



## **Marian Middle School Announces Sr. Connie Probst, OSF, as Family Resource Advocate**

October 2022 (St. Louis) – Marian Middle School is pleased to announce the appointment of Sr. Connie Probst of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Help (OSF) as Marian’s new Family Resource Advocate, which is part of the school’s innovative Care Team. In her role, Sr. Connie will provide students and families with access to services such as crisis intervention, housing, and transportation that help address acute, urgent needs.

“We are thrilled to welcome Sr. Connie, who comes to us from one of our founding communities, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Help,” said Mary Elizabeth Grimes, president of Marian. “She has a strong background as a social worker and a registered nurse and brings with her a deep understanding of the issues our families face.”

The Family Resource Advocate plays an important role on Marian’s Care Team, a group of professionals focused on the social, emotional, mental health, and urgent wrap-around service needs of each Marian Girl. Up to ninety percent of Marian students face poverty and travel from up to 30 zip codes to become a Marian Girl. They face traumatic experiences such as homelessness, unsafe housing, the loss of a parent from gun violence, and depression and thoughts of suicide. The pandemic has exponentially increased these inequities and challenges, and shined a light on mental health, especially in communities of color. According to the National Library of Medicine, less than 15% of children experiencing poverty and in need of mental health services receive support.

Access to the quality mental health services provided at Marian empowers students to safely process and overcome obstacles so they can reach their full potential, and ultimately find career success.

Sr. Connie serves as Director of Mission Support for the Franciscan Sisters, and before that was the Director of the St. Anthony Food Pantry and Social Services. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Maryville University and a Master of Social Work from Washington University. She completed her Registered Nurse (R.N.) studies at St. Louis Community College.

“I am very happy to put my understanding of the challenges our girls face and my commitment to education to work for Marian Middle School,” said Sr. Connie. “I will be working to build deep, abiding, and faith-filled relationships with each Marian Girl and her family to help them grow and meet their goals, while helping to connect them to important resources throughout the community.”

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**About Marian Middle School**

Marian Middle School is a Catholic school for girls that is committed to breaking the cycle of poverty through education. Founded in 1999 and located in the Tower Grove South neighborhood, Marian provides a life-altering experience for girls in grades 5-8 by focusing on each student’s spiritual, academic, social, moral, emotional, and physical development.

Up to 90 percent of students face poverty and travel from up to 30 zip codes to become a Marian Girl. Students attend extended hours each school day and a longer academic year. The staff provides ongoing support to alumni through high school and post-secondary education to ensure career success. Over 300 girls have graduated from MMS with 100% of them recently entering post-secondary institutions.

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