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NEWPORT CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE LEARNING CENTER BLESSING

Newport Central Catholic High School (NCCHS) officially opened its new state-of-the-art Science Learning Center today following a private blessing by Most Reverend Bishop John Iffert, Bishop of Covington.

Over 100 members of the community gathered for the official blessing and tour of the space. Bishop Iffert read from the Gospel of Matthew 5:14, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.” Bishop Iffert stated, “Our strong system of Catholic education in the Diocese of Covington is a great and wonderful gift, and we must continue to pass it on to our children. Let us use these new resources to seek, learn, and teach what is true and to gain knowledge of our Christian calling and to live it fully.”

Principal Kenny Collopy addressed the crowd saying, “We are so grateful for the support of our benefactors for this incredible space. This project within the *Looking Up Capital Campaign* will have the most direct impact on student learning. It gives Newport Central Catholic High School a competitive advantage in the area of STEM and takes learning opportunities to a new level. The renovations to the Science Learning Center were intentionally designed to increase engagement, collaboration, and flexibility thus maximizing student learning – and you cannot beat the view!”

The 10,000 square foot renovated space, is located on the third floor and consists of six learning environments (chemistry, biology, physics, shared laboratory, maker’s space and a flex room) that house six six-foot interactive touchscreen displays. Four snorkel systems allow the space to stay free of fumes during experiments, while two laboratory prep areas house a dishwasher, refrigerator, student created work and live animals (fish, snakes, turtles, lizards, etc.). Chair of the Science Department, Beth Sketch said “The day has finally come! I cried when I walked into my new classroom because of the beauty and all of the opportunity it holds. This is going to affect every single one of our students in a huge way. It’s impossible to predict the future, but this space is built for uncertainty. It’s adaptable – so no matter what the future holds, we are prepared and can ensure our students are college ready.”

Michael Wolff, the Hub+Weber senior architect for the project said, “Beyond providing a state-of-the-art educational environment, this project takes full advantage of dramatic views over Newport, the Ohio River, and the City of Cincinnati - beyond afforded by Newport Central Catholic’s hilltop location. The new design provides a generous hallway with new floor to ceiling windows providing optimum space for circulation and gathering. The hallway ceiling, painted NCC Thoroughbred blue, slopes up to the exterior wall to accentuate and maximize the view, while allowing existing utilities and new ceiling mounted mechanical units to be contained within the lower ceiling space. Balancing the need for safety and the ability to control the classroom environment, the corridor-facing classroom walls feature switchable privacy glass – allowing the walls to go from transparent to opaque at the flick of a switch.”

In addition to the opening of the Science Learning Center, the monies pledged and contributed to the school’s \$13 million *Looking Up Campaign* have already allowed the school to eliminate its debt, hire a Campus Minister and Student Resource Officer and begin work on additional facility improvements. Roof repair/replacement, campus

**NEWPORT CENTRAL
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entryway enhancements, driveway expansion, and HVAC upgrades to the gymnasium and original school building are in progress. Additionally, school, and diocesan officials are planning to break ground this spring on an \$7.9 million on-campus Multi-Purpose Athletic Complex, which will provide a home field for boys' & girls' soccer, track, and football and a practice facility for baseball & softball.

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