



# SAINT IGNATIUS

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Office of the President

April 20, 2017

Mr. Brian E. Hurley, Esq.  
3859 Homewood road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45227

Dear Brian,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful, gracious and cogent letter. Despite the challenging issues involved, I am genuinely grateful for the passion and concern you and others have expressed for our high school alma mater. In my short time as president, I have enjoyed at least three encounters with you, which I have found meaningful and helpful. And your generosity to our alma mater will always be a point of deep gratitude for me.

Let me begin by honestly stating that I am a bit frustrated by those who, without adequate information, are making assumptions that are wholly unjustified and erroneous. In no way is this school distancing itself from any of the Church's doctrines and teachings. We are proclaiming, and will continue to proclaim, our Catholicity and Jesuit Charism without apology. And I clearly understand my role as leader of the school to uphold, defend, and advance the Catholic and Jesuit identity of Saint Ignatius High School, which continues to stand as a flagship of Catholic education.

At the very start of his *Spiritual Exercises* St. Ignatius admonishes both director and retreatant to place upon the other's statements the most generous and positive interpretation possible. It seems some of our stakeholders, possibly due to the lack of information, are creating narratives that do the opposite, making connections that assume the worst.

I fully understand your desire for additional information and transparency concerning employee contracts, and I wish the bounds of decency would allow me to go further, but I cannot. I can, however, give you the assurance that our recent personnel decisions, like all other similar decisions made here, are done with a great deal of thought, analysis, consultation, prayer and discernment. Consequently, I stand with the decisions made and the appropriate practices we have followed. This still does not give me permission to violate the privacy of our employees by discussing specific circumstances that underlie our decisions.

More concretely, you reference the Ignatian Identity Report of October 2016, specifically Recommendation 6 at the end of that same report. I will respond to your questions as best I am able with two critical caveats. The first is that I cannot speak for the report's authors. I feel I have a good sense of their meaning, but it would be presumptuous of me to explicate their intended meaning. Secondly, the Ignatian Identity Report is not a public document. The report is a communication between the Provincial's office and this school. Extending the report to a wider audience subjects it to misinterpretation. I am disappointed that the report has apparently been circulated widely.

However, that bridge has obviously been crossed. I cannot address every question you raise, but I can, perhaps, shed light on many of the issues you raise.

- The Ignatian Identity Report is student-focused. These young men in our care are the entire purpose of this apostolate. Therefore, all "concerns" relate to the spiritual growth, education and well being of students.

- The Identity Team does not give directions that we "follow." That would suggest that they have some say in how we implement their recommendations or how we operate the school. They do not. The Ignatian Identity Report is a comparison of our school to guidelines published by the Society of Jesus. Prior reports relied on the ten benchmarks contained in the document "What Makes a Jesuit School Jesuit?" The latest visiting team relied on the most recent compilation of standards, "Our Way of Proceeding: Standards & Benchmarks for Jesuit Schools in the 21st Century."

-The phrase, "matters of substance" was used to clarify that the issues they were addressing were not issues of style or tone. None of the issues raised related to teaching of Church doctrine. Addressing all of these issues is a process, not an event. We are creating and implementing strategies to address the concerns raised.

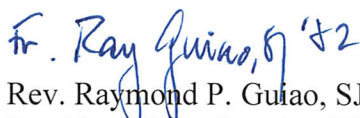
- Finally, and perhaps most critically, Saint Ignatius High School has a remarkable, talented and faithful theology faculty, an assessment I would readily extend to our entire faculty. Without reservation, I assure you that they are teaching and will continue to teach all of the Church doctrine faithfully and consistently. Our theology curriculum is determined by the framework set forth by our Bishop, and we follow that curriculum faithfully. Of course, these topics include homosexuality, marriage and abortion. You will be glad to know that our Ignatians For Life ministry is one of the most vibrant student activities on campus. We also teach and model the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, as animated by the late James Skerl, '74. And most importantly, we strive most ardently to introduce these young men to Jesus Christ, which they may come to know, love and serve Him, our Lord and Savior.

Brian, one last note of concern. I worked side by side with Jim Hogan and Marty Dybicz for years during my tenure here as a fellow theology teacher. These are good and holy men and deserve our respect and gratitude. My fear is that those creating narratives in the absence of adequate information end up being faced with a false dichotomy: that is, either Saint Ignatius is off the mark, or that these teachers are guilty of some heinous offense. Neither is true. We are simply trying our best to create a culture where our students can best come to know Christ. In this time and place we are choosing to use new ways to achieve that goal.

Thank you again for your letter, Brian. I do appreciate your respectful, open-minded approach.

May God bless you and your family with the fullness of His joy this Easter season.

In Christ,



Rev. Raymond P. Guiao, SJ, '82  
President, Saint Ignatius High School

cc: Mr. John Morabeto  
Mr. Joseph McAuliffe