A man of principles
Schultz talks about his past and the future

Growing up in the small town of Stanton, Iowa, principal John Schultz was no stranger to the small community feel, similar to that of Gross Catholic. However, as a child, Schultz dreamed of becoming something much different than a teacher.

“I wanted to be in business somehow, and I really liked banking. So, I wanted to be in banking,” Schultz said.

While studying for his finance degree at Iowa State University, he grew a sudden love for teaching. He later went to Buena Vista University to get this degree in education, which got him his first job at Benson High school teaching business classes. From 2000 to 2003, he attended UNO to get his master’s degree in administration, which eventually led to the job opportunity at Gross Catholic. Overall, he invested around 15 years towards his college education.

“I think you are always learning and that is a good thing,” Schultz said.

Choosing Gross Catholic was a no-brainer for Schultz. His wife is the principal at nearby St. Bernadette and his relatives, the Reeds and the McNamara, both have students that attend the school. Twenty years ago, Schultz switched his religious affiliation from Lutheran to Catholic. Not only was he attracted to the faith that Gross Catholic had to offer but also the environment.

“I thought, you know...I’ll just go see what it’s like. I enjoyed the small community and smaller school,” Schultz said. “I wanted to get back with kids. I was working at the Central Office of OPS, and so it is nice to be back into a school.”

After only being in school for a couple of months, Schultz has ideas for change in store. He plans to reinforce the clean dress code, believing it is a good way for the school to be united as well as a way to look as professional as possible.

“I also plan on enforcing what the teachers are accomplishing and teaching inside the classroom, the strategies they are using, and even give new ideas to them,” Schultz said.

The Cougar Family is just an addition to Schultz's close family. His daughter is an 8th grader at St. Pius/St. Leo and plans to come to Gross next year. His extended family is located in both Iowa and Papillion, but his wife, Lynn, has family all around the metro area.

“We are all very close, similar to that of the Cougar Family,” Schultz said.

In addition to his duties as principal, Schultz also belongs to St. Leo’s parish and is president of its school board shared with St. Pius. He stays involved with the community by coaching a soccer team and singing in the choir at St. Leo. He believes it is important to make sure you are involved and well-rounded.

“I like the Dux Esto program. It is good to teach students that giving back is something that we should do,” Schultz said. “There’s a lot of our community that has a lot of needs, and we can fill those needs through volunteering resources and talent usage.”

Schultz has multiple pieces of advice for students pursuing academic excellence. He encourages taking the most challenging courses in order to make the most out of high school.

“You continue to learn no matter what you do. Always try to be as professional as you can and always try to learn more in every situation,” Schultz said.

The welcoming environment from the students and faculty members has made his transition to new principal easier. However, there have been small challenges for him along the way.

“I’m trying to get names down, but it’s hard as a new person, coming in with 428 names. It’s hard to remember,” Schultz said.