

PICKET FROM PAGE A1

draw the item took into account the sensitivity of the issue and its potential impact on the welfare of our students. The topic has provided much discussion and debate. Some conclusions drawn about the school are simply wrong and we feel compelled to respond to them. Critical thinking is at the core of our curriculum as a Catholic school. We teach critical thinking in an atmosphere that is compassionate and supportive of diversity.

"We believe that providing Mercy students and mothers with the chance to meet with Gov. Granholm is a valuable educational opportunity and fully consistent with our school's support for women seeking positions of leadership and its commitment to providing young women with a Catholic college preparatory education rich in spiritual and cultural experiences as well as intellectual challenges."

Agnes Mansour, a Mercy High trustee who resigned over the weekend due to the Granholm lunch item withdrawal, said Tuesday she was pleased the Granholm item is on again. "I'm pleased that the school reinvented the governor and pleased that the governor accepted the invitation," Mansour said.

She called it "wonderful and courageous."

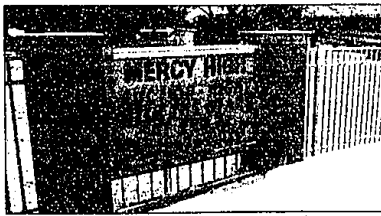
Mansour, who described herself as retired and a volunteer, was the only one of 18 trustees who resigned. She doesn't plan to attend the auction because her presence might detract from it, she said.

When asked, she said she would consider becoming a trustee again.

"It's a two-way street," Mansour said. "The invitation needs to be offered. They have a lot of priorities. They have a lot on their plate this week."

Mansour is against any picketing "because it is usually not peaceful."

Monica Miglorino-Miller, director of the Stop Granholm Church and Truth Project, said



Bill Briesler/Staff Photographer

Saturday night's Mercy High School Auction Night With The Stars will include lunch with Governor Jennifer Granholm.

the six-month-old group is deeply concerned by the change of heart. A South Lyon resident, Miglorino-Miller is an associate professor of theology for St. Mary College in Orchard Lake.

"We're disappointed in their flip-flop," she said. "It's apparent that the killing of unborn children is of no consequence for the administrators of the high school."

She pointed out the school would probably not include in the auction the same opportunity with someone who was a racist with segregationist views.

The group's demonstrations, which can number 50 people, bear public witness to the sanctity of life, Miglorino-Miller said. "Many people have been trying to persuade the Cardinal (Adam Malda) to

intervene. Mercy will face some consequences from people who will not send their daughters there."

Richard Laskos, public relations associate for the Archdiocese of Detroit, said Malda regrets the controversy and confusion, but will leave the decision up to those most closely involved. "The cardinal believes this is matter to be resolved in the Mercy High School community and should be taken up with the board of trustees and the administration."

The Project group, which last year protested at Granholm's church Our Lady of Good Counsel in Plymouth, also distributed fliers with partial birth diagrams during election night last November. They were placed on cars parked in the city lot behind Page's

Restaurant in Farmington. Tuesday, Rosemarie Denton, a Novi resident and a 1975 Mercy High graduate, said she plans to picket outside the school Saturday night.

"It's a school where she had hoped to send her seventh-grade daughter, whom she homeschooled."

"But not now," Denton said. In a family of seven girls, Denton was among four who graduated from Mercy High. She called Granholm, "a dissident Catholic."

GRANHOLM SUPPORT Liz Boyd, Granholm's press secretary, read what she called a direct quote from the governor Tuesday: "I have and have always been supportive of Mercy High School. It is unfortunate that a

few people have been successful at putting this great institution in a difficult position where what they should be doing is supporting the school, these young women and its mission by graduating compassionate and strong leaders. I hope these few detractors will be respectful of Mercy's decision."

Mary Dudley, a West Bloomfield resident and a 1975 alumna, said she won't be demonstrating but doesn't support the Granholm ticket item. She's heard about the situation for awhile because she hosts the listener-supported Michigan Catholic Radio 7-10 a. m. Monday through Friday on 1090 AM. The program is broadcast from the Shrine of the Little Flower on Woodward in Royal Oak.

Her decision not to picket is

based on her media affiliation. However, she prefers that picketers not use controversial, graphic pictures because young eyes might see them. "It bothers me that people think this is a small group of anti-abortion zealots," said Dudley, whose husband the program for 18 months. "For weeks we have been making appeals. We're disappointed that she (Doelker) changed her mind. It's not about tolerance."

Dudley said many were grateful when the school decided to remove Granholm from the catalog and sent checks and thank you letters. She wondered if those checks would now be returned and said some people will probably put a stop payment on those checks.

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FHPD prepared for Mercy protesters

Saturday evening's anticipated protest at Mercy High School has Farmington Hills Police Department beefing up its weekend duty schedule.

But Chief Bill Dwyer doesn't anticipate anything other than a peaceful challenge to Mercy officials' decision to reinstate the "Lunch with Gov. Granholm" auction item for the "Night with the Stars" fund-raiser. Pro-life advocates, including the Stop Granholm Church & Truth Project, have said they'll be out in force Saturday night.

"We don't anticipate any problems," Dwyer said. "We feel it'll be an orderly protest."

Officers will inform protest leaders what city ordinances require - no trespassing on school property (which is considered private), use sidewalks and entrances and exits must be kept open.



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