career, he served as director of religious education at St. Francis Church in Naugatuck immediately after two years of service in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in California.

Dr. Griffin and his wife, Linda, are parishioners of Saint Elizabeth Seton Church in Rocky Hill. He has two grown daughters and four grandchildren -- two of whom attend Corpus Christi School in Wethersfield. Born and raised in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Dr. Griffin moved to Connecticut after his service in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. He earned a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Connecticut and an M.A. in Religious Studies from the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford. He is also a graduate of Providence College where he earned a B.A. in English.

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