

Preparing Potential Principals for Success

BRAINTREE, MA – Continuing recent efforts of the Catholic Schools Office to provide current teachers with the knowledge and resources needed to fill administrative roles in the future, 10 teacher leaders assembled on Tuesday, February 8th for “Pathways to Becoming a Principal.” The gathering, held at the Archdiocese of Boston’s Pastoral Center, provided an opportunity for interested educators to engage in a question-and-answer session with a panel of current principals, gain insight from the group’s experiences leading Boston Catholic schools in the 21st century and receive information detailing next steps in the process to potentially become principals themselves.

The panel of three principals personified the wide array of experiences that a leader can have in a Catholic school setting. Mary Jo Keaney, Principal of Ursuline Academy in Dedham, discussed her experiences leading an all-female Catholic high school in a suburban setting; Stephen Hughes, Principal of Boston College High School in Dorchester, offered information acquired from leading an all-male secondary school in an urban setting and Sheila Kukstis, Area Superintendent for the Archdiocese of Boston and Principal of St. Jerome in Weymouth, presented insights gained from being at the helm of a co-ed elementary school.

With these varying experiences, each principal conveyed common areas of experience and expertise needed to become a success principal - Areas ranging from managing staff and delegating responsibility to ensuring school success in academics, student discipline and school finance. “I appreciate having the opportunity to share learned experiences with those who are interested in pursuing the vocation of leadership” reported Ms. Kukstis, who along with the other members of the panel took questions from the assembled teachers on issues ranging from budgeting and working with parents to fostering spiritual growth in students.

Following the conversation, each of the assembled educators received a packet of information detailing further educational and professional development steps to becoming a Catholic school principal.

For more information regarding Catholic education, please visit the Boston Catholic Schools office website at www.catholicschoolsboston.org/.

By Sean Murphy, Catholic Schools Office