



January 16, 2019

Dear Parents, Students, Alumnae, and Friends of Padua Academy,

After prayerful consideration, I submitted my letter of retirement as Head of School for Padua Academy to Reverend Mark Wrightson, Pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish and to Dr. Louis De Angelo, the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Wilmington. This will take effect at the conclusion of my current 2018-19 contract on June 30, 2019.

As you can imagine, this decision was not made lightly. I have spent hours praying - asking for guidance as well as the Lord's direction for all of the people of Padua and for me at this time in my life. He led me to Padua ten years ago with a mission of leadership for young women. That vision and mission inspired every decision I made. You entrusted me with your daughters' education and I promised you a transformative experience that would guide their current endeavors and their future successes. The impact on my life and spirit has been impossible to measure. Your trust and your daughters' enthusiasm have given me life - literally. I will continue to pray for all of us. I also promise to continue to be a strong advocate for women's education. It is our Padua women, past, present and future, who share in the leadership and spirit of our Church. These women, not only current students, but our very strong and successful alumnae as well as all of the young girls yet to attend, are everyone's hope of the future.

Over the past ten years, it has been my sincere joy to create a team of gifted educational leaders who, in concert with our students, alumnae, and Padua's Board of Trustees have recreated Padua Academy into the school it is today - a premiere twenty-first century women's secondary school. Our Vision and Mission have animated our innovative curriculum within our unique school environment, embracing intellectual curiosity, self-empowerment, gratitude and faith. This has propelled us into a worldwide view of science, technology, mathematics, journalism, communication and the historic point of view that helps to inform the future of our world community. We have created not only an exciting learning adventure for our students, but for our teachers as well. This "hands - on" type of academic rigor allows our Padua community to research and develop new products that are engineered for better medical applications of the future. From the tiniest micro

systems (Internet of Things) that are driving technological components far beyond what we imagine now, is the key driver for school environment that steps beyond the average curriculum and bravely journeys into the only imagined future. I am extremely thankful to have been a part of this change, this redefining of Catholic education for young women.

These ten years have enabled me to research the characteristics of change leadership and develop an extremely effective administrative team, not just made of a principal and vice-principal, but of gifted teachers developing extraordinary curricular designs for this futuristic learning! It is this team that will continue to drive Padua forward. My energy level is waning, but I am confidently turning over our vision for Padua along with the day-to-day operations, to this next generation of Padua leaders.

God has also provided Padua a Board of Trustees made up of highly qualified and dedicated professionals who hold dear and guide the strategic plan of growth for Padua. One of the areas that have impeded maximum fundraising and development growth is our governance model. We have reached a size that is impossible for one person to hold both day to day responsibilities with all others. Just recently Father Mark agreed to change the governance model so that ours now mirrors our brother school, Salesianum, as a President/Principal model. An easy way to imagine this is to think of the CEO/COO Business model. In many ways the school model aligns with this.

Transition of leadership can be tricky, but this year I have been working with internal leaders who I feel would be superior in taking the reins over when I leave. Along with my letter of retirement, I have shared the candidate names I recommend for President and Principal with Fr. Mark and our Board.

I remain grateful for this unforgettable, life changing opportunity. These years with all of you have filled my heart with more than fond memories. You have nurtured my spirit, especially during these last most challenging times of my life. In all of these times, I have felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving in this school as well as the love and direction of Fr. Roberto. Before I accepted this position I met with Fr. Roberto and ask for his blessing. With tears in his eyes, he told me that it was time for Padua to be led by a strong laywoman and then blessed me. I have always tried to follow his direction! That blessing has sustained me and will continue to sustain this school.

These words from the prophet Jeremiah alleviate my hesitancy and lift my spirit. "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". That is not a meek quiet prayer, but a strong prayer – a call to faith – for Padua Academy.

I humbly thank all of you and firmly pledge to continue to keep you in my prayers. This is not goodbye. This is a time to celebrate the new leaders who will take us into

the future. I will remain the watchful “grandmother”. If you ever you need me, I am just 45 minutes up the road in Landenberg. My ministry of education is not over. One chapter of my book ends and another begins. I am open to God’s call and to yours!

Thank you for your unending support.

May God continue to direct the path of Padua Academy, our students, parents, alumnae and friends.

With a promise of continued prayer,

Cindy Mann