



**Office of Communications**  
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**Buckley Appointed Superintendent of Catholic Schools**

Bishop Louis F. Kihneman III has hired Dr. Matt Buckley as Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Biloxi, effective June 1, 2023.

Currently principal of St. Patrick Catholic High School in Biloxi, Dr. Buckley will succeed Dr. Michael Ladner, who served as superintendent from 2005 until 2018 and on an interim basis in August after Dr. Rhonda Clark left the post.

“I am pleased to announce the hiring of Dr. Matt Buckley as Superintendent of Catholic Schools,” said Bishop Kihneman. “Our core mission in our Catholic schools and throughout our diocese is to form disciples and disciple-makers. Matt understands this mission and will be able to lead our Catholic schools – administration, faculty, staff, students, and families – in this mission through faith formation, accompaniment, service, and personal commitment. Matt realizes that everything that we do in our Catholic schools, whether it is in the classroom, athletics, or extracurricular activities, must be geared toward forming intentional disciples and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.”

“Under Matt’s leadership, St. Patrick has established a tradition of academic excellence, which really is a hallmark of all of our Catholic schools. I am confident that he will work with all of our schools to ensure

they will continue to thrive academically, nurture a love of learning that will last a lifetime, and provide a foundation that enables our students to become lifelong disciples.”

Dr. Buckley holds a Doctor of Education and Education Specialist degree from Liberty University, a Master of Education from Concordia University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from The University of Southern Mississippi. He has served as principal of St. Patrick Catholic High School in Biloxi since 2016. He is a lifelong resident of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and attends Sacred Heart Catholic Church in D'Iberville.

“I am honored, humbled, and excited to be appointed as Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi,” said Buckley, who will continue as principal of St. Patrick through the remainder of the school year. “I am grateful to Bishop Kihneman for entrusting me with this responsibility and thank Dr. Mike Ladner and Dr. Rhonda Clark for their dedication and service to our schools.”

Under Dr. Buckley's leadership, St. Patrick increased enrollment by more than 50 percent to full capacity, increased academic scores in all areas, earned the National Blue-Ribbon School award, has been ranked the top Catholic high school in the state of Mississippi and increased compensation for its faculty and staff, among many other achievements.

Dr. Buckley said his goals as superintendent include ensuring the focus of the diocese's schools is always discipleship, faith-formation, spirituality, and service; growing enrollment, and keeping education services affordable and accessible for all families.

“I deeply recognize the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Biloxi uphold a reputation of excellence both in faith-formation as well as in academic success, and I look forward to working closely with and serving all of our pastors, principals, faculty, staff, students, and families,” Dr. Buckley concluded. “Together, I'm confident we will achieve great success as we work to build intentional disciples of Jesus Christ, while advancing the mission and ministry of Catholic education in the Diocese of Biloxi.”