



Scotus Central Catholic

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Rock Bottom

Kathol commits to Scotus community

By Josie Rother

At the end of the 2024-2025 school year, the Scotus Central Catholic staff were subject to many changes. Due to 7 teachers and administrators retiring, staff were shifted around to open room for new hires.

With the retirement of Merlin Lahm, who held the title of activities director and assistant principal, Brady Vancura moved from the position of principal to fill the role. The new opening of principal was subsequently filled by Terry Kathol, who has experience in many different schools and departments within those schools.

Starting out as a social studies teacher for junior high and high school students, Kathol looked to further his education. After deciding to pursue administration, he began his new career at Holy Trinity Elementary School, the school he attended when he was a child. From there he worked as an activities director and principal until he eventually accepted the role of leading Lincoln Pius X High School, the largest Catholic high school in Nebraska.

“One thing that was important at Pius X was communication,” Kathol said. “Strong communication keeps families engaged and helps build a supportive community.”

With his family to consider, Kathol’s decision was not easy to come by. Accepting a job in a town he was not familiar with was a leap of faith that would change many aspects

of his and his family’s lives.

“There was a lot of reflection and asking, what does God have in mind for me? What is he asking me to do?” Kathol said.

Kathol’s wife, Amy, who previously worked as a teacher for Lincoln Public Schools, is now teaching at St. Isidore Elementary. The opportunity for his wife to be able to share her faith in a classroom was one of the factors that led Kathol to decide to accept the job.

His favorite part of Scotus so far has been talking to students and staff and getting to know a little about them.

“A big goal I have is learning more about the culture of Scotus,” Kathol remarked. “I want to learn more about the traditions at Scotus and what people look forward to.”

Kathol has also enjoyed attending school activities such as volleyball and football. He hopes Scotus is a place where students have fond memories.

“I always want students to enjoy their experiences in high school,” Kathol said. “That doesn’t mean every day is going to be great, but overall, hopefully they look back and say, I really enjoyed my classes, activities, and the atmosphere at Scotus.”

Kathol aims to build a culture of quality education and faith even better than what it is today.



EMMA SPLITTGERBER / YEARBOOK STAFF

New principal Terry Kathol converses with students as they enter the gym for the homecoming pep rally on September 24th. Kathol was the principal at Lincoln Pius X High School before accepting the job at Scotus.

“I want our students to grow in their faith. I hope that in some way I can help foster growth in that and help students understand the importance of their faith,” Kathol said.

Once he is able to acclimate to the Scotus way, he will start to work in his own ideas for

the betterment of the school. Kathol has big goals for the future of Scotus.

Kathol concluded, “I think [I] can have an overall impact on the direction of the school.”

Dance team twirls into first season

By Jacqueline Stoner

Cheerleaders are no longer the only group students can look forward to seeing perform at Friday night football games. With the addition of Scotus’ new dance team, fans can expect double the school spirit at not only football games, but also basketball and volleyball events throughout the year.

This is the first year Scotus has had a dance-only team as opposed to the flag and dance team led by vocal director Laura Salyard in years past. However, according to Scotus activities director Brady Vancura, the idea of starting a solely dance-oriented team itself is not new.

“We’ve actually been approached by parents for multiple years about having a dance-only team,” Vancura said. “There were just a lot of kids who wanted to dance. They didn’t want to do the flags. We also understood that the flags part of it was important for the marching for the parades, and it has been something that existed at Scotus for quite a while.”

However, an opportunity arose over the past year when the flag and dance team lost several members and unfortunately had to disband.

Tryouts were held, and of the many girls who participated, fifteen were selected to join Scotus’ new dance team. The team is led by Scotus communications director Amarha Bridger with the help of track coach Sydney Mroczek.

For Bridger, the dance team provided an opportunity to continue her history in competitive dance.

“In high school and in college, I really looked forward to [dance]. I enjoyed it and made a lot of good memories, and I kind of just wanted to continue doing it,” Bridger stated.

Assistant coach Sydney Mroczek also grew up dancing.

“Everyone thinks that I’m just track, but I actually danced before I started running track,” Mroczek shared. “[Dance] was a big

part of my life growing up. When they said that they were going to start a dance team, I first asked and was like, what is this going to be like? Then I eventually heard that they hired a head coach, and I wanted to be that support system and come on and help kids start a dance team for Scotus.”

When asked about their goals for the season, Bridger and Mroczek both agreed they plan on taking it slow.

“[Our goal is to] just build a strong foundation for the first year. It’s a new team and new dynamics, so we are starting new tra-

ditions and building something that we can keep growing on year after year,” Mroczek said.

Of the students selected to join the dance team, seniors Josie Rother and Lily Lancaster and junior Tanner Schultz were all chosen as captains.

Lancaster was drawn to the dance team as an alternative to cheer, which she had been participating in since freshman year.

“I wasn’t always very comfortable using

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GRACE HAMLING / YEARBOOK STAFF

Seniors Lily Lancaster, Gigi Chilapa-Bello, and Alexis Knowlton, freshman Molly Eickmeier, and junior Sadie Matulka perform the team’s hip-hop dance at halftime of the homecoming game on September 26th. There are 15 girls on this year’s team.

Schedule changes simplify and prioritize

By Lillian Miller

No breakfast, no snack break, earlier start time, longer periods, no even/odd classes, new faces in old classrooms, and old faces in new classrooms are all changes that came with the 2025-2026 school year.

Interestingly enough, all of these changes tie together in one way or another. Scotus’ activities director Brady Vancura, who was the principal for the past two years, was the driving force behind the changes in the bell schedule.

“There’s a calculation that gets done at the state level, basically, from your course description book, by the length of your period, and by the number of days you’re in school,” Vancura said. “It came down to the fact that we’ve always been just right on the bubble [of school hours] and in case we would lose a class because we lost a teacher, we wanted to get off of that bubble. By adding literally 2 minutes to each period, it gets us off of that bubble.”

Because Scotus offers religion classes and a study hall, the nine period day differs from the more typical seven or eight period day. One sacrifice made to make up for the time lost was the elimination of snack break.

“I know people are upset about losing snack break,” Vancura said. “It was a nice break to have, but the snack portion of it is supposed to meet the same requirements that the cafeteria does their a la carte items, and we were not necessarily meeting that.”

Because of this, students are now allowed to eat at their lockers throughout the day.

In addition to losing snack break, the cafeteria has discontinued their breakfast pro-

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2025-2026
Rock Bottom Dates
October 9
November 11
December 16
February 10
March 10
April 1
May 5

DANCE

my voice a lot in cheer, so it’s nice in dance because you don’t have to do that,” Lancaster said.

Schultz, meanwhile, joined the dance team as a way to stay involved during the fall. She has been happy with her experience so far.

“All the girls get along well and everybody’s super nice. It’s a really positive atmosphere,” Schultz stated.

The dance team made its debut at the August 28 pep rally, and they have performed at several home football games since. The team plans on continuing to perform at various Scotus events and will also attend CHS’ Jam the Gym dance competition in January. They will make their first appearance at state dance in February as well.

According to Vancura, though, it is about more than simply winning awards.

“I’m always in favor of giving more kids an opportunity to participate,” Vancura said. “At a football game, we’re going to have 30 to 40 girls down there on the sideline instead of 15. I think it’s great for school spirit that we can all represent Scotus in a positive way.”



Senior dance captain Josie Rother debuts her moves at the August 28th fall pep rally. This was the teams first performance since its creation earlier this year.

CHANGES

gram. Columbus Catholic Schools executive director Jeff Ohnoutka and cafeteria manager Margie Swanson decided making breakfast for the few kids who ordered it every day was not logical.

“[There were] not a lot of participants in the breakfast program, so it doesn’t make any sense to do it if nobody’s using it,” Swanson said. “We would like to have at least 50 or 60 kids participating in our breakfast program in order for it to work.”

Snack break and breakfast were originally implemented for the junior high kids who had early morning practices, but other changes in junior high have made their lives much easier. In the junior high schedule, prioritizing religion has led to an adjustment of the old schedule, which consisted of classes that alternated on an even/odd basis.

“I’ve probably laid out 70 or 80 different

schedules to try and figure out how to get the junior high to where there wasn’t any even and odd and where they could have religion every day,” Vancura said. “The main factor that drove all this was getting religion every day. As a Catholic school, that was something that needed to happen.”

Altering the schedule gives the students less to think about. Annie Sokol, who has taught junior high science for five years, has seen positive results from the change.

“I know that it’s much easier for them to manage. They don’t have to [keep track of if] it’s an odd day or an even day, and I just feel their stress level is a little bit lower because of it,” Sokol said.

Junior high teachers have also had to adjust to a different kind of study hall. Instead of having junior high kids scattered between study halls throughout the day, every junior

high core teacher monitors a structured ninth period study hall to teach students how to manage their time. Math teacher Sam Rose has taught seventh graders for six years.

“The ninth period study hall is nice,” Rose said. “In fact, it creates a little bit of certainty for where each kid is going to go, but then there’s the flexibility of the kids who really need to go see the math teacher get to go see the math teacher, and the kids who really need to go see the English teacher can see the English teacher. All of those core teachers have a study hall and should be available to answer questions or send their kids to someone else.”

The only changes junior high students will see throughout the year is at the quarter when they will switch between exploratory courses in vocal music, computer applications, literature, and art.

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