

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Identification, Description, and Perceived Viability of K – 12  
Consolidated Catholic School Systems

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# Identification, Description, and Perceived Viability of K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School Systems in the United States

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Limited research has been conducted on Catholic school viability (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008; Lundy, 1999) and Catholic school systems (Goldschmidt, O’Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). But no research studies have investigated the viability of the consolidated Catholic school system (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). This study investigates the organizational structures within consolidated school systems, factors that led to consolidation, and variables that predict perceived viability of the consolidated model.

This study was conducted with the entire known population of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. Nearly two-hundred school administrators and pastors participated in the study by completing a survey on demographics, finances, factors of consolidation, and perceived viability. Quantitative data analyses using both school system data and individual responses as units of analysis included descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, and multiple regression. Qualitative data analysis included grounded theory coding techniques of open-ended responses.

Most Catholic school systems are found in the Great Lakes and Plains regions and located in urban areas, are sponsored by parishes, were established after 1987, and have substantially lower secondary tuition than the national average. Financial challenges, enrollment decline, and centralize administrative responsibilities are the top factors that led communities to adopt the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Enrollment trend was found to significantly predict viability. As enrollment stabilizes or grows within a system, the system becomes more viable. The system concept, however, has created a division between the system and the supporting parishes, which leads to reduced parish and pastoral support.

This study shows that the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a viable model but dependent upon enrollment and high parish subsidies.

Although the system model has allowed for efficiencies and financial savings, the consolidated system has become similar to a pseudo-parish, which led to the perception from those surveyed that pastors and parishioners feel isolated from the school, and parents do not feel obligated to support their parish.

Communities adopting the consolidated model should strongly consider keeping parishes and pastors involved, gradually reduce parish subsidy, and increase secondary tuition that is in line with the national average.

This dissertation by Kenith C. Britt fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Catholic Educational Leadership approved by John J. Convey, Ph.D., as Director, and by Merylann J. Schuttloffel, Ph.D., and Leonard DeFiore, Ph.D. as Readers.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Jessica, who sacrificed the last five years for our family. Her relentless belief in me, support, and love allowed me to complete this dissertation.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Catholic education has a rich history in the United States dating back to the seventeenth century, well before this country was established (Hunt, 2005). These early schools were formed for the purposes of religious missions (Hunt, 2005) and experienced moderate growth during the eighteenth century (Buetow, 1985; Kealey & Kealey, 2003). Following the substantial immigration movement into the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Catholic schools grew rapidly with the peak of enrollment coming in 1965 (Buetow, 1985; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991; Convey, 1992; Hunt, 2000). This period of growth and progress, however, would not continue.

Though Catholic schools are effective religiously and academically (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman, Hoffer, & Gilgore, 1982; Convey, 1992; Meegan, Carroll, & Ciriello, 2004) and the United States bishops remain firm about the importance of Catholic education (Buetow, 1985; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991; Hunt, 2000, 2005), the post-Vatican II era of Catholic schools has been the antithesis of growth and progress. The decline of Catholic schools in this era, labeled a crisis by many inside and outside of the church (Guerra, 2000; Hunt, 2000), can be attributed to several factors: the rapid reduction of student

enrollment and available financial resources (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971), out-migration of Catholics from the inner-city to the suburbs (Haney & O'Keefe, 2007), and leadership challenges – recruitment, retention, and preparation of Catholic school leaders (Schuttloffel, 2003) as well as a lack of support and oversight of the parish priest and diocesan offices, respectively (Cook, 2008; DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). The weakening enrollment base and availability of financial resources along with unprepared or unsupportive ordained, vowed, and laity leading dioceses, parishes, and schools have, therefore, challenged the traditional structure, purpose, and continuation of Catholic schools (Baker & Riordan, 1998; Kelleher, 2004; Kollar, 2003).

Large urban dioceses have been severely impacted with the decline, but even smaller dioceses, which constitute the highest percentage of dioceses in the country, have also been affected by the crisis (Buetow, 1985; McDonald & Schultz, 2008). These large and small dioceses have attempted to respond to the crisis. Closing or consolidating schools and various forms of restructuring of schools have taken place in an effort to sustain Catholic school education (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Hunt, 2005; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991; Lundy, 1999).

Since United States Catholic schools are a loose network of schools, no two dioceses operate alike when it comes to sustaining them (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). Perhaps one model or solution to keeping Catholic schools viable in every diocese simply does not exist (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). With this loose network of schools in addition to bishops making decisions with limited or no consultation of the laity, or without consideration of data, it makes it difficult to determine which models are most effective (Greeley, McCready, & McCourt, 1976). And few research studies have been conducted to determine the extent of effectiveness of each of these changing models (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Hamilton, 2008).

In an attempt to keep Catholic schools viable, one approach that several dioceses have supported is the consolidation of Catholic elementary and secondary schools. While consolidation is not a new phenomenon in Catholic schools, consolidating to form a regional system with one administrative unit is a relatively new form of governance (Cook, 2008). These regional school systems have been established in order to share resources and maximize development efforts (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009).

There is little known about the structure of this new approach to school governance including why communities abandoned the long-established parish-

based elementary and inter-parish or diocesan high school in favor of the consolidated system model. There also is little known about the benefits and limitations of consolidated Catholic school systems. This study examines K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems including the structure of the system, factors that led to the change, and the impact that K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems have on school viability.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a structure of governance and administration unlike the traditional parish or diocesan school (Cook, 2008; Goldschmidt, O’Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Haney & O’Keefe, 2009). The viability of this model is a function of two primary factors: demographics and school finances (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008). Demographic factors include region and location of the system and student enrollment. School finance factors include revenue sources and median family income. Demographics and school finances are utilized to determine the extent that the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a viable alternative to the parish or diocesan school.

Demographic factors are crucial to the viability of a Catholic school. Being in an area with a large enough population to support enrollment is important

(DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009), but some large urban dioceses experiencing out-migration to the suburbs have left the urban center with a different mix of students – those not typically Catholic (Haney & O’Keefe, 2007). Some regions of the United States have suffered declines more substantially than others. Not only have families migrated to the suburbs but also younger families continue their migration to warmer climates with more employment opportunities, which has impacted the northeast and central parts of the United States (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). Finally, enrollment is a significant factor driving school viability. Enrollment has a direct impact on educational programs (e.g., curriculum) and tuition revenue (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008).

School finance factors are also critical to the success of a Catholic school. Today, tuition is the largest revenue stream for a Catholic school (Guerra, 1995; DeFiore, 2011). Subsidy from parishes, another income source, typically is a large financial resource for a Catholic school, especially elementary schools (Guerra, 1995; Harris, 1996). Development income continues to be an emerging and vital source of revenue (Burke, 1984) and is now the second highest revenue category for Catholic high schools (Guerra, 1995). Finally, family income is an important indicator of school viability. The household income has to be high enough to

support the tuition of Catholic schools (Baker & Riordian, 1998; Haney & O'Keefe, 2007; James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008).

Some literature on Catholic elementary school viability suggests a relationship between total enrollment, enrollment trends, tuition, and household income in determining whether a school will remain open or is likely to close (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008). Other studies suggest a simpler relationship on elementary school viability by comparing school income over expense with parish income over expense (Lundy, 1999). These studies, however, only investigate single parish-based elementary schools. This study seeks expand on current literature by studying the viability of restructured Catholic schools. More specifically, this research aims to understand the factors of viability associated with K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems.

### **School Viability Predictors**

A viable school is one that has a reasonable chance to succeed and remain open. Catholic schools have been closing for decades as a result of enrollment declines and the impact on school finances (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Catholic school viability, however, cannot be exclusively associated with student enrollment (Krahl, 1998). The Division of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of

Baltimore published a matrix to help identify viable schools versus those in threat of closing (Division of Catholic Schools, 2007). While valuable, this profile assessment is, in many instances, subjective measures to identifying school viability or simply a record of conversations with administrators. The scores generated within these evaluative tools are based exclusively on the evaluator's perception of the existence of each statement. Lundy (1999) and James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) have identified the variables that better predict the viability of Catholic schools. These identified variables are objective and based on reliable annual diocesan reporting. Lundy (1999) developed a key ratio to determine viability by studying the relationship between school income over expenses with parish income over expenses. James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) investigated Lundy's (1999) key ratio but found a more reliable method to predict viability. James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) developed a metric to predict viability that includes total enrollment, enrollment trends, and a ratio of median household income with tuition. For the purposes of this study, parish finances will not be investigated, and the viability predictors of K - 12 consolidated Catholic schools have been organized into two categories: demographics and school finances.

## **Demographics**

McDonald and Schultz (2010) report that the total number of Catholic schools declined by 3.3% from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010 and 20.1% since 2000. The significant decreases were experienced in large urban areas of the Mideast and Great Lakes regions (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). McLellan (2000) found similar results in a study on the decline of Catholic schools in that the more urban a diocese the greater the decline of student enrollment. In a study on parish school viability, James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) found the importance of a certain threshold of total school enrollment as well as enrollment trends in determining whether a school would remain open or be closed. Region and location of the school system along with student enrollment will be used to operationalize demographics for this study. Student enrollment will be operationalized by both total school enrollment, K – 12, and enrollment trends.

## **School Finances**

Finance is the most obvious and urgent challenge facing Catholic schools in the twenty-first century (Cook, 2008; Guerra, 1991) and the primary reason why Catholic schools close (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). With school costs increasing at an alarming rate (Harris, 1996), revenue for Catholic schools



has not kept pace and has caused one in four Catholic elementary schools to be considered unviable (Cook, 2008). Common sources of revenue for Catholic schools include tuition, parish subsidy, and other fundraising initiatives typically labeled development (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991).

Tuition is the most significant source of income for Catholic schools (Buetow, 1985; Guerra, 1995), and Bassett (2005) suggests that viable schools increase tuition at an annual rate that is comparable to the increases of the Consumer Price Index. At one time, parishes, along with indirect subsidies from religious orders, assumed nearly all of the financial responsibility for the parish school (Lundy, 1999). Pastors today, however, are faced with the loss of religious brothers and sisters and increasing demands to financially support other parish and diocesan ministries (Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2008). With substantial reductions of subsidy over time, in terms of percent of the school budget, the parish-funding model no longer appears viable (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971; Harris, 1996). Since tuition and subsidy no longer cover the cost to operate a Catholic school, development programs began to emerge in the late 1980s and 1990s (Hunt, 2000). Although slow to organize and wage fundraising campaigns (Hickey, 2003), national attention has been placed on the need for Catholic

schools to secure alternative funding sources to remain viable (Haney & O'Keefe, 1999).

James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) also uncovered a relationship of median household income and tuition cost and its impact on Catholic school viability. This relates specifically to the increase of tuition suggested by Bassett (2005). DeFiore, Convey, and Schuttloffel (2009) also found that tuition increases to offset declining parish subsidy exacerbates the decline where middle-income families can no longer afford tuition. School finance will be operationalized by revenue sources – tuition, subsidy, and development – and the relationship between tuition cost and median household income.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of Catholic schools (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman, Hoffer, & Gilgore, 1982; Convey, 1992; Meegan, Carroll, & Ciriello, 2004), but only two studies have focused on Catholic school viability in relation to open and closed schools (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008; Lundy, 1999). While it is important to understand whether or not Catholic schools are producing positive religious and academic outcomes in students, Catholic schools continue to close at a disturbing rate

(McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Little attention has been placed on the issue of viability other than identifying the dioceses, regions, and locations most impacted by the decline and the major factors causing the decline (Buetow, 1985; Convey, 1992; Guerra, 2000; Haney & O'Keefe, 2007; Lundy, 1999; McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Hobbie (2009) studied Catholic schools beyond simply identifying the decline to investigate the characteristics most associated with school vitality.

Dioceses across the country have been experimenting with alternative structures in order to sustain Catholic schools (Haney & O'Keefe, 2007; Walch, 2000). One approach gaining momentum is the consolidated Catholic school system model (Cook, 2008; Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991). This emerging model differs from traditional consolidation or merger of multiple schools since it typically involves keeping all schools and campuses open (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). Another difference is that through this system consolidation, all administrative functions are centralized and monitored through one office allowing the principals to focus on improving education (Cook, 2008; Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Haney & O'Keefe, 2009).

The consolidated Catholic school system model has garnered some national attention as a result of major urban cities adopting the alternative structure (Feuerherd, 2006). Major urban centers such as Washington, D.C.;

Oakland, California; Worcester, Massachusetts; Indianapolis; Covington, Kentucky; and New Orleans have merged schools to form a consolidated system, typically called a consortium. Although these inner-city systems appear to benefit Catholic schools (Feuerherd, 2006), the viability of this approach continues to be debated. The consortium in Washington, D.C., for example, converted roughly half of their schools to charter schools (Turque, 2008). The Archdiocese of Indianapolis followed by converting two of its six Catholic schools to charter schools (Indianapolis, 2010). While some of the elementary schools have been abandoned in these two consortia, the model itself has remained.

A lesser-known configuration of the consolidated system model is the unification of both elementary and secondary schools (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). The K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model has not been widely recognized in national conversations on Catholic schools, but many dioceses have actually adopted this elementary and secondary approach in order to save Catholic schools (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004; Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). These models differ from the inner-city consortia model, but limited research has been conducted to study the factors that led to the K – 12 consolidated system (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). Limited research also exists to identify

how these systems are actually structured or governed (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). Finally, no studies have investigated the viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009).

Two studies have identified viability indicators for Catholic schools (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008; Lundy, 1999), but these studies are limited for two reasons: 1) each study was conducted exclusively in one diocese and 2) the researchers focused only on the viability of parish-based elementary schools. This study attempts to contribute to the viability literature by investigating the viability of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems across all dioceses in the United States that have adopted this emerging model.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to 1) identify the different organizational structures within consolidated school systems, 2) determine the factors that led communities to adopt the consolidated Catholic school system model, and 3) identify the variables that predict the perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

To date, there is a lack of understanding and information regarding K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems including the viability of this emerging model. Many dioceses use different labels for consolidated school systems while some continue to use the title of a school with multiple campuses. With the lack of understanding regarding this developing model, research on the factors that led to the shift away from parish or diocesan schools is limited. This study will help identify all K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States along with the factors that led to the support for this model. Limited research exists on Catholic school viability, and no research exists on the extent that the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a model that is sustainable. This study will help dioceses and schools in the United States that continue to struggle with identifying how best to sustain Catholic schools through an alternative approach. This study will also help dioceses that have adopted the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model to evaluate its impact on viability.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions that will guide this study include the following:

1. What are the patterns of structure and governance in K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems?
2. What are the factors that led communities to adopt the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model?
3. What variables exist that help predict the perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model?

### **LIMITATIONS**

The purpose of this study was to investigate K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems: factors leading to the consolidation, different structures of K - 12 school systems, and the variables that help predict the viability of this model. Several limitations exist for this study. Since parish, inter-parish, and diocesan schools still make up the majority of Catholic schools in the United States, there is a limited population of K - 12 consolidated Catholic schools across the country. While the entire population can be surveyed, a limitation exists if only a small percentage of participants respond to the survey. Another limitation involves the participants themselves. Presidents, principals, and pastors will be the primary survey participants in the study, but many of these participants may not have been employed in the current school system or community at the time

of consolidation making it more difficult to obtain accurate responses for the factors that led to consolidation (Fowler, 1995). Finally, since the entire population of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems were surveyed, many different dioceses are included in the study. Since many dioceses are different in the way they are structured as well as the competence of the diocesan leadership (i.e., bishop, superintendent, etc.), it makes it more challenging to predict viability across dioceses where these factors are not considered. The survey is based simply on the responses from participants of the systems without consideration of how diocesan, school, or parish leadership may positively or negatively impact viability (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009).

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

The following terms have been defined for the study:

K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system - A school or system led by a single administrative body that has been formed as a result of a merger or closing of other campuses or schools involving students in kindergarten through grade 12 (Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). [Other identified terms include consortia, regional schools, clustered schools, or inter-parish programs.]



School viability – A school that has a reasonable chance to succeed and remain open.

Median household income – Sum of money income received in the calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over (retrieved September 18, 2010 from [http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long\\_IPE010208.htm](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long_IPE010208.htm), U.S. Census Bureau)

Student enrollment – Total number of students in the school system (K – 12).

Tuition – Gross amount charged to one student, before fees or financial aid, for educational purposes.

Subsidy – Direct financial payment from a parish to a Catholic school (Harris, 1996).

Development income – Money accumulated through various efforts including annual giving, deferred giving, capital giving, and endowment (Burke, 1984).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter contains a thorough review of the research literature on Catholic school viability. Few studies have centered on the viability of Catholic schools (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008; Lundy, 1999), but the literature is plentiful regarding the decline of Catholic education in the United States in the modern era (Buetow, 1985; Convey, 1992; Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971; Guerra, 2000; Haney & O’Keefe, 2007; Lundy, 1999; McDonald & Schultz, 2010). The few studies on school viability, however, have focused exclusively on Catholic elementary schools. Furthermore, only one study has investigated a new phenomenon in Catholic schools – the consortia model (Goldschmidt, O’Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). This study uncovered various consortia structures from systems with only elementary schools or a combination of elementary and secondary schools. No research exists on elementary and secondary consolidated Catholic school systems and its impact on school viability. This study will contribute to filling the gap in the literature.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a background on the topics of school viability and identify the responses that Catholic schools have developed in hopes of limiting the threats to long-term sustainability. This literature review

is organized into three sections. The first section focuses on the history of Catholic schools including its structure (governance), purpose (mission), and impact (effectiveness). The second section discusses the viability of Catholic schools and the major factors impacting viability. The final section of the literature review identifies some of the ways that dioceses, schools, and communities have responded to the threats of school viability. The literature in this chapter provides a framework for the study in relation to school viability. The analysis of the literature also presents limitations of existing research on the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model and its related impact on school viability.

## **HISTORY OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS STRUCTURE, PURPOSE, AND IMPACT**

Catholic schools in the United States have existed since the seventeenth century (Hunt, 2005; Kim, 1994). From its inception as mission schools (Buetow, 1985; Hunt, 2005; Kim, 1994) to today's leading academic institutions (Convey, 1992; Jeynes, 2008), each generation of Catholic schools has experienced different societal circumstances, prompting shifts in its governance and mission. With the exception of the middle part of the twentieth century, Catholic schools have always struggled to maintain existence. The struggles began within the early exploration years of little to no religion (Buetow, 1985; Hunt, 2005) and continue

in today's culture of individualism and movement away from organized religion (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). This section discusses how Catholic schools are governed, the changes to the mission of Catholic schools in relation to the challenges facing them since the seventeenth century, and the effectiveness of Catholic schools on student religious and academic outcomes.

### **Catholic School Governance**

The governance of Catholic schools can best be understood as a loose collection of schools operating within dioceses throughout the United States with no one set of national policies or practices guiding the operation of schools (Sheehan, 1986). Most elementary Catholic schools are stand-alone parish schools while fewer are inter-parish or regional schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Catholic high schools are a diverse group representing governance structures of religiously owned, sponsored or affiliated, diocesan, independent or private, central, or parish (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Despite the fact that alternative structures continue to be considered, the traditional forms of Catholic school governance and ownership, especially at the elementary level, have been relatively static for more than 150 years. In 2010 the National Catholic Educational Association reported that parishes or dioceses sponsored 95% of elementary schools and 65% of high schools with the remainder being private (McDonald & Schultz, 2010).

Before proceeding through this section, it is important to clarify the meaning of governance in Catholic schools and review the concepts of parish schools, inter-parish schools, and diocesan schools. Doing so will give focus to establishing the differences between these traditional forms of governance and a more contemporary form of governance called the consolidated Catholic school system – discussed later in the chapter. Governance of Catholic schools, according to Burke (1988) is:

1. articulating, monitoring, and controlling the philosophy, mission, goals, and values;
2. creating, approving, reviewing, directing, and recommending policy;
3. ensuring the quality and continuity of the administration of the school;
4. initiating and monitoring quality education; and,
5. continuing growth and development of human, material, and financial resources (as cited in Hocevar and Sheehan, 1991, p. 6).

At this point, a brief description of the traditional forms of school governance is warranted.

### **Parish Schools**

Sheehan (1986) offers a straightforward description of parish-based schools. A parish school is an elementary or secondary institution that is associated with one parish. According to Canon Law, parishes with schools are

the responsibility of the pastor (Brown, 2010). In 1986, 75% of all elementary and secondary schools were operated by a single parish (Sheehan, 1986). In just 25 years, elementary and secondary schools sponsored by a single parish have declined to 61% of all Catholic schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2010).

### **Inter-Parish Schools**

Inter-parish schools are schools that are sponsored by more than one parish. Between 1990 and 2010, inter-parish elementary schools increased from 8.9% to 12.1%, respectively (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Although still parish-based, the inter-parish school draws from families in multiple parishes. Sheehan (1986) notes that the challenges facing parish schools pale in comparison to the issues facing inter-parish schools. These challenges come from the restructuring and consolidation process that includes unresolved relationships between the inter-parish school and the supporting parishes (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; McDonald & Schultz, 2010). One such challenge is clarifying whom the principal reports to when there is more than one pastor involved (Theis, 1996; Krah, 1998). Other problems include parish subsidy agreements, facility usage agreements, loss of parish affiliation, and the final decision-maker for the new school (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2008; Theis, 1996).

## **Diocesan Schools**

Diocesan schools are not affiliated with parishes. They are schools that are completely supported by the diocese. In diocesan schools, the principal typically is directly accountable to the bishop by way of the superintendent (Sheehan, 1986). Approximately 35% of secondary schools and 4% of elementary schools were considered diocesan in 1986 (Sheehan, 1986). In 2010, diocesan secondary schools remained relatively constant at 37%, but diocesan elementary schools increased more than two-fold to 10% (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Perhaps a reason for the increase is that over the last 20 – 25 years, parish-based elementary schools were more likely to close than diocesan schools.

## **Mission of Catholic Schools**

From the beginning, Catholic schools have, and continue to have, a primary and secondary mission to impart the Catholic faith within youth and prepare them to take their place in American society (Buetow, 1985). These focal points of the mission of Catholic schools have remained constant. What has changed over time, however, has been the group for which Catholic schools exist and how best to prepare this group to be successful in the American culture of the time. Catholic schools in the seventeenth century, for example, were set up as religious missions for exposing Native Americans to Western civilization and Christianity (Buetow, 1985). Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, Catholic schools sought to indoctrinate and provide a basic education to the growing immigrant population who were mostly Catholic (Hunt, 2005). Today, Catholic schools in the United States pass on the Catholic faith not simply to Catholics, but to a mixed group of Catholics, other Christians, and even non-Christians (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). The secondary mission of Catholic schools to prepare students to enter society is also much different today than in previous generations. This, in large part, is due to the pressures of post-secondary education and the demand for high academic achievement among students while in high school. This section describes the transition of the primary and secondary mission of Catholic schools from the formative years to contemporary American Catholic education.

During the seventeenth century, Franciscans, Jesuits, and Capuchins sent missionaries to set up Indian schools in New Spain and New France (Buetow, 1985; Kim, 1994). The early schools in New Spain were formed to discipline the natives, introduce them to Western ways of living, and expose them to Christianity (Buetow, 1985). The schools were considered successful and taught as many as 2,000 Indians in one school (Buetow, 1985). New France had a different experience and purpose for educating the Indians. The nomadic way of life for Indians in New France made it difficult for missionaries in Maine, New York, Louisiana, and the Great Lakes and Illinois regions to educate the natives with any consistency (Buetow, 1985). While they also sought to Christianize



Indians, the French government – which claimed to be Catholic – was more interested in the economic advantages. Though the Spanish efforts at early Catholic schooling can be considered successful and the French efforts a failure, the work of early missionaries to Christianize the New World natives were great and paved the way of future Catholic educational endeavors (Buetow, 1985).

Many attempts were made at initiating Catholic schools when the United States was a young country. These schools of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, especially during the Western expansion, were set up in cabins, church basements, and abandoned buildings (Buetow, 1985). The focus of education within Catholic schools moved from Native Americans to Catholic youth. Catholic schools sought to “teach Catholic doctrine, to imbue Catholic youth with the spirit of Christ...[and] to equip students to take their place in society” (Buetow, 1985, p. 18). While most of these early schools struggled to remain open, one who experienced and worked through the challenges to lay the foundation for American Catholic elementary schooling was Elizabeth Ann Seton (Kealey & Kealey, 2003). Seton began the parish school movement in the United States; she was also concerned with providing a quality education and offered one of the first pedagogical training programs to the Sisters of Charity, a religious order she founded (Kealey & Kealey, 2003). As immigration of Catholics continued, the purpose for maintaining and expanding Catholic schools would change over the years, but the focus of Elizabeth Ann Seton’s

quality education along with teaching Catholic doctrine are still two of the significant tenants of Catholic schooling in the United States today.

Between 1821 and 1850, 2.1 million Europeans entered the United States, most of whom were Catholic (Hunt, 2005). Coupled with this new, larger Catholic population and the fact that Catholic schools were permitted to exist after the Civil War (Buetow, 1985), Catholic schools began an expansion that would last 100 years. These Catholic school expansion efforts brought with it, however, increased anti-Catholic sentiments (Buetow, 1985).

Tension against Catholics grew as immigrants continued flooding the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Buetow, 1985). New dioceses were formed and new schools built for the purpose of maintaining ethnic heritage (Hunt, 2000) and protecting children from the blatant anti-Catholic public schools (Buetow, 1985). The bishops in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore could not have been more direct when they challenged every church to have a school and required every parent to enroll their children in a Catholic school (Buetow, 1985). Still, the purpose of these schools was to protect and educate a poor immigrant population through religious indoctrination and basic education (Buetow, 1985). There existed such a desire to maintain this educational mission during expansion in new communities that schools, often times, were built even before the church (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971).

Following federal and state rulings permitting Catholic schools to exist in the United States (Kim, 1994; Hunt, 2005), diocesan offices for Catholic schools emerged (Kim, 1994), as did the Catholic Educational Association in 1904 (Buetow, 1985). Laws enacted to end child labor, and later the “baby boom,” caused both Catholic and public school enrollments to rise rapidly between 1920 and 1965 (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971). The growth in Catholic schools, however, would come to an end. This led to what has been called a crisis in Catholic schools (Guerra, 2000; Hunt, 2000; Cook, 2008).

Many confounding issues emerged beginning in the 1950s that led to the crisis in Catholic schools and its subsequent impact on the structure and purpose of Catholic schooling. The launching of Sputnik caused a national focus on improving public education by emphasizing more mathematics, science, and technology skills as well as improvements to reading education (Hiatt, 1986). Along with this change came a change in the funding of public schools and, thus, more revenue (Hiatt, 1986). It became difficult for Catholic schools with 100 students per grade to compete with this advanced curriculum in a limited revenue/low-cost environment. Secondarily, the assimilation of Catholics into the United States – symbolized by the election of Catholic president John F. Kennedy – signaled that Catholics had become upwardly mobile in society and gained acceptance in the American culture, including public schools (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971).

The religious purpose of Catholic schools remained constant, however, during this era of crises (Guerra, 1991). This is evidenced by many Church documents including the publication *To Teach as Jesus Did* in 1972 where the United States Bishops affirmed the threefold religious mission of Catholic schools: to teach Catholic doctrine, to build community, and to serve (National Conference 1972). The Sacred Congregation of Catholic Education (1977) published *The Catholic School*, which outlined the temporal and religious purpose of Catholic schools: to assimilate students into their respective culture through intellectual formation and to help in the salvific mission of the Church. Additional publications from the Sacred Congregation of Catholic Education discussed specifically the religious purpose of Catholic schools (Sacred Congregation, 1988) as well as the ecclesial nature of Catholic schools with respect to the increased interest of non-Catholics sending their children to Catholic schools (Sacred Congregation, 1997).

This new upwardly mobile Catholic population fled the urban centers to suburbia where Catholic schools had waiting lists or were not available. This impact caused many families to enroll their children in public schools (DeFiore, 2011). The suburban flight of Catholics left inner-city Catholic schools with a population that was largely not Catholic (Kollar, 2003), and this change – combined with Catholics Americans becoming American Catholics (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971) – led to an identity shift. Catholic schools no longer

existed to protect the immigrant heritage and integrate these groups into American society. These goals had been met with tremendous success (Convey, 1992; Greeley, 1989).

The success of Catholic schools in assimilating students to take their place in American society, i.e., the upwardly mobile Catholic population moving to the suburbs with limited or no access to Catholic schools (Kollar, 2003), combined with the significant number of religious leaving religious life (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971) began the major decline of Catholic school education in the United States. At one point, Catholic parents were first obligated to send their children to Catholic schools; after Vatican II, that was no longer the case (Hunt, 2000). With the decline of religious teaching in Catholic schools, questions about Catholic schools surfaced from inside of the Church (Hunt, 2000). The decline of students along with increased questioning about maintaining Catholic schools contributed to a crisis of commitment among Catholics to continue supporting this heritage (Guerra, 1991; Sacred Congregation, 1977).

The decline of teaching religious in schools along with the major reduction in student enrollment prompted many schools to charge parents tuition to cover the costs of an increasingly lay teaching staff (Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991; Hunt, 2000). This tuition charge, especially at parish schools, made it difficult for middle and lower income families to send their children to Catholic schools. The decline of the middle and lower class Catholics left Catholic schools with an

increasing number of wealthy Catholic and non-Catholic students (Baker & Riordan, 1998), albeit, a decline. The exception to this has been the center-city schools. Catholic schools in the urban core have been abandoned by Catholics and replaced with an almost entirely poor, non-Catholic student body.

Nevertheless, in either case, the mission of Catholic schools began to focus more on academic preparation by giving students a firm foundation to be successful in high school and post-secondary schools.

The next section addresses the effectiveness of Catholic schools in accomplishing its mission as evidenced by religious and academic outcomes.

### **Catholic School Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of Catholic schools can be determined through an investigation of its related missions. Catholic schools exist to impart the Catholic faith onto students and prepare them to enter society. Preparing students to enter “society” today involves giving students an academic foundation that will help lead them to success in college and in life. This section describes the research related to religious and academic outcomes in Catholic schools.

#### **Religious Outcomes**

Near the time of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, “James Cardinal Gibbons wrote: ‘It may be safely asserted that the future status of Catholicity in

the United States is to be determined by the success or failure of our day-schools''' (Hunt, 2000, p. 37). A little more than 100 years later, Convey (2000) surveyed bishops and priests regarding Catholic schools and found that bishops and priests agreed that Catholic schools were of high quality. In fact, bishops were in agreement with Cardinal Gibbons in that 90% stated that Catholic schools are the best resource for evangelization of the Church (Convey, 2000). While the amount of research on religious outcomes is less than what exists on academic outcomes, Convey (1992) provides the most comprehensive review of studies on religious outcomes between 1965 and 1991. For the past 20 years, however, little research has been conducted on religious outcomes of students in Catholic schools. The exceptions are Convey and Thompson's (1999) and Convey (2010) studies of students in Catholic schools and parish religion programs.

Several dozen studies were conducted on religious outcomes of students in Catholic schools between 1965 and 1991. An extensive review of these studies by Convey (1992) shows a Catholic school effect on religious outcomes in students. For example, adults who attended Catholic school through high school were more likely to participate in Sunday mass, receive the Sacraments regularly, and pray daily (Convey, 1992). When surveyed on the topic of religious knowledge, students in Catholic schools and parish religion programs showed strong scores (Thompson, 1982, as cited in Convey, 1992), which is consistent with later findings of the same topic (Convey & Thompson, 1999).

There have been differences, however, in the effectiveness of Catholic schools on certain aspects of the religious mission. Convey (1992) found that Catholic schools make special efforts to create and nurture the faith community within the school, but only half of the students surveyed in 1994 – 1995 reported that their classmates cared for each other (Convey & Thompson, 1999). Another substantial difference over this same period relates to mass attendance of students in school. Thompson (1982) reported that 81% of students in Catholic schools and parish religion programs attended Sunday mass regularly (as cited in Convey, 1992), but that number dropped significantly to roughly half of the students reporting regular mass attendance on Sunday a little over 10 years later (Convey & Thompson, 1999). Furthermore, in *Catholic High Schools and Minority Students*, Greeley found that Catholic schools have only a modest impact on religious behaviors of students (Greeley, 2002). In regards to adult religious behaviors, Uecker (2009) found that young adults who attended Catholic schools reported levels of religiosity similar to those in public schools but are less likely than students in public schools to participate in religious functions outside of mass.

Unfortunately the research on religious outcomes of students in Catholic schools after 1991 is limited. But, Convey (2010) reviewed survey data from the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) ACRE test which showed that Catholic school students continue to outperform students in parish religion



programs in religious knowledge. Even though the religious research is limited after 1991, it can be safely asserted that Catholic schools have a positive impact on religious outcomes in students.

### **Academic Outcomes**

The research on academic outcomes of students in Catholic schools is much more extensive than religious outcomes. Over the past five decades, researchers have studied the impact of Catholic schools on student academic outcomes. These studies have typically compared Catholic schools to public and other private schools by investigating standardized test scores, attendance and drop out rates, as well as college entrance and graduation rates.

Similar to religious outcomes, Convey (1992) provides the most in-depth review of research on student academic outcomes in Catholic schools. Between 1948 and 1990, Convey (1992) identified 15 major studies that have shown consistent results in the Catholic school advantage on standardized tests (Table 4-1, p. 83). But even studies not included in Convey's (1992) review of research have shown similar results. Bartell (1969) found that in 1959 and 1960 Catholic school students scored higher than public school students on high school placement tests. Vitullo-Martin (1979) reported that Rhode Island school officials launched a study to determine why Catholic school students performed better than public school students on the state standardized test in 1976. But even

research after the studies reviewed by Convey (1992) indicate a Catholic school advantage. In another extensive review of research on academic outcomes after 1990, Meegan, Carroll, and Ciriello (2004) found that Catholic school students outperform public school students on standardized tests. When compared to other religious schools, students attending Catholic schools even outperformed Protestant students, except those attending Lutheran schools (Jeynes, 2008).

While there appears to be a Catholic school effect based on standardized measures, this is not to say that all students in all subjects are impacted to a greater extent in Catholic schools than in public schools. Vitullo-Martin (1979) found that the parochial school differences were only for the middle and lower performing students. Higher performing students achieved at the same level in both parochial and public schools (Vitullo-Martin, 1979). Coleman and Hoffer (1987) found greater growth for the average student in Catholic schools in verbal and mathematics, but science and civics were less significant than public schools. But, in all, Catholic schools seem to have the biggest impact on those students considered disadvantaged (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey, 1992; Greeley, 2002).

Outside of the Catholic school effect on standardized tests, Catholic schools also outperform public schools in other areas as well. Students attending Catholic schools have a higher attendance rate (Vitullo-Martin, 1979) and are significantly less likely to drop out of school (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey,

1992; Meegan, Carroll, & Ciriello, 2004; McDonald & Schultz, 2008, 2010).

Catholic schools have a higher rate of students who attend and graduate from college than public schools (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Convey, 1992). This could be a result where students in Catholic schools are more likely to have higher aspirations to attend college (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Meegan, Carroll, & Ciriello, 2004) and take more college preparatory courses while in high school (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Finally, Catholic schools provide a safer, more disciplined environment than public schools (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Vitullo-Martin, 1979).

### **Conclusion**

Catholic school education in the United States has experienced growth and decline, stability and crisis over the past 300 years. Questions regarding the religious and academic value of Catholic schools have been answered with affirmation, yet the recent history of Catholic school education has been marked with tremendous decline. Governance changes have attempted to mitigate the decline. Catholic schools, especially at the high school level, have become more costly as a result of the decline of enrolment and religious teaching in Catholic schools. The costs have shifted primarily to parents through the form of tuition, and people continue question their worth – even though the research is clear regarding the impact (Cook, 2008). The parents who send their children to

Catholic schools today do so for reasons different than prior generations. Social and religious pressures were the driving forces behind enrollment in the past, whereas today, parents choose Catholic schools so that children will be safe, better educated, formed in the faith, and more disciplined (Kollar, 2004).

It is clear that since 1965, Catholic schools have struggled to maintain viability. The following section describes the viability of Catholic schools and the challenges Catholic schools have faced and continue to face today.

## **VIABILITY OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS CHALLENGES TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

It is difficult to comprehend the fact that Catholic schools have experienced tremendous decline over the same period where researchers and bishops have heralded its impact and its importance. Catholic school researchers and leaders have attempted to identify factors that have led to the Catholic school crisis in recent decades. Enrollment in Catholic schools has declined and schools have closed substantially since 1965 (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). These enrollment declines and school closures have been experienced most drastically in large, urban dioceses (McLellan, 2000), and more specifically, urban dioceses of the Mideast and Great Lakes regions (McDonald & Schultz, 2010).

The viability of Catholic schools – or the lack thereof – cannot be associated simply with enrollment declines (Krahl, 1998). James, Tichy, Collins,

and Schwob (2008) have identified additional aspects of determining school viability. Along with enrollment, the researchers found that finances also have a direct impact on whether or not schools are likely to remain open (James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008). This is consistent with research by DeFiore, Convey, and Schuttloffel (2009) where they indicate finance as the most significant reason schools close.

In this study, two significant variables of Catholic school viability have been identified: demographics and school finances.

### **Demographics**

Enrollment in Catholic schools has declined substantially since the peak year in 1965 where approximately 5.6 million students were enrolled in Catholic elementary and secondary schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Today, only 2.1 million students are enrolled in Catholic schools, a 62.5% decline from 1965 and a 20% decline since 2000 (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). McLellan (2000) found that urban dioceses have been affected the most and McDonald and Schultz (2010) further reported that dioceses of the Mideast and Great Lakes regions have been impacted by the decline more than other regions.

Not only have urban dioceses been affected by the enrollment declines, but smaller, rural dioceses have experienced the reduction of student enrollment as well (Buetow, 1985; McDonald & Schultz, 2008). The National Catholic

Educational Association (NCEA) has identified six regions of Catholic schools across the United States: New England, Mideast, Great Lakes, Plains, Southeast, and West/Far West. Over the past decade, these regions have been impacted by the decline differently. The Mideast and Great Lakes regions, for example, enrolled 53.2% of the Catholic school enrollment in 1999-2000 but only 48.1% just over 10 years later (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). The Southeast and West/Far West regions, however, have grown from 31.1% to 35.7% in the last decade (McDonald and Schultz, 2010).

This does not mean, though, that Catholic school enrollment in the Southeast and West/Far West has grown in number. These schools simply have experienced a slower rate of decline than schools in other regions. Data taken from McDonald (2001) and McDonald and Schultz (2010) in Table 1 show the decline of enrollment across the six NCEA regions over the last decade.

Table 1

*Enrollment by Region*

NCEA Region	2000-2001	2009-2010	% Decline
New England	166,703	125,463	24.7
Mideast	759,146	540,670	28.8
Great Lakes	631,854	478,955	24.2
Plains	252,586	219,001	13.3
Southeast	364,211	328,046	9.9
West/Far West	472,801	427,206	9.6
United States	2,647,301	2,119,341	19.9

Source: McDonald (2001); McDonald & Schultz (2010)

The decline can be further evidenced through an investigation of school closures from 2009 to 2010. The Mideast and Great Lakes regions closed or consolidated 98 schools but only opened 11 new elementary schools in one year (net 2.5% decline). The Southeast and West/Far West regions, on the other hand, closed or consolidated 37 schools and opened 11 new elementary and secondary Catholic schools (net 1.0% decline).

Location of the school is also a factor considered in the decline of Catholic school enrollment. McLellan (2000) found that urban dioceses were impacted by the decline to a greater extent than non-urban dioceses. While McDonald and

Schultz (2010) do not identify total enrollment by location, data are available regarding the number of schools in each of the locations identified by NCEA. These locations include: urban, inner-city, suburban, and rural. Table 2 shows the decline of the number of schools over the last 10 years by location. As can be seen, urban schools have closed at a higher rate than non-urban schools, but rural schools have also been significantly impacted by the decline. Suburban schools have experienced the least decline over the last 10 years. If one goes back even further, the number of closings is more depressing. And the facts also support the position that urban schools have not been the only location substantially impacted by the crisis. Between 1968 and 2010, 63% of urban elementary and secondary Catholic schools have closed, whereas 67% of rural schools have closed (Haney & O’Keefe, 2007; McDonald & Schultz, 2010).

Table 2

*Schools by Location*

NCEA Location	2000-2001	2009-2010	% Decline
Urban	2,691	2,178	19.1
Inner-City	1,016	872	14.2
Suburban	2,683	2,589	3.5
Rural	1,756	1,455	17.1
United States	8,146	7,094	12.9

Source: McDonald (2001); McDonald & Schultz (2010)



Although it is argued that finance is the most significant reason why schools close, financial instability, in most cases, is caused by low enrollment (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). One of the factors contributing to low enrollment is a declining number of school-aged children within a community (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). Several significant issues have been linked to the declining number of Catholic school-aged children, especially in urban areas of the Mideast and Great Lakes: family migration to the suburbs (Haney & O’Keefe, 2007; Lundy, 1999), families moving to warmer climates for jobs (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009), failure to build schools in places of Catholic population growth, and failure to provide tuition aid.

In their study on school viability, James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) identified enrollment as a significant variable impacting school viability. Two important enrollment factors were found to impact open and closed schools: total enrollment of the school and three-year enrollment trends. The authors found a “tipping point” with enrollment at the elementary school. Schools with less than 200 students, they propose, are less likely to remain open. Also, enrollment trends have been identified as a significant factor impacting viability. The authors calculated enrollment loss or growth and inserted this statistic into a developed metric to help determine school viability.

## School Finances

Financing is the most urgent issue facing Catholic schools (Cook, 2008; Guerra, 1991) and a significant factor in school viability (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; James, Tichy, Collins, & Schwob, 2008; Lundy, 1999). The financial crisis for Catholic schools started with substantial enrollment losses and was exacerbated by religious teachers being replaced by laypeople (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971). School costs have increased at alarming rates, averaging 8.7% per annum between 1980 and 1995 (Harris, 1996). In addition to inflation, rising costs for Catholic schools are a result of increases in teacher salaries, lower student-teacher ratios, and increases in utilities, insurance, and pension programs (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971; Guerra, 1991; Harris, 1996).

With direct parish and indirect religious subsidies declining or entirely gone (Lundy, 1999), leaders have made attempts to respond to the rising costs of operating Catholic schools by passing on these increases to parents through tuition (Buetow, 1985; Guerra, 1995). Tuition increases, though, have contributed to the decline of enrollment since middle and lower income families have not been able to afford the cost (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009). The shrinking parish support and limited tuition income has led to schools pursuing other sources of revenue to cover the gap. Although slow to organize fundraising efforts, development revenue has become more important to the sustainability of

Catholic schools in recent decades (Hickey, 2003; Hunt, 2000). This section will describe the school viability research regarding school finances, which includes research on revenue sources and tuition as it relates to median household income.

### **Catholic School Revenue**

**Tuition.** The traditional Catholic school is funded by three main sources: tuition, subsidy, and development (Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991). Tuition has not always been the major revenue source for Catholic schools, especially for parish elementary schools (DeFiore, 2011). Until the late 1960s, the need to charge parents for the cost of educating children in Catholic schools was limited since the parish and fundraising efforts assumed nearly the entire cost (Harris, 1996). The changes began, however, between the late 1960s and early 1980s when 2.5 million students left Catholic schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2010), and the % of religious in schools dropped from 57% to 25% over the same period (Hunt, 2005). This resulted in a major financial crisis for many schools and dioceses.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, for example, launched a study in the early 1970s to determine the causes of the financial crisis in schools and recommendations to improve the condition (O'Leary & Tierno, 1972). Parishes in the archdiocese operated at a deficit of \$2.2 million in 1970, \$5.1 million in 1971, and continued deficits were projected in future years (O'Leary & Tierno, 1972).

The solution to improving the viability of parishes and schools, according to the authors, was to charge parents tuition (O'Leary & Tierno, 1972). This example from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is just a highlight of what many schools and dioceses were dealing with at the time and the attempts made to improve the financial condition of the schools.

Four decades after the increases of tuition, it has become the largest source of revenue for most Catholic elementary and secondary schools (DeFiore, 2011). Tuition covers approximately 62% of the costs at the elementary level and 80% at the high school (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). As far as amounts charged, average tuition at the elementary school in 2010 was \$3,383 compared to \$8,182 for high schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). This signals an increase of approximately 90% at both levels over the past decade (McDonald, 2001; McDonald & Schultz, 2010). This continues the trend noted by Harris (1996) between 1980 and 1995 where school costs increased nearly 9% annually, and these costs appear to have been passed on entirely to parents through tuition increases. The result of increased tuition has been a diminishing Catholic population willing to send their children to Catholic schools (Harris, 1996).

**Parish Subsidy.** Parish subsidy is a source of funding for Catholic schools, but subsidy normally is invested at the elementary level. At one point, parishes assumed the entire cost of educating students in the parish (Harris, 1996).

Despite the reliance on parish subsidy, this funding area has steadily declined over the years in most regions of the country. On average, Catholic elementary schools receive 24% of church income compared to 34% 30 years ago (DeFiore, in press). In terms of reliance on the school budget, subsidy accounts for 22% of the budget today (DeFiore, 2011) as opposed to 63% in the late 1960s (Harris, 1996). Although a significant decline of percentage of school investment – % of parish budget and % of school budget – the nearly 9% per year increases in school costs could never be made up through parish revenue that increased at a more modest rate of just over 3% annually (Harris, 1996).

Ironically, in an earlier, poorer Church the parish more heavily financed Catholic schools; however, the cost of running a parish school staffed entirely by religious was drastically less at the time (Harris, 1996; Theis, 1996). The decline of indirect subsidies from religious orders, which led to significant increases in salaries for laypersons, is not the only factor causing the reduction of parish subsidy. Another reason appears to be the desire among pastors to support other parish and diocesan programs beyond the school (Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2008). Pastors feel more compelled to spread the financial resources more equitably among the parish, and with limited increases in parish revenue, this money has come from a reduction of subsidy to the school (Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2008).

Cassidy (1967) argues that the amount of money the pastor allocates from the Sunday collection is the index on his support for Catholic schools. This is a strong connection between Cook's (2008) argument that bishops and pastors have become disinterested in Catholic schools. And one has to question whether Church leadership understands the benefits of Catholic schooling on the overall health of the Church. Outside of the religious impact discussed earlier, parishes with schools are more financially viable than parishes where schools have closed (Harris, 1996; Lundy, 1999).

**Development.** Parish subsidy and tuition have not kept pace with the cost to educate students in Catholic schools (Hunt, 2000). With the lack of financial and other support from the parish, school costs increasing rapidly, and during periods of marked enrollment declines, Catholic schools will continue to decline unless viable sources of funds are secured (Haney & O'Keefe, 1999; Hunt, 2005). This challenge has forced Catholic school leaders to invest in professional programs aimed at covering the gap between what parents pay in tuition and parishes invest in subsidy (Harris, 1996; Hunt, 2000).

Although development programs are more complex than simple fundraising initiatives like bake sales, development revenue is comprised of income sources that include multiple fundraising initiatives – events, annual fund appeals, endowments, and estate gifts (Burke, 1984). Outside of bake sales

and other events, Catholic schools, especially elementary, have been slow to organize and wage development programs (Hickey, 2003). This is a troubling fact since Greeley, McCready, and McCourt (1976) reported 35 years ago that 80% of the Catholic population would financially support Catholic schools if asked. Nevertheless, national attention has been given to this area of need, albeit late. In a cooperative effort between NCEA and Boston College called Special Programs for Improving Catholic Education (SPICE) in 1998, for example, a conference was held for Catholic leaders focusing exclusively on alternative methods of financing for Catholic schools (Haney & O'Keefe, 1999).

It should be noted that there has been a difference in development efforts between elementary and secondary Catholic schools. Catholic high schools have been more successful in raising money outside of tuition, and this has been the case for some time. Just between 1974 and 1977, development revenue for Catholic high schools increased by nearly 15%, or 5% of the total budget (Bredeweg, 1978). The need to cover the gap continued to grow for Catholic high schools, and development revenue accounted for 9% of the total budget in 1993 (Guerra, 1994) but remained flat at 9% in 2008 (Taymans & Connors, 2009).

### **Tuition and Median Household Income**

Tuition remains a significant source of income for Catholic elementary and secondary schools (DeFiore, 2011; Taymans & Connors, 2009) and has risen

exponentially due to the high annual increases in school costs (Harris, 1996). Bassett (2005) cautions against exponential increases in tuition. For schools to remain viable, it is suggested that annual tuition increases be in step with inflation as identified by the Consumer Price Index (Basset, 2005). DeFiore, Convey, and Schuttloffel (2009) and Harris (1996) argue that charging families high, escalating tuition is a cause of the gradual diminishing of the Catholic population in Catholic schools.

Outside of families moving from northern urban areas to the suburbs and Sunbelt, a critical factor for the decline in Catholic schools is attributed to a high percentage of families earning less than \$40,000 annually compared to the high cost of tuition (Haney & O'Keefe, 2007). This challenge supports the argument by DeFiore, Convey, and Schuttloffel (2009) and Harris (1996) regarding the enrollment decline. This also supports the concern among pastors about the threat of schools becoming elitist (Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2008). Today, children who attend Catholic schools are likely to come from families of middle and upper-income (Baker & Riordan, 2008; Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971).

James, Tichy, Collins, and Schwob (2008) investigated the viability of Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. In their study, the authors developed a metric to help predict long-term viability of elementary schools. Tuition as a function of median household income was found to be one of three variables that help accurately predict open and closed schools. Tuition



that increased in schools beyond an affordable level within the given community negatively impacted school viability.

### **Conclusion**

Since Catholic schools in the United States operate as a loose network with limited diocesan oversight, the viability of Catholic school education is difficult, if not impossible, to determine across all types of schools and levels. It is clear that the significant enrollment decline since 1965 has been the root cause of school closures. But enrollment is not the only factor that determines whether schools will remain open or close (Krahl, 1998). School finances play a critical role in viability as well. Also, not all regions and locations across the country have experienced the same rate of the enrollment loss and school closure.

Due to the aging population of the northern parts of the United States, the Mideast and Great Lakes regions have suffered decline in enrollment and the closure of schools more than any other region. The location of the school also has an impact on the decline. Much more attention has been given to urban school education regarding the mass exodus to the suburbs and subsequent drop in enrollment and closings, but due to the shift away from an agricultural-based economy, rural Catholic schools have been affected at nearly the same rate as urban schools.

Coupled with enrollment and region and location of schools, finances impacts school viability. School revenue, along with median household income, plays a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of Catholic schools. Tuition charged at a rate that is too high, given the median income of families, makes it difficult to attract a sufficient number of students. Equally as concerning, subsidy reductions and a lack of strong development programs in schools cause financial stress that may not be overcome. Even with the best and brightest Catholic school leaders convening, many schools have not been able to overcome the challenges in recent decades and have been forced to close (DeFiore, 2011). This is evidenced by the fact that 1300 schools have closed since 1990 (Hamilton, 2008).

In an effort to help offset the decline in Catholic schools, many dioceses have attempted to look beyond the traditional structure of governance and administration in Catholic schools. As early as 1972, the bishops challenged communities to consider alternatives to the traditional parish school (National Conference, 1972). But responses to the crisis of decline have been dominated, not by creative management structures, but by consolidation and closing of schools (Lundy, 1999). Still, some communities have attempted to respond to the crisis through creative management opportunities and partnerships (Haney & O'Keefe, 2007; Harris, 1996).

The following section will describe the major responses communities have taken to help limit the decline of Catholic schools.

## **SUSTAINING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

### **RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS OF DECLINE**

Until the 1960s, Catholic schools were a function of the Church (Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991). Vatican II prompted changes to an “open” Church including more participation among the laity (Donovan, Erickson, & Madaus, 1971; Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991). This increased participation among the laity in decisions regarding Catholic schools began with the educational board movement, including boards with limited jurisdiction (Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991; Hunt, 2005; Kim, 1994).

As Catholic school tuition increases, the demand for quality education strengthens as well as the need to find additional revenue to support the operation of the school. As a result, school administration has become more complex; the president-principal model of school leadership has emerged as an alternative to the traditional principal-only approach. This model, slowly adopted over the last 25 years, has proven to be a popular way to structure school administration and divide the responsibilities of education and finance (Commission, 1991; Dygert, 1998, 2000; James, 2007, 2008, 2009; James & Vercruysse, 2005; Mullen, 1998).

Even though the mission for Catholic schools may appear clear, the Church has recognized the challenges facing Catholic school education. One challenge is the lack of understanding among those working in Catholic schools regarding the unique identity of the mission (Sacred Congregation, 1977). While identifying the mission of Catholic schools in *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the bishops also challenged Church leaders to maintain Catholic schools by considering other structures outside of the traditional parish school (National Conference, 1972). Most dioceses have made attempts to limit financial burdens on the parishes and dioceses by consolidating or closing schools when challenges exist and seem insurmountable. Yet, some dioceses have been creative in attempting to perpetuate Catholic schools through small, system consolidations consisting of both elementary and secondary schools.

This section discusses the research on alternative forms of governance and leadership, consolidation and closing of schools, and consolidated Catholic school systems.

### **Alternative Governance and Leadership**

#### **Consultative Boards and Boards with Limited Jurisdiction**

Elementary schools, although still largely parish-based and under the control of the pastor, are beginning to experience new forms of governance where regional schools governed by consultative boards or boards with limited

jurisdiction have been established (Hocevar & Sheehan, 1991). Since there are only two types of boards appropriate for Catholic schools, consultative or limited jurisdiction, it is important to explore the differences between them (Sheehan, 1990). For dioceses and parishes that want to remain in control of the decision-making function of the school system, a consultative board is the appropriate board to establish. For dioceses that wish to hand over everything except for ultimate authority of the schools to laypeople, a board with limited jurisdiction should be set up.

Consultative boards operate in the policy-making process and make recommendations to the pastoral authority of the school (Sheehan, 1990). Boards with limited jurisdiction have power but not the ultimate authority over the schools as bishops and pastors under Canon law cannot delegate ultimate authority of the school system to a board (Shaughnessy, 1988). A board with limited jurisdiction has power over limited areas of the educational process (Sheehan, 1990). According to the *Code of Regulations of the Catholic Central School Board of Trustees*, a newly created regional school system in Springfield, Ohio with a board with limited jurisdiction, the roles of the board include: 1) monitor the compliance to the mission, 2) determine policies, 3) review the performance of the president, and 4) recommend the appointment or removal of the president and principals to the bishop. Boards with limited jurisdiction have become more popular throughout the country as the number of priests decline and have

caused pastors to serve in multiple parishes. Another reason for the popularity may be a result of the bishops and pastors disinterest in governing or administering Catholic schools (Cook, 2008).

### **President-Principal Model of School Administration**

Complexity is the best word that comes to mind when referring to the principal of a Catholic school. The principal position continues to evolve into a more complex position that educational leaders are finding it difficult to manage. The complex roles the principal plays have become more arduous to control in a world that is changing rapidly (Ciriello, 1996). Accountability is high, parental expectations of what the school should provide for their children are diverse and expansive, and the increased financial pressures on Catholic schools all bring into focus the need to address the leadership crisis facing the Church's most vital ministry (Cook, 2008; United States, 2005).

Catholic school principals have a unique set of job responsibilities. They are to be the spiritual, educational, and managerial leaders of their schools (Ciriello, 1996). Each role cannot be taken lightly as research has revealed that principals have a significant impact on a school's overall effectiveness (Mullen, 1998). As spiritual leader, the principal is responsible for building a Christian community among the faculty and staff, students, and parents. As educational leader, the principal can have either a positive or negative impact on student

achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Yet the managerial role of the principalship has a tendency to dominate the other two roles of the principal. Managing personnel, the institution, and finance demands the utmost attention from leaders, which causes the principal to spend an unequal amount of time in this area. Even with these three primary roles outlined by Ciriello (1996), it is also important to realize that the principal has the responsibility of developing and maintaining a positive school culture as well (Cook, 2001; Helm, 1989). This role must also be taken seriously as school culture has been found to be a significant variable of academically effective schools (Purkey & Smith, 1983).

As one can imagine, with the many roles and responsibilities of Catholic school principals, the desirability of professionals to become involved or remain involved in school administration is quite alarming. Catholic school principals are handed responsibilities that far exceed tasks faced in public schools (Dorman & D'Arbon, 2003). The factors involved in making the decision from educators who desire the job of a school principal, though, include the overall aspiration to achieve and improve education (Pounder & Merrill, 2001). Specifically for Catholic schools, principals with high levels of mission and professional motivation decided to continue serving as school leaders (Wao, 2002). But educators who desire the ministry of Catholic school administration or remain in these positions, as well as those who are adequately prepared to handle the principal responsibilities, seem to dwindle each year. In fact, many dioceses in

the United States operate without a principal in at least one school at the start of each school year (Cook, 2008). When accepting this responsibility of leading a school, however, the time spent as a principal may be short-lived. Principals seem to face burnout in this critical position due, in part, to the many roles that the principal performs. In a study of school principals, Gmelch and Gates (1998) and Wytaker (1996) found that emotional exhaustion was a significant cause of administrative burnout. Emotional exhaustion, according to Gmelch and Gates (1998), involved task-based stress, conflict-mediating stress, and administrative behavior. Administrative behavior was also seen to contribute to burnout. Those with Type A behavior, who are competitive, take work too seriously, or have a strong work ethic, were more likely to experience burnout than those without these qualities (Gmelch & Gates, 1998).

With a major leadership crisis affecting Catholic schools, communities throughout the United States have struggled to embrace strategies to help create opportunities to ease the decline. To help alleviate some of the burdens faced by Catholic school principals, secondary schools have adopted an alternative form of leadership which attempts to reduce role overload of the principal in order to maximize school effectiveness (Commission, 1991; Dygert, 1998; Mullen, 1998). The president-principal secondary model is seen as a highly successful model with equally as high ratings of president and principal job satisfaction (Commission, 1991; Dygert, 1998; Ferrera, 2000; Mullen, 1998).



Kraushaar (1972) appears to have been the first to advocate for this two-tiered leadership approach. This two-person leadership model, typically called the president-principal model of school administration has not been heavily researched, and it remains unclear when the model was first implemented in Catholic schools. The Jesuit Secondary Education Association published the first extensive study of the president-principal model in 1991 in order to improve the training and functionality of the two-person leadership team (Commission, 1991). This pioneering study provided a framework for additional research on the president-principal model as well (Dygert, 1998; Mullen, 1998). Typically used at the high school level, especially in larger Catholic high schools, the president-principal model of administration is a growing strategy in Catholic schools across the country (Holland, 1985). Roughly 66% of high schools responding to Mullen's (1998) study reported that the president-principal model has been in operation less than ten years while 42% for less than six years.

In 1992, roughly 20% of all Catholic high schools adopted the president-principal model (Guerra, 1993). In 1994 that number increased to 24% (Guerra, 1995), and by 2004 the president-principal model of administration increased to 47% of the Catholic high schools in the United States (James, 2009). And the pattern is predicted to continue increasing (Mullen, 1998). The majority of the schools using the president-principal model are owned or sponsored by a

religious community with the second largest group being diocesan schools (Mullen, 1998).

James (2009) offers the latest report on the research of the president-principal model. He effectively reviewed the research conducted through 2008 on the president-principal model and offers insight on how to improve upon the model so that schools and dioceses across the country may not experience the pitfalls of moving toward such a structure. Although schools with the president-principal model report stronger development programs than those without development programs (Guerra, 1993, 1995), there are several intangible benefits to the model: board development, strategic planning, and aligning actions with the school's mission (James, 2009). James (2009) claims, and rightfully so, that the president-principal model gained ascendancy because it was more successful than the autonomous principal model in solving the problems of enrollment, marketing, and financial issues. Based on the research from Dygert (1998) and Mullen (1998), James (2009) suggests that the tensions between the president and principal, which contribute to the success or failure of the model, can only be managed not eliminated. If these tensions are well managed and the personalities of the president and principal are compatible, the satisfaction and results of the president-principal model are more likely to be found highly effective.

Whether the study was from the Jesuit Secondary Education Association in 1991, Dygert or Mullen in 1998, or Ferrera in 2000, there is a pattern of reported high levels of satisfaction with the president-principal model among both presidents and principals. Mullen's (1998) research shows that presidents and principals are extremely satisfied with the administrative model although a lower percentage of principals indicated they were extremely satisfied. Specifically, presidents with more than seven years of experience in the model reported the highest level of satisfaction; there was no difference in the experience of the principal and their satisfaction levels (Mullen, 1998). Dygert (1998) found similar results on satisfaction in his study on the president-principal model. A majority of presidents and principals agreed that the model works well and would recommend it to others (Dygert, 1998). Ferrera (2000) went a step further and found there was even a great deal of satisfaction from the community for the president-principal model. It appears that the president-principal model, in its division and separation of roles, increases the satisfaction among principals and presidents for the concept.

### **Consolidation of Schools**

One response to the crisis of decline that many dioceses seem to favor is consolidation. This approach is where several parishes support a single school (Lundy, 1999). School consolidation is not a new phenomenon, and consolidation

didn't start in the post-Vatican II era of decline in Catholic schools. Research as early as 1959 shows that schools were consolidating (Feighery, 1959). This research by Feighery (1959) identified consolidated schools across 22 states in the United States. This research along with more recent studies identified some of the causes for consolidation as well as the benefits and challenges to school consolidation.

Schools consolidate for similar reasons that schools close. Enrollment declines and financial challenges are the dominant factors in school consolidation (Burdick, 1996; Lundy, 1999; Mudd, 1989). When considering the major threats of enrollment decline and financial pressures, some pastors and principals feel that consolidation is the only option possible to continue Catholic school education (Mudd, 1989). The success of this model is mixed. While it does provide some benefits to parishes and schools, major challenges have been identified.

One of the benefits to consolidation is that it provides the opportunity to continue offering a Catholic school education (Burdick, 1996; Mudd, 1989). There are also financial benefits to consolidation. Consolidating multiple schools typically, though not always, involves closing buildings. In this case, shared facilities along with reducing the number of classrooms and teachers provide a better financial position for the parishes and school (Mudd, 1989). Even if buildings do not close through consolidation, there is a better utilization of resources such as sharing school administration and some faculty (Mudd, 1989;

Burdick, 1996). Finally, merging multiple schools that are small appears to benefit students socially due to the increased opportunity for more activities (Burdick, 1996).

Consolidation may preserve the opportunity to continue Catholic school education in a given community, but major challenges exist after schools consolidate that continue to threaten its existence. Although many may consider consolidation necessary, the success of the process and new model is highly dependent upon the pastor, principal, and parishioner conviction of the necessity to consolidate (Mudd, 1989). One of the major challenges of consolidation is the lack of ownership and commitment of the supporting parishes (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; Feighery, 1959; Lundy, 1999; Mudd, 1989; Theis, 1996). In one of the earliest studies on Catholic school consolidation, Feighery (1959) found that the allocation of direct responsibility of the administration of the consolidated school was unknown. This lack of ownership caused pastors to feel uncomfortable with consolidation (Theis, 1996). These uncomfortable feelings amid parish leadership also led to more pessimism about the need to support the consolidated school and about its future success (Theis, 1996). Attempting to develop an equitable payment among all supporting parishes leads to further resentment (Theis, 1996; Lundy, 1999) including the feeling that the school only sees the parish as a source of money (Theis, 1996).

Even with the limitations, consolidation of schools will continue as long as the threat to school viability exists. Under certain circumstances, consolidation can be successful (Mudd, 1989). If consolidation is considered, it is critical that parish and school leaders recognize the complexity of the process (Mudd, 1989). Consolidation should never be a forced approach, and consideration must be given to the hierarchical model of administration and the development of funding allocations from supporting parishes (Theis, 1996).

### **Consolidated School Systems**

Catholic school restructuring, though decades old, has gained momentum in recent years. The high number of attendees at the 2008 SPICE Conversations in Excellence at Boston College suggests that restructuring Catholic schools is of growing interest (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). One relatively new method of restructuring is to consolidate schools by forming a regional system of schools with an administrative team administering all schools (Cook, 2008).

Regionalization may be a relatively new concept, but Catholic schools have not been completely unacquainted to the process of consolidating schools. Consolidations of Catholic schools in many dioceses, however, have been more reactive approaches by reducing the number of schools to form one inter-parish or regional school in a given community. There is an important distinction to make regarding consolidation. Consolidating schools to establish one school and

regionalizing schools to form a system are quite different. The approach toward regionalizing Catholic schools to form a system is more proactive rather than seen as a last resort. A regional school system, as described in this study, can be defined as a small system of schools that is supported by more than one parish (Sheehan, 1986) and administered by a leadership team rather than a single principal.

Regional Catholic school systems have grown in number and continue to be investigated by dioceses throughout the country (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, and Walsh (2004) reported on this type of reconfiguration. The authors determined that 31 consortia models existed at the time of their study, and they analyzed six of these systems. Five of the six consortia were K - 12 systems whereas one only included elementary schools. Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, and Walsh (2004) found that all consortia reconfigured (as opposed to closing) due to enrollment declines and financial pressures. All consortia also reported that the reconfiguration was successful. Due to the lack of data on regional Catholic school systems, it is difficult to obtain historical information on the model or determine the reasons dioceses have adopted this approach of school governance.

In studies of public school district consolidation, some of the advantages of consolidation evidenced in research include a broader curriculum, increased teacher salaries and a concentration on their field of interest, and a more efficient

system (Hall & Arnold, 1993). In the mid 1970's the Kansas City School District went as far as to develop objective criteria that would be used to consolidate their schools. These ten objectives, in order, included: achievement levels, facility cost per pupil, space per pupil, teacher load, racial/minority balance, age/condition of buildings, auxiliary facilities, commuting distance, number of pupils, and fuel requirements (Salmon, 1976).

### **Administration and Support**

The consolidated Catholic school system can best be described as operating similar to a mini-diocese where an administrative team directs a small group of schools. Whether diocesan-controlled or parish-controlled, a Catholic school system allows schools to pool resources together to maximize the efficiency of the operations while also improving development efforts (Britt, Felix, & Volk, 2008). There are many variations of the consolidated school system in terms of the structure of elementary and secondary schools that are bound within the system.

During the 2008 SPICE conference in Boston, Massachusetts, nearly 200 participants traveled from around the United States to learn from communities that have successfully implemented the regional Catholic school system model. Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools in Sioux City, Iowa is a regional school system that was established in 1998 from seven traditional parish schools and one high



school. Seven separate boards were merged to form one governing board for the entire school system and an administrative team was hired to lead the new approach (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009).

On a smaller scale, the community in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin also formed a K - 12 consolidated school system called the Chippewa Area Catholic Schools. The Chippewa Area Catholic Schools was also listed at the 2008 SPICE conference as a nationally recognized model that had successfully reconfigured their schools. In 1987, the three original parish schools and one central high school merged, and under a new regional system, launched a primary location (K - 2), an intermediate location (3 - 5), a middle school (6 - 8), and the high school remained 9 - 12. Similar to Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools, the Chippewa Area Catholic Schools hired an administrative team to oversee the operations of the newly created regional school system (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009).

The roles and responsibilities among major stakeholders in the consolidated school system may change depending upon the governance structure that is adopted (i.e., parish-based system, diocesan-based system, or board with limited jurisdiction). Since most of the Catholic schools in the United States are parish or diocesan schools, the president, principal, superintendent, and pastor roles, as explained here, will be described from the perspective of the parish or diocesan-based consolidated Catholic school system. In order for the model to be successful, there must be a clear delineation of roles formulated and

communicated internally to all staff and externally to families, parishioners, and benefactors (Mullen, 1998).

## **President**

The president of a regional Catholic school system is the apostolic leader of the school who exercises pastoral authority over the schools (Hotz, 1995). He is also the strategist, politician, and prophet (Hotz, 1995). Similar to a CEO in the business sector, the president has a primary emphasis on maintaining the future viability of the school (Dygert, 1998; Ferrera, 2000; James, 2009; Mullen, 1998). According to Mullen's (1998) study conducted on the president-principal model, the president views his top three job responsibilities to include advancement and fundraising, business and financial fiduciary leadership, and being the liaison to the governing board. In a similar study from Dygert (1998), presidents indicated their top three roles to be fundraising, alumni relations, and partnerships with businesses.

In the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin, the consolidated Catholic school system approach has been established for over 20 years. The job description of a president in this diocese includes many of the same areas identified in the Dygert (1998) and Mullen (1998) studies except that the president is directly accountable to the dean who represents pastoral authority for the consolidated school system. For presidents working in systems in the Diocese of La Crosse, their primary

responsibilities include overseeing the finances, the marketing and public relations program, and the development program of the system, is the chief articulator of the system's philosophy and mission, ensures the long-term building management of facilities, coordinates the long-range strategic planning efforts for all schools, and works directly with the school advisory board.

### **Principal**

According to Ciriello (1996), the Catholic school principal serves three primary roles: spiritual leader, educational leader, and managerial leader. Cook (2001) and Helm (1989) add that the principal is also the chief architect in creating school culture. A perceived benefit of the consolidated school system with the president-principal model is that the principal can serve the roles of spiritual, educational, and managerial leader while helping to craft the school culture quite effectively given that the president position affords them the flexibility to focus less on business management and fundraising and more on the areas that have significant impact on student learning. Additionally, the principal will have more time to allocate toward achieving the catechetical objectives of the Catholic school in coordination with the parishes (United States, 2005).

In his study of principals in the president-principal model, Mullen (1998) found that principals reported their top three areas of responsibility include

instructional leader of the school, educational leader of the school, and primary contact with students, parents, and faculty. In the study from Dygert (1998), principals reported their top three areas of focus include supervising instruction, evaluating student learning, and curriculum development and assessment. The Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin has issued a clear job description for principals within consolidated school systems. A principal working in one of the seven systems in the Diocese of La Crosse, reports directly to the system president. Her primary responsibilities as principal include monitoring student achievement, operation of the school physical plant, promotion of the Catholic environment, development of the curriculum, and input on the budget.

### **Pastor**

According to the *General Directory of Catechesis*, “the quality of catechesis [in schools] depends very largely on the presence and activity of the priest” (Congregation, 1997, p. 212). Decades ago when the priesthood was abundant in numbers, priests were expected to maintain a high level of presence in schools (Cassidy, 1967). Even with the many complications that consolidated systems have on the authority of the schools (Theis, 1996) priests still play a major role in the successful implementation of a consolidated Catholic school system. Though in a consolidated system a pastor may not be the “supreme leader” of the school (Cassidy, 1967), they can still positively contribute to the schools in the area of

spiritual formation and public relations (Cassidy, 1967; Congregation, 1997; United States, 2005). Priests must not remove themselves of their responsibility to ensure that the faithful are properly formed, and they must foster the link between catechesis, sacraments, and the liturgy (Congregation, 1997). “Pastors should also work with parents, school...personnel, and appropriate boards...to plan and carry out the catechetical mission” (United States, 2005, p. 221).

Even within the school system where the pastor no longer has supreme control over a school, in a parish-based consolidated system the pastors collectively represent the pastoral authority over the entire system. For example, in the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin (a diocese with seven consolidated school systems) the bishop appoints a pastor to serve as dean over the schools. This dean regularly consults with the other pastors on the administration of the school system and appoints the president to oversee the entire operations of the schools. In another system, Owensboro Catholic Schools in Owensboro, Kentucky, the local pastors elect a “priest-pastor” to serve as the canonical authority of the school system. In a different governance structure having a board with limited jurisdiction, the pastors in Springfield, Ohio elect a pastor to serve as their representative to the board of trustees that represents pastoral authority of Catholic Central Schools.

## **Superintendent**

The superintendent of Catholic schools is a difficult role to assume due to the complex nature of authority and oversight of the schools in the diocese. The authority of the superintendent is largely dependent upon the bishop's involvement and interest in schools (Davies & Deneen, 1968). Regardless of the power that is given to the superintendent by the bishop, it is clear that the superintendent should have the responsibility for defining curriculum, monitoring the quality of schools and school leadership, and ensuring that diocesan policies are being followed (Ainely & McKenzie, 2000; Cassidy, 1967). In parish-based systems, the superintendent has authority over the schools only through policy oversight – not direct authority. Additional responsibilities of the superintendent include supervising and supporting the school system's academic and religious programs (Onyebuchi, 2007).

In a job description for the superintendent from the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin (titled director of Catholic schools), the superintendent has certain responsibilities when it comes to working with consolidated school systems. The superintendent validates the religious education program through curricular approval, serves as a consultant for strategic planning, evaluates the president and principal (together with pastoral authority), and oversees contracts for all school system personnel.

**Finance**

Consolidated Catholic school systems have shown promise in generating substantial funds. Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools and Chippewa Area Catholic Schools, both consolidated systems recognized as exemplary models at SPICE 2008, have been successful in the area of development. In just three years, Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools raised \$1.6 million for teacher salaries. Additionally, they raise \$700,000 annually through their annual appeal and one fundraising event. Chippewa Area Catholic Schools has also experienced tremendous growth in the area of development. This consolidated system accumulated over \$3 million in major gifts over a two-year period, which brought the system's net worth to over \$5 million (Haney & O'Keefe, 2009). These systems have been successful in development efforts as a result of the principals being able to focus more time on instructional-related responsibilities and the president devoting time to long-term sustainability of all the schools - elementary and secondary.

**Conclusion**

Significant enrollment declines and financial challenges have led to many school closings, even in recent decades. More is known today regarding the factors contributing to the decline as well as what can be done to revive Catholic schools. Yet, dioceses and parishes continue to choose closing over commitment.

There have been few examples, however, of dioceses, communities, and schools that have attempted to keep Catholic schools available to Catholic families.

Even during these challenging times, however, the Church has been steadfast in her determination to keep Catholic schools available and affordable, especially for the poor (United States, 2005). Unfortunately this concept of keeping Catholic schools available and affordable has become more unlikely as enrollment declines and school closures dominate the headlines of Catholic schools in many dioceses across the country. Support for Catholic education from bishops may exist, but pastors, superintendents, and school leaders continue to contemplate how to keep Catholic schools effective, open, and reasonably well financed. Some claim that we are in need of a pioneering spirit—the same spirit that existed when Catholic education began in the United States (Haney & O’Keefe, 2009). While effective schools research data are plentiful and a pioneering spirit may be a quality needed by the Church in the United States at this time, the very core idea of the overall governance and structure of Catholic schools remains debated.

Many researchers have recognized the importance of collaboration of management and restructuring of schools, but little research exists on the viability of restructured Catholic schools. And few studies have examined restructured Catholic schools compared to the traditional parish-based elementary or diocesan secondary models. More and more schools are



attempting to give laypeople ownership of the governance of Catholic schools by forming consultative boards and boards of limited jurisdiction. Although the diocese does not give up its Canonical authority over the school, this approach affords laypeople more control over setting policy and the decision-making process. Due to the complexities of school administration, a majority of Catholic high schools have adopted the two-tiered leadership approach called the president-principal model. This leadership model affords the principal the opportunity to focus on educational improvements while the president makes an effort to keep the school financially viable.

Consolidating schools has been a dominant theme among dioceses as a response to the threats facing schools. Multiple parishes supporting a single school sustains Catholic education but brings along with it a host of new challenges that continue to threaten its viability. A similar strategy that is the topic of this study is the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system. It appears that the consolidated system has taken the benefits of each of the aforementioned structural changes: increased lay involvement, divided leadership responsibilities, and merged resources through elementary and secondary consolidation. The K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system has shown some promise, but the model is still largely unexplored.

## SUMMARY

This chapter examined the research that supports the study's conceptual framework. School viability is an important and critical topic that needs continual investigation, and limited research exists regarding viability in Catholic schools.

The history of Catholic schools was examined in relation to its structure, purpose, and impact. The structure and purpose of Catholic schools have remained relatively constant since the inception, with some changes in terms of educational purpose and those being taught in Catholic schools. Research shows that Catholic schools are effective religious and academic institutions.

The viability of Catholic schools was also explored. Research on Catholic school viability is limited, yet two significant factors have been shown to impact viability: demographics and school finances. Demographic factors that impact school viability include region and location of the school and total enrollment and enrollment trends. School finance factors impacting viability involve school revenue and a relationship between tuition cost and median household income. The viability research, however, is limited to Catholic elementary schools. No research exists on the viability of schools outside of the traditional parish elementary school.

Many dioceses have attempted to offset the decline of Catholic schools by adopting alternative structures. The topic of this study involves K - 12

consolidated Catholic school systems. Limited research exists as to the makeup of this model as opposed to the parish or diocesan school. And no research exists on the viability of this alternative approach. This dissertation study will contribute to filling the gap in the research literature.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the methodology utilized for the study. The sections in this chapter include participants, instrumentation, and major variables. This chapter concludes with a description of the analyses for the study.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

This study investigated K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. The consolidated Catholic school system was the unit of analysis. Preliminary investigation of Catholic school systems shows a total population of 80 consolidated school systems across 38 dioceses in the United States. This investigation includes a National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) mailing to all diocesan superintendents in the United States to question whether or not they had consolidated systems in their diocese, a review of systems in studies by Goldschmidt, O'Keefe, and Walsh (2004) and Haney and O'Keefe (2009), and through an online investigation of school systems.

An initial mailing to the 80 identified K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems gathered specific information related to presidents, principals of the

schools within the system, and pastors of the supporting parishes. Follow up investigations through online research of systems also provided details on school administrators and parishes. Both the responses to the mailing and online research include a total school administrator population of 284 (N) and a total pastor population of 210 (N) in 80 K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems (N) in 38 dioceses.

For the purposes of this study, the entire known population of school administrators and pastors was surveyed. School administrators and pastors were asked to complete the K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey. Since the unit of analysis is the school system, participant responses from each school and parish within the system were combined to form a system score as it relates to each section of the survey.

Table 3 describes the NCEA regions, Catholic dioceses, and K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems.

Table 3

*K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School Systems and Diocese by NCEA Region*

NCEA Region	Dioceses	School Systems
Great Lakes	15	33
Plains	11	30
Southeast	4	6
West/Far West	4	6
Mideast	4	5
Total	38	80

**INSTRUMENTATION**

The researcher designed the K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey using the viability research on Catholic schools (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; James, et al, 2008; Lundy, 1999) including school demographic and financial variables (Appendix D).

The survey instrument consists of 43 items. Participants were asked to respond to questions in sections one and two involving personal and school demographic information as well as financial information related to the school system. The Structural Change and Viability section allowed respondents to rank the reasons communities adopted the school system model and rate the viability of the school system model using a four-point Likert scale. The final section

involved open-ended questions where respondents identified the specific strengths, weaknesses, and needed improvements of the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Table 4 describes the variable categories of interest in the study, the corresponding items on the survey, and the operational definition.

Table 4

*Survey Variable Category, Items, and Operational Definition*

Variable Category	Items	Operational Definition
Personal Demographics	1 – 7	Personal Characteristics
School Demographics	1 – 20	Region of the System
		Location of the System
		Student Enrollment
School Finance	21 – 30	Tuition
		Parish Subsidy
		Development
		Median Income
		Budget Management

**Pre-test**

The K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey was pre-tested by experts in the field of K – 12 Catholic school system consolidation and higher education. The experts responded to the request within two weeks and improvements were made. Improvements to the survey included shortening the length of the survey in order to maximize the participant response rate, clarifying concepts within questions that were unclear, and separating the question involving endowment and foundation to include two separate questions.

**Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted with one K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system based on a convenience sample. The pilot study was limited to one system due to the small population of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. Seven participants, including pastors (n = 4) and school administrators (n = 3), completed the survey instrument consisting of personal demographics, structural change and viability, and open-ended questions. School administrators were asked to complete additional questions related to the school system. All participants were also asked to complete questions regarding clarity and difficulty of the survey questions.

Responses from the survey were entered into a statistical program to perform a reliability analysis and to test the construct of the dependent variable –



Perceived Viability. In the pilot study, the Perceived Viability Scale had an overall reliability of .75 according to Cronbach's alpha. Four items on the survey instrument had a corrected item total correlation of less than .30. Another item, similar in wording, had a corrected item-total correlation slightly above .30. These five items were deleted from the Perceived Viability Scale. Once deleted, Cronbach's alpha increased to .78.

Further investigation took place to refine the construct of the Perceived Viability Scale. Inter-item correlation was chosen as a method of analysis to identify the items that were highly correlated with each other. Four of the remaining seven items had an inter-item correlation above .60. Although one statement regarding enrollment had an inter-item correlation below .60, it was determined that based on the viability research by James, et al (2008) this item should remain as part of the construct. Once two of the three items with an inter-item correlation below .60 were removed, the reliability increased to .81 according to Cronbach's alpha. These methods of data analyses allowed for the refinement of the construct of Perceived Viability. The following statements have been identified as the construct of the dependent variable - Perceived Viability: 1) the school system model will survive, 2) the system model has improved finances, 3) the system model has improved development and fundraising efforts, 4) student enrollment has improved in the school system, and 5) the system model has improved buildings/facilities.

A second function of the pilot study was to investigate clarity and difficulty of the survey instrument questions. This step was especially important since the system is proposed as the unit of analysis for the sections utilizing descriptive statistics. Only school administrators were asked factual information about the school system and related to the independent variables: demographics and school finances. Inconsistent responses were identified in several questions on structure of the school system and finance. Reflections to the survey by respondents indicated a lack of experience (first-year principal) or knowledge in the school system (a result of the president-principal model).

The pilot study allowed improvements to the survey instrument including more clarification of questions on structure and finance as well as the elimination of questions in the Perceived Viability Scale with low corrected item-total correlation or inter-item correlation scores. This elimination of questions provided a refinement construct of Perceived Viability and includes five items within the survey instrument rather than the initial 12. Although seven items were eliminated from the construct, only two items were completely eliminated from the survey instrument. Responses from the pastors and school administrators for these remaining five items still provided value and contribution to the field of research.

### **Administration of the Survey**

The complete K - 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey, cover letter, and addressed, stamped envelope were mailed to 281 school administrators. A shorter form of the survey was sent to 206 pastors soliciting their responses to only the final section of the survey regarding perceived viability. Pilot study participants were not involved in the main research study. Participants were asked to complete their survey within six weeks. A reminder email was sent to all participants in the research project two weeks after the initial mailing requesting their participation. A final reminder email was sent four weeks from the initial mailing to those who had not completed the survey instrument.

### **MAJOR VARIABLES**

The major variables in the study are school demographics and school finance. Region and location of the school system along with student enrollment was used to operationalize demographics for this study. School finance was operationalized by revenue sources – tuition, subsidy, and development – median income, and budget trend. The dependent variable is perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Table 5 describes the components of the major variables in the study.

Table 5

*Major and Minor Variables used in the Analysis*


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School Demographics	
<hr/>	
region	NCEA region of the school system
location	Location of the school system
yrest	Year school system consolidated
school	Number of schools/campuses
princ	Number of principals
ellevel	Elementary school(s) grade levels
mslevel	Middle school grade levels
hslevel	High school grade levels
spons	Sponsorship of the system
schbrd	Type of school board
decfingov	Final decisions regarding finance and governance
supprinc	The supervisor of the principal
suppres	The supervisor of the president/director
closedat	The number of schools that closed at the time of consolidation
closedpost	The number of schools that closed after consolidation
open	The number of schools that opened since consolidation
enrltot	Total K – 12 enrollment of the school system
enrltrend	Three-year enrollment trend of the school system
parishes	Number of parishes that support the school system
parishoth	Other ways parishes help the system besides direct subsidy
<hr/>	
School Finance	
<hr/>	
tuitionel	Tuition cost elementary
tuitionsec	Tuition cost secondary
pertuition	% of budget from tuition
persub	% of budget from parish subsidy
perdev	% of budget from development or other sources
endow	Endowment assets
found	Foundation assets
medinc	Median family income
debtto	Debt to another entity
debtpar	Debt from parishes to the school system
finman	Three-year trend of balancing budget

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## PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS

The procedure of analyses for this study was to employ descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, regression, and statement coding techniques. The school system was the unit of analysis for all research questions and statistical procedures. Responses were averaged from school administrators and pastors associated with school systems in order to create a school system mean. A question in the survey instrument regarding zip code allowed the researcher to identify responses from each system. Any wide discrepancies or variation from school administrator responses to the school demographic section of the survey were clarified by contacting school administrators. The analyses are explained through each of the related research questions.

The first research question for this study is: What are the patterns of structure and governance in K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems? Descriptive statistics, and more specifically frequency distributions, were used for each of the areas identified through the school system demographic information related to structure and governance.

The second research question for the proposed study is: What are the factors that led communities to adopt the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? A frequency distribution provided information of the overall means of school systems in rank order of the factors that are most associated with changing to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. An

analysis of variance was conducted to determine if any differences occur in the factors across the various structures of K - 12 consolidated systems.

The third research question is: What variables predict the perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? In addition to descriptive statistics, a regression analysis was performed to identify the factors that impact perceived viability.

The final analysis of perceived viability was the coding of open-ended response statements regarding the benefits and limitations of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems. The coding techniques followed established procedures of grounded theory by Strauss and Corbin (2008).

Several potential problems exist in data collection that may lead to challenges within the procedure for analyses. For a study to be credible, it is reliant on a competent participant completing the survey (Babbie, 1992). This study had a risk of not attracting competent participants for two primary reasons. First, when surveying a pastor of a consolidated system, he may not be as familiar with school demographics or school finances. This risk was minimized by limiting the pastor to personal demographic and perceived viability responses. Second, if systems have been in existence for several decades and have new school administrators, the responses may not have accurately reflected the reasons why communities adopted the school system model. To minimize this risk, separate investigations were performed on the personal

demographics item of length of service in current position to the year the school system was established. Eighteen of the systems had only one respondent, and of these systems, 11 have not been in the position at least as long as the system has been established. Four of the 11 systems were eliminated due to non-response. Of the remaining seven systems, only three had respondents in their first year. Investigation of the responses to the reasons why the community adopted the system model did not show any significant problems (i.e., directions were followed, responses show similar results to other systems, etc.).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

The purposes of this study were to identify the different organizational structures within K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems, determine the factors that led communities to adopt the school system model, and identify the variables that predict the perceived viability of consolidated Catholic school systems. The current chapter presents the results of the analyses performed according to these three purposes. For each purpose of the study, the school system was the unit of analyses. Initially, the sample and survey collection are discussed. Descriptive statistics are then presented for the personal demographics of the survey participants. The results related to each of the research questions and analyses are also discussed. The chapter concludes with a qualitative analysis of open-ended questions and a summary of the findings.

#### **Sample**

During the 2010-2011 school year, an attempt was made to contact pastors and school administrators of 80 K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. One system was used in the pilot study, and the remaining 79 systems were mailed surveys to a total of 487 participants. Five of the 79 systems



(for a total of 36 participants) failed to meet the criteria as a consolidated system and were eliminated from the study. These schools operated independently from each other with separate governance structures but were part of a collaborative “system” in an attempt to reduce costs.

Of the 74 remaining systems and 449 participants, 66 systems (89.2%) and 199 pastors and school administrators (44.3%) responded to the survey. It can be assumed that a higher number of participant responses occurred since several system responses were returned with a note indicating that the survey was completed together by all administrators from the system; however, for the purposes of this study, responses from these systems were considered a singular response as opposed to multiple responses from the same system.

### **Survey Collection**

Participant responses were first entered into an Excel spreadsheet and investigated for errors prior to merging these data into a statistical software program. Since the survey sought responses from all school administrators on both factual information related to the school system as well as perceptions of the viability of the system model, many inconsistent responses were identified within each system where only one answer was accurate. Follow up investigations occurred by contacting each system with inconsistent responses in

order to validate the correct responses to the school demographics section of the survey.

A secondary challenge occurred when soliciting responses from pastors associated with school systems. While the response rate was adequate among pastors, each pastor was given only a shortened version of the survey that did not include questions on school system demographics or finances. The challenge arose when pastors from school systems responded to the survey where there were no school administrator responses from the same system. Contacts were made to school administrators from these systems in order to solicit their responses. Four of the 66 systems failed to have school administrator responses, and online investigation of each of these systems yielded some answers to school system demographics and finances questions. The answers to the questions not found through online research of the school system demographics and finances sections were treated as missing data.

Once all school system demographic and finance data were corrected, mean scores for the factors that led to consolidation and perception of school system viability were generated for each school system by averaging responses from pastors and school administrators. Two files were subsequently created for analyses: individual responses and school system responses. These data were entered into statistical software, SPSS version 19.0 for analyses. The total sample

of school systems was 66 (N = 66), and the total sample of individual responses was 199 (N = 199).

### **Participant Demographics**

School administrators and pastors of 66 school systems responded to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic School System Survey. Descriptive statistics for position are shown in Table 6, length of service in the position in Table 7, length of service in Catholic schools Table 8, and state in life Table 9. Gender is represented in Table 10, and degree is shown in Table 11. Finally, Table 12 shows responses from participants related to their position and the total enrollment of the system in which they represent.

Pastors represented 47.7%, principals 35.2%, presidents 9%, president/principal 5.5%, and other administrator 2.5% of the participant responses that were received. The average length of service in the respondents' current position was between 6 – 10 years while the average service in Catholic schools was over 15 years. Clergy represented the largest response group at 51.3%, laypersons at 45.2%, and religious at 3.6%. Male respondents represented the largest group with 71.6% being represented and females 28.4%. The highest degree earned by respondents was master's degree (87.3%) followed by specialist (6.1%), doctorate (4.1%), bachelor's (1.5%), and other (1.0%). Systems with a total

enrollment between 401-600 had the highest number of participant responses (n = 61). The fewest responses came from systems with enrollment between 601-800 (n = 14).

Table 6

<i>Current Position</i>		
	Frequency	%
Pastor	95	47.7
Principal	70	35.2
President	18	9.0
Principal and President	11	5.5
Other	5	2.5
		100.0
Total	199	

Table 7

<i>Length of Service - Position</i>		
	Frequency	%
First Year	28	14.1
2 - 5 Years	70	35.4
6 - 10 Years	54	27.3
11 - 15 Years	23	11.6
More than 15 Years	23	11.6
Total	198	100.0
Missing	1	
Total	199	

Table 8

<i>Service in Catholic Schools</i>		
	Frequency	%
First Year	8	4.0
2 - 5 Years	17	8.6
6 - 10 Years	24	12.1
11 - 15 Years	20	10.1
More Than 15 Years	129	65.2
Total	198	100.0
Missing	1	
Total	199	

Table 9

<i>State in Life</i>		
	Frequency	%
Clergy	101	51.3
Religious	7	3.6
Layperson	89	45.2
Total	197	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	199	

Table 10

<i>Highest Degree</i>		
	Frequency	%
Bachelors	3	1.5
Masters	172	87.3
Specialist	12	6.1
Doctorate	8	4.1
Other	2	1.0
Total	197	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	199	

Table 11

<i>Gender</i>		
	Frequency	%
Male	141	71.6
Female	56	28.4
Total	197	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	199	

Table 12

<i>Total Enrollment by Current Position</i>							
		Current Position					
		Pastor	Principal	President	P/P*	Other	Total
Total	200 - 400	13	16	2	1	0	32
Enrollment	401 - 600	30	17	8	4	2	61
	601 - 800	5	7	1	1	0	14
	801 - 1000	14	13	1	2	0	30
	More than 1000	29	17	6	3	3	58
Total		91	70	18	11	5	195

Note: \*P/P represents both Principal and President

## **RESEARCH QUESTION ONE**

The first research question for the study was: What are the patterns of structure and governance in K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems?

Analyses for this research question involved frequency distributions and are presented in this section. Patterns of structure and governance are presented in accordance with the major variables of the study: School System Demographics and School System Finances. Participants responded to questions soliciting factual information regarding School System Demographics and Finances. The school system was the unit of analysis for the first research question (N = 66).

### **School System Demographics**

The first major variable in the study, School System Demographics, includes several major and minor variable components. The major variable components are region and location of the system, total enrollment, and enrollment trends. Minor variables are also discussed and include governance and structure of the school systems.

The majority of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems are found within the Great Lakes and Plains regions. Table 13 identifies the number of systems in each region, and the Great Lakes region had the highest number of systems respond (n = 29) followed by the Plains region (n = 25). There are

substantially fewer systems in each of the three other regions as identified in Table 13. The Mideast region had five system responses, the Southeast had four, and the West/Far West had three systems respond.

Table 13

<i>NCEA Region</i>		
	Frequency	%
Mideast	5	7.6
Great Lakes	29	43.9
Plains	25	37.9
Southeast	4	6.1
West/Far West	3	4.5
Total	66	100.0

Table 14 shows the systems by location. The National Catholic Educational Association has identified four possible locations of schools, and the majority of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems are urban (n = 34) with the next highest being rural (n = 21). Only one system is considered inner-city and 10 are reported as suburban.



Table 14

<i>Location</i>	Frequency	%
Inner-city	1	1.5
Urban	34	51.5
Suburban	10	15.2
Rural	21	31.8
Total	66	100.0

A range of 126 years separates the oldest and youngest K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system. The oldest system was established in 1885 whereas the newest system was established in 2011. The average consolidated system started in 1989, but the most frequently cited established year was 1989 (n = 4) and 2001 (n = 4). Most of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems were formed after 1987 (n = 47), and approximately one-third of the systems were started after 2000 (n = 23). Seventeen systems were consolidated in the 1990s and 11 were established in the 1980s. The remaining 12 systems consolidated between 1885 and 1975. Three systems failed to report the year in which they were established.

Table 15 identifies the average number of schools and principals associated with each system. As identified by either the system mean or median, there are fewer principals than there are schools. This leads one to believe that principals of consolidated systems are shared between schools within the system. Table 16 more clearly shows this relationship between the number of schools and

principals. Based on these data, 37.9% of systems have at least one less principal than they do the number of schools; however, the majority of systems with one school have two principals (81.8%). The range of schools is between one and eight schools within a system, and most of the systems have three or less schools (n = 45).

Table 15

*Number of Schools and Principals for the 66 Consolidated Systems*

	Median	Mean	SD
Schools	3.00	3.06	1.672
Principals	2.00	2.73	1.504

Table 16

*Number of Principals by Schools in the System*

		Principals							Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	8	
Schools	1	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	11
	2	5	11	1	0	0	0	0	17
	3	1	9	7	0	0	0	0	17
	4	1	0	2	6	0	0	0	9
	5	0	1	1	3	2	0	0	7
	6	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total		9	30	11	10	2	2	2	66



Table 19 shows the results for junior high or middle schools. For systems that have junior high or middle schools, most are 6-8 schools (n = 26). Seven systems have junior high or middle schools structured by grades 7-8. Half of the systems, however, do not have separate junior high or middle schools.

Table 19

<i>Junior High or Middle School Structure</i>		
	Frequency	%
6 - 8	26	39.4
7 - 8	7	10.6
No jr hs or ms building	33	50.0
Total	66	100.0

As reported in Table 20, 72.7% of the systems have the traditional 9-12 high school. Eleven of the systems (16.7%) have high schools that are combined junior/senior high schools, and seven systems (10.6%) have a combination middle and high school. No system has more than one high school.

Table 20

<i>High School Structure</i>		
	Frequency	%
6 - 12	7	10.6
7 - 12	11	16.7
9 - 12	48	72.7
Total	66	100.0

Table 21 identifies the sponsorship of the school systems. Parish and inter-parish systems represent the majority of consolidated school systems (68.2%). Diocesan systems represent the next highest group with 18 systems (27.3%). There are two corporate or private systems (3.0%), and one system is considered other (1.5%).

Table 21

<i>Sponsorship</i>	Frequency	%
Parish	11	16.7
Inter-Parish	34	51.5
Diocesan	18	27.3
Corporate/Private	2	3.0
Other	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

The authority of the school board was a question in the School System Demographics section and is represented in Table 22. Advisory or consultative boards make up 65.2% of the systems, and boards with limited jurisdiction represent 25.8% of the systems. Other types of boards are the smallest group with 9.1%.

Table 22

<i>School Board</i>		
	Frequency	%
Advisory/Consultative	43	65.2
Limited Jurisdiction	17	25.8
Other	6	9.1
Total	66	100.0

Authority to make financial decisions was a question in the survey that solicited responses to determine the centralization or decentralization of each system. It is clear that each system is highly independent of the Catholic schools office. Table 23 shows two systems reported that the final decisions regarding financial matters are made from the Catholic schools office. On the other hand, presidents (n = 28) or boards (n = 26) represent the two highest groups that make the final decision regarding school system finances.

Table 23

<i>Final-Finance</i>		
	Frequency	%
President	28	42.4
Principal	4	6.1
Board	26	39.4
Catholic Schools Office	2	3.0
Other	6	9.1
Total	66	100.0

Reporting and accountability of the principal and president were questions in the study that sought to determine how many systems embraced the president position, who the president reported to in terms of accountability, and who the principal reported to in the hierarchy of administration. Tables 24 and 25 identify the systems that reported on these two questions. Represented in Table 24, an overwhelming majority of systems have adopted the president-principal model of school governance. Fifty-one systems have a president or similar position in place to oversee the entire system from kindergarten through grade twelve. System presidents report mostly to a board (n = 27) or pastor/dean (n = 16). Seven presidents report to the Catholic schools office. Table 25 identifies the reporting hierarchy of principals. Most principals within K - 12 Catholic school systems report directly to the president (n = 43). Pastors oversee principals in nine systems, boards oversee principals in eight systems, and the Catholic schools office oversees principals in three systems.

Table 24

*President-Report*

	Frequency	%
Board	27	40.9
Catholic Schools Office	7	10.6
Pastor/Dean	16	24.2
Other	1	1.5
Not Applicable	15	22.7
Total	66	100.0

Table 25

*Principal-Report*

	Frequency	%
President	43	65.2
Board	8	12.1
Pastor	9	13.6
Catholic Schools Office	3	4.5
Other	3	4.5
Total	66	100.0

The K - 12 consolidated Catholic School System survey included questions regarding opening and closing of schools at the time or since consolidation occurred. Table 26 shows that just over half of the school systems that responded closed schools or campuses at the time of consolidation. Table 27 shows that 26 school systems have closed schools after the consolidation took place. Further investigation of systems closing schools at the time or since consolidation shows that 45 of 62 systems (72.6%) that responded to the question closed schools either at the time or since consolidation. Finally, Table 28 indicates that 11 school systems have opened schools since consolidation.



Table 26

*Systems that Closed Schools at Consolidation*

	Frequency	%
Yes	32	50.8
No	31	49.2
Total	63	100.0
Missing	3	
Total	66	

Table 27

*Systems that Closed Schools Since Consolidation*

	Frequency	%
Yes	26	41.9
No	36	58.1
Total	62	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	66	

Table 28

*Systems that Opened Schools Since Consolidation*

	Frequency	%
Yes	11	17.5
No	52	82.5
Total	63	100.0
Missing	3	
Total	66	

Total enrollment and enrollment trends are critical factors in school viability, and questions on enrollment were included in the K - 12 consolidated Catholic School System Survey. Total enrollment for grades kindergarten through twelve within consolidated Catholic school systems is fairly diverse, as seen in Table 29. Over half of the systems, however, are smaller and have a total enrollment of 600 or less students (57.1%). Systems with more than 1000 students represent 19.0%. Table 30, Enrollment Trend, shows that roughly half of the systems (51.6%) reported that total enrollment has remained within 5% over the last three years or since consolidation occurred (if sooner than three years). Twenty-three systems (37.1%) reported that total enrollment has declined by more than 5%, and only seven systems (11.3%) reported growth more than 5% over the same time period. Table 31 compares the total enrollment of the school and the enrollment trend. Systems with total enrollment of more than 1000 students were more likely to have steady enrollment, whereas systems with student enrollment between 601 – 800 were more likely to report enrollment decline greater than 5%.

Table 29

*Total K - 12 Enrollment*

	Frequency	%
200 - 400	15	23.8
401 - 600	21	33.3
601 - 800	7	11.1
801 - 1000	8	12.7
More than 1000	12	19.0
Total	63	100.0
Missing	3	
Total	66	

Table 30

*Enrollment Trend*

	Frequency	%
Decline 5% or more	23	37.1
Remained within 5%	32	51.6
Grown 5% or more	7	11.3
Total	62	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	66	

Table 31

*Enrollment Trend by Total Enrollment Over the Last Three Years*

		Enrollment trend			Total
		Decline 5% or more	Remained within 5%	Grown 5% or more	
Total	200 – 400	7	5	3	15
Enrollment	401 – 600	8	10	3	21
	601 – 800	5	2	0	7
	801 – 1000	2	5	0	7
	More than 1000	1	10	1	12
Total		23	32	7	62

The overwhelming majority of school systems reported having multiple supporting parishes as can be seen in Table 32. Three systems (4.7%) do not have supporting parishes, and three systems (4.7%) have only one supporting parish. Thirty systems (46.9%) have between 2 – 5 supporting parishes, 20 systems (31.3%) have between 6 – 10 supporting parishes, and eight systems (12.5%) have more than 10 supporting parishes. Of these supporting parishes, it was of interest to the researcher to identify the types of support given. With the systems responding to this set of questioning, 46.8% receive financial assistance (outside of subsidy), 50% are helped with building repairs, 22.6% contribute through utility payments, and 12.9% in other ways. Nearly one-third of systems (30.6%) reported receiving no additional support from parishes.

Table 32

<i>Number of Supporting Parishes</i>		
	Frequency	%
0	3	4.7
1	3	4.7
2 – 5	30	46.9
6 – 10	20	31.3
More than 10	8	12.5
Total	64	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	66	

### School System Finances

The second major variable of school viability is finance. The K - 12 consolidated Catholic School System Survey included many questions related to school system finances. Tuition, school system revenue, debts and assets, and budget trends are discussed. Further analysis was also conducted on median family income for each system. As identified by James, et al (2008), family income is an important component of identifying school viability.

Table 33 shows the information related to elementary and secondary tuition charged to parents for each student. The elementary mean tuition is approximately \$3,000 and the secondary mean tuition is approximately \$4,600. Elementary tuition ranges from a low of \$1,440 to a high of \$5,674. Secondary tuition ranges from a low of \$2,200 to a high of \$9,000 per student.

Table 33

*Tuition in the 66 Consolidated Systems*

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Elementary	\$1,440	\$5,674	\$3,019.79	\$1,032.33
Secondary	\$2,200	\$9,000	\$4,647.67	\$1,540.64

With Catholic schools, revenue typically involves more than one source. Tuition, subsidy, and development have been identified as the major revenue sources of a school budget. Tables 34, 35, and 37 describe revenue as a percentage of the overall budget for the school systems, and Table 36 describes subsidy as a % of the parish budget.

Table 34 shows that 28 systems (45.9%) that responded to this question report having more than half of their total revenue come from tuition while 33 systems (54.1%) report half or less of their revenue comes from tuition. Subsidy is another source of income for Catholic schools. Table 35 shows that five school systems receive no parish subsidy, 33 rely on parish subsidy at 30% or less of their total revenue, and 25 school systems rely on parish subsidy at more than 30% of their budget. Table 36 includes data related to the % of parish income going toward subsidy to the school system. Both the mean and median are approximately 46% while the mode is 30%. A wide range of subsidy as a percentage of parish revenue has been identified with 5% as the least amount of subsidy allocated from parish revenue and the highest percentage being 95% of

parish income. Table 37 shows that school systems rely least on development income. Over half of the school systems (54.1%) report development income of less than 20% and only 5 systems (8.2%) report more than 30% of income from development.

Table 34

<i>Tuition Percentage of System Income</i>		
	Frequency	%
Less than 20%	1	1.6
20 - 30%	10	16.4
31 - 50%	22	36.1
51 - 75%	21	34.4
More than 75%	7	11.5
Total	61	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	66	

Table 35

<i>Subsidy Percentage of System Income</i>		
	Frequency	%
No subsidy	3	4.9
Less than 20%	13	21.3
20 - 30%	20	32.8
31 - 50%	20	32.8
51 - 75%	4	6.6
More than 75%	1	1.6
Total	61	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	66	

Table 36

*Subsidy as a Percentage of Parish  
Income*

N	Valid	82
	Missing	117
Mean		46.20
Median		46.50
Mode		30
Minimum		5
Maximum		95
Std. Deviation		20.715

Table 37

<i>Development Percentage of System Income</i>			
	Frequency	%	
Less than 20%	33	54.1	
20 - 30%	23	37.7	
31 - 50%	5	8.2	
Total	61	100.0	
Missing	5		
Total	66		

Part of development revenue for school systems includes endowment and foundation assets. Over two-thirds of the systems reported having an endowment (n = 41) and a foundation (n = 41). As reported in Table 38, of school systems have endowments, 24 reported a minimum endowment of \$100,000 and the maximum was \$10,000,000. For school systems reporting foundations, 27 had a minimum balance of \$84,483 and the maximum asset balance of \$10,000,000.



The mean endowment reported was \$2,370,000 and the mean foundation reported was \$3,200,000.

Table 38

<i>Endowment and Foundation Amounts</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Endowment	24	\$100,000	\$10,000,000	\$2,370,000	\$2,882,000
Foundation	27	\$84,483	\$10,000,000	\$3,200,000	\$3,059,000

Median family income has been found to be an important component of school viability (James, et al, 2008). Median family income for a community was identified through Fannie Mae and provided by the Federal Housing Finance Agency for the year of the study - 2010-2011. Table 39 shows that communities in which school systems operate had an average median family income of \$60,863. The minimum median family income identified was \$48,100 and the maximum reported was \$91,300.

Table 39

<i>Median Family Income</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Med. Family Income	66	\$48,100	\$91,300	\$60,863	\$7,249

Half of the systems ( $n = 30$ ) reported having debt to another entity. Table 40 shows that of the systems reporting the amount of debt, the average debt exceeded \$1 million with a minimum of \$35,000 and a maximum debt of \$8,470,000. Regarding parish debt, 14 systems reported that parishes have a past-due subsidy debt to them. Table 40 also shows that eight systems reported that parishes have a debt to the system with the average parish debt of \$183,000, a minimum debt of \$50,000, and a maximum debt of \$500,000. The remaining six systems did not report the amount of parish debt.

Table 40

<i>Debt</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
System Debt	25	\$35,000	\$8,470,000	\$1,110,000	\$1,854,000
Parish Debt	8	\$50,000	\$500,000	\$183,000	\$167,700

The final analysis of the first research question involved school system budget management. Table 41 shows that less than half of the systems ( $n = 28$ ) report having a balanced budget over the last three years. Seven systems (11.5%) reported not having a balanced budget over the last three years, and 26 systems (42.6%) reported both balanced and unbalanced budgets during the last three years.

Table 41

<i>Budget Management</i>		
	Frequency	%
Not balanced	7	11.5
Balanced and unbalanced	26	42.6
Balanced	28	45.9
Total	61	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	66	

## RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

The second research question for the proposed study was: What are the factors that led communities to adopt the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? Analyses for this research question involved frequency distributions and analysis of variance and are presented in this section.

Individual responses to the factors that led to consolidation are discussed (N = 199). The school system was the unit of analysis for the second research question (N = 66). Individual responses from each system were combined to create a school system mean for each of the possible factors leading to consolidation. A frequency distribution shows the overall means of school systems in rank order of the factors that are most associated with changing to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. An analysis of variance was also performed to determine if any differences occur in the factors across the various structures of K - 12 consolidated systems.

### Individual Responses

This section discusses the individual rankings of each of the potential factors leading to consolidation. A total of 199 respondents ranked the top five of nine factors, with a ranking of one being most important and five being “least” important, that led to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Many respondents failed to follow the complete directions and ranked fewer than the five most important reasons for consolidation. Rather than treat the four or more unranked factors as missing data, the researcher created a sixth ranking factor called *no importance* for the analyses of the remaining unranked factors. A frequency distribution (Table 42) shows each of the individually ranked consolidation factors in the order they were listed on the survey instrument.

Table 42

*Individual Rankings of Consolidation Factors*

Consolidation Factors	Ranking of Importance (frequency N)						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	NI*	
Building maintenance	4	9	15	19	7	145	199
Centralize administration	17	8	19	12	13	130	199
Parish support decline	3	3	6	8	6	173	199
Quality leadership decline	0	1	1	4	1	192	199
Enrollment decline	27	17	8	8	3	136	199
Expand fundraising	0	11	5	8	20	155	199
Financial challenges	33	23	8	7	7	121	199
Inconsistent education	3	10	7	6	2	171	199
Inconsistent finances	8	7	15	9	12	148	199

Note: \*NI = No importance

With a total of five potential rankings plus the new analysis ranking titled *no importance*, the most important factor was transformed to a value of six and the new analysis ranking of no importance received a value of one. All other rankings received a value between 2 – 5 with 5 being the second most important factor, 4 being the third most important factor, 3 being the fourth most important factor, and 2 being the fifth most important factor. This process allowed the

researcher to calculate the mean for each factor leading to consolidation. The highest mean score represents the most important factor leading to consolidation. Table 43 shows the mean and standard deviation of each of the factors in order of importance from the most important factors to the least important factors leading to consolidation. Individuals ranked financial challenges (mean = 2.52) as the most important factor leading to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system. The next four highest ranked factors were enrollment decline (mean = 2.24), centralize administration (mean = 2.06), building maintenance (mean = 1.73), and inconsistent finances between schools (mean = 1.72). Some of the differences in the consolidation factors are barely discernable. For example, participants ranked building maintenance and inconsistent finances with very little difference in importance. This is also the case for expand fundraising and inconsistent education.

Table 43

*Factors Leading to Consolidation From Most Important to Least Important - Individual Responses*

Factor	Mean	SD
Financial challenges	2.52	1.072
Enrollment decline	2.24	1.946
Centralized administration	2.06	1.684
Building maintenance	1.73	1.339
Inconsistent finances	1.72	1.407
Expand fundraising	1.48	1.072
Inconsistent education	1.45	1.196
Parish support decline	1.34	0.986
Quality leadership decline	1.08	0.453

Note: N = 199

### School Systems

This section investigates the unit of analysis: the school system. The values associated with the rankings were kept consistent with the previous analysis of individual responses. Through the analysis, the most important factor had a value of 6 and a ranking of no importance had a value of 1. Each system was identified with a city code in the data file which allowed the researcher to average individual responses from each system to form the system mean. A frequency distribution in Table 44 shows the number of responses from each of the 66 systems in the study. The highest number of responses from a system was nine ( $n = 2$ ), and the lowest number of responses from a system was one ( $n = 18$ ). The remaining systems had between two and eight respondents ( $n = 46$ ).

Table 44

*Number of Respondents by System*

System	Respondents	System	Respondents
1	2	34	3
2	1	35	2
3	9	36	1
4	4	37	2
5	3	38	3
6	8	39	2
7	2	40	1
8	7	41	7
9	2	42	6
10	7	43	2
11	3	44	1
12	5	45	9
13	2	46	1
14	1	47	1
15	2	48	3
16	1	49	3
17	1	50	6
18	6	51	2
19	3	52	2
20	1	53	5
21	1	54	4
22	1	55	5
23	2	56	2
24	2	57	2
25	5	58	2
26	3	59	1
27	1	60	1
28	2	61	3
29	2	62	5
30	2	63	4
31	1	64	6
32	1	65	5
33	3	66	1



Since the school system was the unit of analysis for this research question, a school system mean for each of the factors was generated. Individual participant responses were averaged for each system to create the school system mean for the factors leading to consolidation. Nine of the 66 systems were eliminated from this analysis due to non-response. Table 45 shows the factors in order of importance after calculating a mean score for each system. There was a slight increase in each mean score when comparing the system mean score and the individual mean score for each factor leading to consolidation. In order of importance, the top six factors and the least important factor saw no change between the initial individual and the converted school system means. Parish support decline was placed ahead of inconsistent education in order of importance for the school system mean score. However, the total rankings clearly show consistency between individual responses and the school system means for factors leading to consolidation.

Table 45

*Factors Leading to Consolidation From Most Important to Least Important – System Scores*

Factor	Mean	SD
Financial challenges	2.73	1.564
Enrollment decline	2.36	1.596
Centralized administration	2.32	1.473
Building maintenance	2.02	1.157
Inconsistent finances	1.67	0.936
Expand fundraising	1.55	0.899
Parish support decline	1.46	0.987
Inconsistent education	1.36	0.687
Quality leadership decline	1.11	0.374

Note: N = 57

One-way analysis of variance tests (ANOVA) were performed to investigate rankings of the top five factors leading to consolidation and differences in system demographics and finances. System demographics and finance variables under investigation through these analyses include total enrollment, enrollment trend, tuition, subsidy, and development as a percentage of school system revenue, and budget management.

#### **Factors Leading to Consolidation by Total System Enrollment**

The number of reported students in grades kindergarten through twelve identifies total enrollment. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to

consolidation varied across total enrollment groups. Table 46 summarized the system means and standard deviation of the factors leading to consolidation with the five ranges of total system enrollment. Of the five most important factors leading to consolidation, only one showed statistical significance – Centralize administration ( $p = .003$ ). As total enrollment in the system increases, centralizing administration as a factor for consolidation becomes more important.

Table 46

<i>ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Total Enrollment</i>					
		N	Mean	SD	F p
Financial challenges					.12 .97
	200 - 400	15	2.64	1.45	
	401 - 600	21	2.99	1.91	
	601 - 800	7	2.88	1.65	
	801 - 1000	8	2.78	1.53	
	More than 1000	12	2.72	1.10	
	Total	63	2.81	1.55	
Enrollment decline					2.04 .10
	200 - 400	15	3.03	1.77	
	401 - 600	21	2.70	1.76	
	601 - 800	7	1.55	.70	
	801 - 1000	8	2.49	1.62	
	More than 1000	12	1.65	1.08	
	Total	63	2.42	1.61	
Centralize administration					4.50 .003
	200 - 400	15	1.94	1.25	
	401 - 600	21	2.02	.99	
	601 - 800	7	4.29	2.27	

	801 - 1000	8	2.15	1.18		
	More than 1000	12	2.61	1.40		
	Total	63	2.38	1.48		
					.98	.43
Building maintenance	200 - 400	15	2.13	1.02		
	401 - 600	21	2.21	1.42		
	601 - 800	7	2.57	1.48		
	801 - 1000	8	1.64	.63		
	More than 1000	12	1.71	.83		
	Total	63	2.06	1.16		
					.81	.53
Inconsistent finances	200 - 400	15	1.38	.70		
	401 - 600	21	1.66	1.08		
	601 - 800	7	1.88	1.02		
	801 - 1000	8	1.81	.91		
	More than 1000	12	2.00	.96		
	Total	63	1.70	.95		

### Factors Leading to Consolidation by Enrollment Trend

Enrollment trend is identified by systems reporting enrollment decline, flat enrollment, or enrollment growth over the last three years. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to consolidation varied across enrollment trend groups. Table 47 summarized the system means and standard deviation of the factors leading to consolidation with the three categories of enrollment trends. None of the five most important factors for consolidation was found to be statistically significant for enrollment trend.

Table 47

*ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Enrollment Trend*

		N	Mean	SD	F	p
Financial challenges					.56	.57
	Decline 5% or more	23	2.81	1.73		
	Remained within 5%	32	2.67	1.43		
	Grown 5% or more	7	3.37	1.67		
	Total	62	2.80	1.56		
Enrollment decline					1.23	.30
	Decline 5% or more	23	2.28	1.27		
	Remained within 5%	32	2.31	1.66		
	Grown 5% or more	7	3.31	2.30		
	Total	62	2.41	1.62		
Centralize administration					.36	.70
	Decline 5% or more	23	2.34	1.53		
	Remained within 5%	32	2.35	1.47		
	Grown 5% or more	7	2.86	1.49		
	Total	62	2.40	1.48		
Building maintenance					.16	.85
	Decline 5% or more	23	2.03	1.28		
	Remained within 5%	32	2.03	1.14		
	Grown 5% or more	7	2.30	1.08		
	Total	62	2.06	1.17		
Inconsistent finances					1.57	.22
	Decline 5% or more	23	1.51	.70		
	Remained within 5%	32	1.75	.93		
	Grown 5% or more	7	2.21	1.58		
	Total	62	1.71	.95		

**Factors Leading to Consolidation by Tuition Revenue**

Tuition revenue is represented by the reported amount each system gains in tuition collection by a percentage of the overall annual revenue. A one-way

between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to consolidation varied across tuition groups. Table 48 summarized the system means and standard deviation of the factors leading to consolidation with the five categories of tuition percentage. None of the five most important factors for consolidation was found to be statistically significant for tuition revenue.

Table 48

<i>ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Tuition Revenue</i>					
		N	Mean	SD	F p
Financial challenges	Less than 20%	1	1.00	-	1.36 .26
	20 - 30%	10	2.80	1.64	
	31 - 50%	22	2.67	1.72	
	51 - 75%	21	2.85	1.36	
	More than 75%	7	3.95	1.06	
	Total	61	2.87	1.54	
Enrollment decline	Less than 20%	1	1.00	-	1.59 .19
	20 - 30%	10	2.99	1.95	
	31 - 50%	22	2.76	1.64	
	51 - 75%	21	1.81	1.07	
	More than 75%	7	2.64	2.14	
	Total	61	2.43	1.62	
Centralize administration	Less than 20%	1	1.00	-	1.27 .29
	20 - 30%	10	2.75	1.86	
	31 - 50%	22	1.97	1.13	
	51 - 75%	21	2.51	1.55	
	More than 75%	7	3.12	1.67	
	Total	61	2.43	1.62	

	Total	61	2.40	1.49		
Building maintenance					.37	.83
	Less than 20%	1	1.00	-		
	20 - 30%	10	2.14	1.36		
	31 - 50%	22	1.93	.89		
	51 - 75%	21	2.15	1.47		
	More than 75%	7	2.29	.71		
	Total	61	2.07	1.17		
Inconsistent finances					.56	.69
	Less than 20%	1	1.00	-		
	20 - 30%	10	1.62	.90		
	31 - 50%	22	1.67	.99		
	51 - 75%	21	1.67	.82		
	More than 75%	7	2.17	1.39		
	Total	61	1.71	.96		

### Factors Leading to Consolidation by Parish Support

Parish support includes financial subsidy paid by parishes to the school system. Parish support is represented by parish subsidy as a percentage of the overall annual revenue of the system. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to consolidation varied across subsidy groups. Table 49 summarized the system means and standard deviation of the factors leading to consolidation with the six categories of subsidy percentage. None of the five most important factors for consolidation was found to be statistically significant for parish support.

Table 49

*ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Parish Subsidy*

		N	Mean	SD	F	p
Financial challenges					1.82	.12
	No subsidy	3	4.33	.58		
	Less than 20%	13	3.64	1.57		
	20 - 30%	20	2.67	1.40		
	31 - 50%	20	2.56	1.67		
	51 - 75%	4	1.95	.82		
	More than 75%	1	2.50	-		
	Total	61	2.87	1.54		
Enrollment decline					1.10	.37
	No subsidy	3	1.00	.00		
	Less than 20%	13	2.92	1.79		
	20 - 30%	20	2.40	1.47		
	31 - 50%	20	2.68	1.80		
	51 - 75%	4	1.60	.42		
	More than 75%	1	1.50	-		
	Total	61	2.47	1.61		
Centralize administration					1.07	.39
	No subsidy	3	3.22	.69		
	Less than 20%	13	2.64	1.81		
	20 - 30%	20	2.69	1.53		
	31 - 50%	20	1.91	1.05		
	51 - 75%	4	2.76	2.18		
	More than 75%	1	1.00	-		
	Total	61	2.43	1.48		
Building maintenance					1.16	.34
	No subsidy	3	2.89	1.02		
	Less than 20%	13	2.54	1.54		
	20 - 30%	20	1.89	1.03		
	31 - 50%	20	2.07	1.09		
	51 - 75%	4	1.31	.39		
	More than 75%	1	2.00	-		
	Total	61	2.10	1.17		
Inconsistent finances					1.03	.41
	No subsidy	3	2.78	2.04		



Less than 20%	13	1.73	1.02
20 - 30%	20	1.74	.89
31 - 50%	20	1.54	.80
51 - 75%	4	1.91	.77
More than 75%	1	1.00	-
Total	61	1.72	.95

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### **Factors Leading to Consolidation by Development Revenue**

Development revenue includes fundraising sources outside of tuition and parish subsidy. Development revenue is represented as a percentage of the overall annual revenue of the system. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to consolidation varied across development groups. Table 50 summarized the system means of the factors leading to consolidation with the three categories of development percentage. None of the five most important factors for consolidation was found to be statistically significant for development revenue.

Table 50

<i>ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Development Revenue</i>					
		N	Mean	SD	F p
Financial challenges					3.23 .05
	Less than 20%	33	2.78	1.48	
	20 - 30%	23	2.66	1.46	
	31 - 50%	5	4.48	1.67	
	Total	61	2.87	1.54	
Enrollment decline					2.01 .14
	Less than 20%	33	2.40	1.52	
	20 - 30%	23	2.28	1.67	
	31 - 50%	5	3.82	1.60	
	Total	61	2.47	1.61	
Centralize administration					.63 .54
	Less than 20%	33	2.25	1.49	
	20 - 30%	23	2.70	1.54	
	31 - 50%	5	2.35	1.19	
	Total	61	2.43	1.48	
Building maintenance					3.08 .05
	Less than 20%	33	1.79	.84	
	20 - 30%	23	2.36	1.35	
	31 - 50%	5	2.90	1.67	
	Total	61	2.10	1.17	
Inconsistent finances					.64 .53
	Less than 20%	33	1.72	.85	
	20 - 30%	23	1.82	1.16	
	31 - 50%	5	1.28	.39	
	Total	61	1.72	.95	

### Factors Leading to Consolidation by Budget Management

Budget management is an aspect of interest in the study and involves three categories: not balanced, balanced and unbalanced, and balanced. Systems

were asked to respond to one of these categories to describe their system budget over the last three years. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if the mean scores of the top five factors leading to consolidation varied across budget groups. Table 51 summarized the system means and standard deviation of the factors leading to consolidation with the three categories of budget management. None of the five most important factors for consolidation was found to be statistically significant for budget management.

Table 51

*ANOVA of Factors Leading to Consolidation by Budget Management*

		N	Mean	SD	F	p
Financial challenges					2.29	.11
	Not balanced	7	3.33	1.76		
	Balanced and unbalanced	26	3.23	1.53		
	Balanced	28	2.43	1.42		
	Total	61	2.87	1.54		
Enrollment decline					.60	.55
	Not balanced	7	2.81	1.84		
	Balanced and unbalanced	26	2.58	1.63		
	Balanced	28	2.19	1.57		
	Total	61	2.43	1.62		
Centralize administration					2.44	.10
	Not balanced	7	3.55	2.38		
	Balanced and unbalanced	26	2.27	1.22		
	Balanced	28	2.24	1.39		
	Total	61	2.40	1.49		
Building maintenance					.45	.64
	Not balanced	7	1.86	1.46		
	Balanced and unbalanced	26	2.23	1.17		
	Balanced	28	1.97	1.12		
	Total	61	2.07	1.17		
Inconsistent finances					.46	.63
	Not balanced	7	2.02	1.03		
	Balanced and unbalanced	26	1.63	.97		
	Balanced	28	1.70	.94		
	Total	61	1.71	.96		

### RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

The third research question was: What variables predict the perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? Descriptive statistics for individuals and systems are presented in this section on the perceived viability of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems. Multiple regression analysis was performed to identify the factors that impact perceived viability. Results for the multiple regression analysis are presented in this section.

#### Descriptive Statistics

All participants were asked to rate nine opinion statements regarding the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Ratings ranged between 1 and 4 with 1 being strongly disagree, 2 meaning disagree, 3 being agree, and 4 meaning strongly agree. Descriptive statistics in Table 52 show the overall mean and standard deviation of each statement. Scores approaching 4.0 indicate strong agreement with the statement, and scores approaching 1.0 indicate strong disagreement with the statement. According to the participants, the change to form a system was necessary for survival (mean = 3.53, SD = .64), an effective leader currently leads the system (mean = 3.25, SD = .76), and the system model is one that will survive (mean = 3.23, SD = .69) received high ratings. On the

other hand, statements receiving the lowest ratings were the system model improved enrollment (mean = 2.60, SD = .79), the system model improved parish finances (mean = 2.72, SD = .85), and a strategic plan is currently in place and followed (mean = 2.96, SD = .76). The final three statements received ratings above 3.0 and include the system model improved school finances (mean = 3.12, SD = .76), fundraising (mean = 3.10, SD = .72), and buildings/facilities (mean = 3.02, SD = .76).

Table 52

*Means of Viability Statements by Individual Participants*

	N	Mean	SD
a. The change in structure to form a school system was necessary for the schools to survive.	193	3.53	.64
b. The system model has improved the parish finances.	185	2.72	.85
c. A well-defined strategic plan is in place and followed.	192	2.96	.76
d. An effective leader currently leads the school system.	190	3.25	.76
e. The school system model is a model that will survive.	186	3.23	.69
f. The system model has improved finances of the school system itself.	188	3.12	.76
g. The system model has improved fundraising and development efforts.	187	3.10	.72
h. Student enrollment has improved in the school system model.	187	2.60	.79
i. The system model has improved buildings/facilities.	190	3.02	.76

Individual responses were combined to form a school system mean for each opinion statement regarding K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems. Data from individual responses to the statements were grouped in a statistical software program by each system to form a school system mean. Table 53 shows the descriptive statistics for the school system means for each statement. Even

after combining the statements to form the school system mean, the ratings for each statement are consistent with the individual responses.

Table 53

*Means of Viability Statements by Systems*

		Mean	SD
a.	The change in structure to form a school system was necessary for the schools to survive.	65 3.55	.49
b.	The system model has improved the parish finances.	64 2.65	.64
c.	A well-defined strategic plan is in place and followed.	66 2.92	.57
d.	An effective leader currently leads the school system.	66 3.22	.55
e.	The school system model is a model that will survive.	66 3.22	.55
f.	The system model has improved finances of the school system itself.	64 3.11	.51
g.	The system model has improved fundraising and development efforts.	65 3.08	.57
h.	Student enrollment has improved in the school system model.	65 2.66	.60
i.	The system model has improved buildings/facilities.	65 3.03	.63



### **Analysis of Perceived Viability**

Individual responses to the statements regarding perceived viability were averaged to form a school system mean. The following statements have been identified as the construct of the dependent variable - perceived viability: 1) the school system model will survive, 2) the system model has improved finances, 3) the system model has improved development and fundraising efforts, 4) student enrollment has improved in the school system, and 5) the system model has improved buildings/facilities.

System mean scores were entered into a statistical program to perform a reliability analysis and to test the construct of the dependent variable. In the study, the Perceived Viability Scale had an overall reliability of .83 according to Cronbach's alpha, which is a slight increase over the pilot study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation for the five statements that make up the dependent variable was performed to verify the significant relationships between the statements. Table 54 shows the correlations of the five statements that make up the dependent variable. A review of the correlational matrix shows a significant relationship with each other. All figures shown in the table were statistically significant at the .01 (2-tailed) level. The school system model is a model that will survive had the highest correlation coefficients with a low of .413 and a high of .626. There is a considerable relationship between survival of the model and

improved fundraising (.626) and improved finances (.621). Improved finances had the lowest correlation with improved enrollment (.323), yet the correlation is still significant.

Table 54

*Correlational Matrix of Dependent Variable Statements*

	Survival of the model	Improved finances	Improved fundraising	Improved enrollment
Improved finances	.621**			
Improved fundraising	.626**	.582**		
Improved enrollment	.553**	.323**	.526**	
Improved buildings	.413**	.450**	.422**	.459**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to determine the school system factors that help predict perceived viability. The dependent variable was created by averaging the five statements of perceived viability to create a viability mean for each system. Table 55 shows the descriptive statistics of the viability means. The potential viability scores could range between 1.0 and 4.0, where a higher rating is equivalent to stronger agreement with the statements. The average system viability mean was 3.02. The minimum system viability mean was 1.90 and the maximum was 4.00.

Table 55

<i>Descriptive Statistics of Viability Mean</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Viability Mean	64	1.90	4.00	3.02	.44

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine whether or not nine system factors accounted for a statistically significant amount of variance in predicting system viability. These factors include: number of schools, number of parishes, total system enrollment, tuition percentage, system debt, enrollment trend, budget, foundation, and tuition ratio. After the stepwise regression was performed, enrollment trend was the only factor found significant in predicting perceived viability. As shown in Table 56 enrollment trend accounted for approximately 28% of the variance in viability, which was statistically significant ( $F(1, 56) = 4.81, p = .03$ ). Enrollment trend had a  $\beta = .29, t = 2.91$  indicating that as enrollment stabilizes or grows, the system becomes more viable. Table 57 shows the excluded variables from the stepwise regression.

Table 56

*Stepwise Regression of Major Predictor Variables on Perceived Viability*

Model	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F	p
1	.28	.08	4.81	.03

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enrollment trend

b. Dependent Variable: Viability Mean

Table 57

*Coefficients of Excluded Variables of Perceived Viability*

Model		$\beta$	t	p
1	Schools	-.06	-.44	.66
	# of parishes	-.12	-.95	.35
	Total Enrollment	.03	.22	.83
	Tuition percentage	.13	.97	.33
	System debt	.13	.99	.33
	Budget	.01	.06	.96
	Foundation	-.22	-1.71	.09
	Tuition Ratio	.04	.34	.74

Dependent Variable: Viability Mean

Due to the limited significance between the independent factors and viability mean for K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems, further investigation of each of the nine opinion statements with the following independent factors occurred: number of schools, number of parishes, total system enrollment, tuition percentage, system debt, enrollment trend, budget,

foundation, and tuition ratio. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed for each opinion statement and independent factor.

The number of schools was found to be statistically significant in predicting the necessity of the change to form the consolidated system ( $R^2 = .14$ ,  $p = .003$ ). Systems with fewer schools identify the move to the system model as one of survival more so than systems with more schools. Enrollment trend was significant in predicting whether or not a strategic plan was in place and followed ( $R^2 = .09$ ,  $p = .02$ ). Systems with growing enrollment are more likely to have an adopted strategic plan. An effective leader currently leads the system was also found to be significant in predicting the presence or absence of a foundation ( $R^2 = .07$ ,  $p = .046$ ). Systems that have a foundation that supports the schools are more likely to have an effective leader as the system administrator. Finally, and not surprising, enrollment trend was significant in predicting whether the system model actually improved enrollment ( $R^2 = .16$ ,  $p = .002$ ). Systems that have experienced recent enrollment growth are more likely to identify the K - 12 model as helping to improve enrollment compared to systems with declining or flat enrollment.

### **Open-Ended Questions**

The final stage of data analysis involved reflections from participants on the strengths and weaknesses of the system model as well as changes that would improve the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system. These reflections were gathered through responses to open-ended questions. The four open-ended questions were:

- 1) What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the school system model?
- 2) What do you feel are the greatest challenges to the school system model?
- 3) What would improve the school system model?
- 4) Do you have any further comments not covered in the survey?

Data from these open-ended questions were analyzed using grounded theory procedures (Strauss and Corbin, 2008). While grounded theory is a qualitative technique that emphasizes development of a theory, the data analysis techniques are beneficial when investigating a largely unknown Catholic school model to help identify emergent concepts from responses to open-ended questions. The core method of data analysis in grounded theory is the constant-comparative method. This method seeks to establish theoretical constructs, essential codes, and categories from the data by looking for cause, structure,

context, and correlations between themes or emergent concepts continuously as data is collected and analyzed. Steps of the constant-comparative method in grounded theory are identified in Table 58.

Table 58

*Steps in the Constant Comparative Method of Grounded Theory*

Step	Description
Data gathering, coding, and analyzing	Compare survey responses, categories, and constructs
Writing memos	Read coding reports and notes. Explore similarities and differences among the data. Write memos and look for relevant supporting data.
Sorting, saturating, and reviewing literature	Assign memos to core concepts. Compare core concepts and review system data.
Writing theory	Identify an overall theoretical construct based on the core concepts of the benefits, challenges, and improvements needed of the system model.

Note: From Sherman, R. R., & Webb, R. B. (Eds.). (1988). *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods*. London: Routledge Falmer.

To begin the data analysis, the researcher reviewed participant responses to each open-ended question. Table 59 shows the number of responses gathered for each question. The researcher then began to generate a list of themes from the

data. These themes were generated not from the entire response to each question, but rather from separate statements within each response that appeared to be distinct from the other. For example, for question one (benefits of the model), a participant response included financial efficiencies and better educational opportunities for the students. This type of an example resulted in two themes from a single participant's response.

Table 59

*Open-Ended Question Responses*

Question	Frequency (N) and%
1. What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the school system model?	175 (87.9%)
2. What do you feel are the greatest challenges of the school system model?	171 (85.9%)
3. What would improve the school system model?	134 (67.3%)
4. Do you have any further comments not covered in the survey?	49 (24.6%)

Note: Percentage based on the number of surveys received (N = 199).

For the next step of the data analysis, the researcher assigned codes for themes that were generated for each open-ended question. Memos were written for the codes and participant responses were identified as supporting



documentation. This process resulted in core concepts that helped to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and improvements needed to the consolidated Catholic school system model.

The results of each open-ended question are described separately. Each open-ended question set of responses clearly showed consistent themes, which resulted in high frequency of related codes. These high frequency codes are explained in each section.

**Question One: What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the school system model?**

A total of 175 participants responded to this survey question. The responses to this question resulted in 303 overall themes, 24 of which were different. The highest frequency theme of strength of the system involved opportunities for collaboration and coordination among schools within the system (n = 124, 40.9%). For example, one school administrator stated that the system provides “unification-everyone is on the same page regarding everything from faith formation to curriculum.” A pastor commented, in a system it (Catholic schools) “doesn’t all fall on the pastors and parishes.” Still other administrators and pastors made statements involving a “seamless pre-K – 12 experience,” “consistent tuition rates and salary scales,” “coordination of

finances and fundraising,” “cooperation among teachers in elementary and high school,” “sharing teachers and programs,” and “working together to support a common mission.” Perhaps a pastor best stated the benefit of collaboration and coordination:

We have four school sites (K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12). There are 1290 children in the system. With this model, we are able to pool more resources of people, finances, professionals, and faith to assist children on the path of education and formation.

The next highest set of responses for the benefits of the system model included better educational opportunities (n = 34, 11.2%). Some participants were vaguer in their responses with statements such as “quality education” or “improved instructional quality.” Others, however, were more specific in relation to how the system model improves education. One school administrator stated, “Greater programming and opportunities for educational improvements are possible with shared staff.” Others identified curriculum as a primary benefit in improving education through the system model. Several administrators made comments such as “seamless, sequential curriculum,” “improved curriculum through joint planning meetings,” and “K - 12 unified curriculum.” Regarding curriculum, another administrator commented, “Coordination allows for a preK - 12 curriculum which leads to a stronger education for all students.” Besides curriculum, participants responded that teachers were able to use “peer-tutoring

and multi-age collaboration” and “challenge gifted students by allowing them to work to the next level of a class.”

Saving money through efficiencies (n = 33, 10.9%) also had a high number of responses. Many participants commented that the system model is “financially sound,” “efficient,” or “a better financial model” than the parish school.

Specifically related to the efficiencies, the consolidated system “avoids duplications of classrooms and programs,” provides a “more efficient use of teachers, administration, and buildings,” and “reduced the number of buildings and principals.” One school administrator went as far as to state, “We have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars with faculty, administration, staffing, and resources.” These efficiencies have led to “reduced parish subsidy to the Catholic school system,” as one participant wrote. Or, in another case, the system model provides “cost savings to parishes and schools.” The consolidated system has also led to “better salaries for staff and teachers.” Finally, two pastors cited the importance of the system model. One pastor wrote, “Individual parishes of our community could not finance a preschool – 12<sup>th</sup> grade offering on their own.” The other pastor simply put, “It is the only chance for future viability.”

Approximately 10.2% (n = 31) of the respondents indicated a high level of commitment to support all schools within the system. School administrators and pastors wrote of this support from many angles. Several school administrators

offered responses including “strong level of commitment from pastors, parishes, staff, boards, and community,” “strong support from the community and alums,” “dedicated faculty and staff,” and “parish and parent commitment.”

Most of the pastors commented that the system model moves Catholic education away from having one parish carry the weight of the school to a “wider degree of ownership and responsibility.” Another pastor put it differently when he commented, “The strength is that it belongs to all involved.” Perhaps the system formation was said best by a school administrator: “All stakeholders are committed to the successful fulfillment of the system mission to develop personal and academic excellence in the Catholic tradition.”

Professional, centralized leadership (n = 16, 5.3%) was another higher frequency theme that emerged from the data analysis. Most comments in regards to leadership simply came in the form of “leadership,” “strong leadership,” or “strong administration.” However, there were more specific comments from both pastors and administrators that the consolidated system has led to the formation of “a president position who can give more attention to creating a vision” for the system. Another school administrator stated, “This is the first year of the president/principal model. I wish we would have gone to this years’ ago.” Still another stated, “Two principals, one president equals excellent leadership.” According to one pastor, the effectiveness is a result of putting “the leadership

role into the hands of more professionals.” This leadership role, according to another administrator, is a team approach. “We have a strong administrative team made up of principals, controller, advancement director, and president.”

The last high frequency theme involved Catholic identity (n = 13, 4.3%). Most all of the comments were general and non-specific. For example, comments included “strong Catholic identity,” “Catholicity,” or “Catholic identity.” Two comments were directed at the specific nature of the system model and Catholic identity. One administrator commented that the system provides a strong “faith formation program through all the grade levels.” Another administrator stated that the system “seems to provide a sense of Catholicity.” The remaining 52 responses resulted in 17 different themes.

**Core Concept – Question One.** Formation of the consolidated Catholic school system has enabled schools to centralize the leadership functions of the schools, which has proved to be more efficient and save money, provide a seamless educational product whereby improving academic quality, renew the sense of commitment from various stakeholders within the community for Catholic schools, and provide better opportunities for collaboration between parishes, schools, teachers, and students.

**Question Two: What do you feel are the greatest challenges of the school system model?**

A total of 171 participants responded to this survey question including 248 themes. Of the 248 total themes, 26 different themes were uncovered for the second survey question. The number of different themes discovered is consistent with the first survey question, yet there were a wider set of diversity in responses found within the themes of question two. The highest frequency theme that emerged from this data set of challenges to the system model was a loss of parish support and identity (n = 67, 27.0%). According to one pastor, “[The] loss of identity with the parish has created a pseudo parish [system].” To another pastor, “A fourth parish was hatched.” This separateness has created a “‘them’ not ‘us’” mentality between the parish and school system. A high number of responses from both administrators and pastors support the separateness argument. Comments included, “separation of schools to parishes,” “connection to the parish,” “creates distance between parishes and school,” and “not as much connection to the parish.” This division has created some unintended consequences. For example, parents have become less involved with the parish and pastors have become less involved in the life of the school that is no longer theirs. Even when pastors are involved, gaining consensus is a challenge. School administrators stated that they have a difficult time getting pastors to agree on

issues now that a system exists. Comments on this challenge included “getting all pastors to agree” and “working with 15 parishes – not all priests agree.” Though the subsidy reduction was a benefit to the system model, pastors still commented that the subsidy was a “burden” or “strain” on the parishes. One pastor went as far as to state, “Parish support is too great – leading to bankruptcy.” The “financial burden on parishes” has led to not only a reduction of subsidy to the system, but the separation also has impacted “fundraising and certainly enrollment.” The reduction of financial support from the parishes to the system has caused school administrators to focus more on money than on mission. One pastor commented:

Pastors are too involved with money and not consulted on what makes the school Catholic (e.g., I’ve never been consulted on religious formation/education but every month we talk about money. I have no background in money but a D. Min – what’s going on?).

The second highest response involved finances (n = 57, 22.9%). Over half of this group of respondents simply made comments such as, “finances,” “funding,” “\$\$\$,” “financial,” or “finances, as always.” Other school administrators and pastors were specific in the financial challenge comments, however. Three significant financial themes emerged from the specificity of comments: finding additional revenue, support for teacher salaries, and challenge of merging multiple schools’ finances. Many respondents indicated that the systems are losing “revenue from the parishes.” The loss of parish

subsidy along with “declining enrollment and increasing costs” have resulted in “tighter budgets every year” for the consolidated system. It has also led to the realization that the systems “need to dramatically increase third party contributions” by “[beating] the bushes to find new sources of revenue for the school” or by “tapping alumni for help.” Teacher salaries within the system have also been a concern to some administrators and pastors. One administrator stated, “Our teachers start at \$23,000 and pay 50% of their health insurance. Is this just?” Two pastors wrote, “Teacher salaries are low, too much overhead” and “Providing a decent salary for teachers.” Finally, pastors and administrators stated that the merger of the finances of the schools has caused some challenges. One administrator commented, “There’s often a debate about which school is supporting the other.” A pastor stated,

The school still feels the effects of integrating the former lower tuition of the K-6 with the high tuition of the 7-12. This has created an increasing debt over the years; therefore, little funding [has been available] to improve facilities.

Enrollment challenges was the third highest theme (n = 45, 18.1%). The overwhelming majority of responses in this group were general enrollment comments. Many of the repetitive comments included “enrollment,” “decreasing enrollment,” and “keeping enrollment up.” Few went on to discuss the reasons for the enrollment challenge, and only two comments mentioned the enrollment challenge in relation to the consolidated school system model. School



administrators and pastors noted the difficulty of maintaining or increasing enrollment as a result of “our area becoming a retirement community,” or “weak demographics.” Others made comments that enrollment is affected by “the economic downturn.” Coupled with the economic downturn is, as one pastor noted, “the affordability of tuition” and the impact on enrollment. Outside of demographics, the economy, and affordability, one pastor felt that enrollment is difficult when parents “do not see value in a Catholic education,” and another pastor commented that it is a challenge to attract students “whose parents have faith.” Lastly, and specifically related to the system model, one administrator wrote, “[It’s a challenge] retaining students from one school to another [in the system].” A pastor noted, “Attracting parents who are afraid that this is just one step toward closing altogether.”

Leadership quality (n = 12, 4.8%) was the last high frequency theme for question two. The major issue of the leadership challenge, as noted by the respondents, appeared to be attracting “qualified” and “effective” leaders. One pastor wrote, “[It’s hard] finding a strong leader – public face, development, educational leader.” Another pastor commented, “[The] president position costs more money, but the salary doesn’t always attract the right person.” A different pastor agreed with the extra costs: “It added another layer of administrative cost.” Outside of school leadership, other administrators and pastors found a

challenge in “making sure there are motivated, hard-working people on the board of directors” or “not enough leadership in our foundation (fundraising).” Finally, one pastor felt the “need for support and confidence in our tradition by a bishop who shares our vision in a limited fashion.” The remaining 67 responses resulted in 21 different themes.

**Core Concept – Question Two.** The loss of parish identity through the formation of the system has led to the creation of a pseudo-parish. This has caused pastors to become less involved with the schools, reduced support from the parish, parents not being involved at their parish, and a lack of understanding of a “new” administrative structure. The reduced subsidy has also led to increasing tuition and the need to attract new sources of funding.

### **Question Three: What would improve the school system model?**

A total of 134 responses were collected for this survey question resulting in a total of 178 themes. While the number of responses and total themes reduced for this question, the number of different themes remained constant with the first two questions at 26. The highest response theme for improvement to the system involved finances (n = 42, 23.6%). Most of the comments for finance were general in nature. For example, comments included “finance,” “additional revenue,” “\$,” and “improving our financial picture.” More specifically, though, some pastors

and school administrators cited the need to broaden the financial support for the school system. One administrator wrote, “[We need] greater fundraising by the foundation.” Another commented, “We need a bigger foundation and more planned giving.” A pastor noted, “We need to find a new approach for third sources of funding as tuition and parish subsidy are no longer going to make it work financially.” Less frequent financial comments included, “a better tuition model,” “a larger pool of financial aid,” “state/federal help,” and “more equal funding by parishes.”

Parish and pastor support was the next highest theme response ( $n = 36$ , 20.2%). Pastors and school administrators identified several ways to improve the system model through parish support and pastoral support. Many of the administrators commented that more parishes and pastors should actively support the system. One administrator stated, “All parishes in the diocese should help maintain Catholic schools.” Another administrator commented, “Greater commitment of parishes that do not have a school on site.” Although these statements of support were more in regards to funding, other administrators noted the need for pastor involvement in the system. Comments made by administrators and pastors included “priestly presence,” “consistent pastor support,” “highly energized pastors with a strong hand in governance,” and “stronger priest support of Catholic education verbally and presence in the

school.” One school administrator commented: “One of the issues that will face all systems will be parish support as well as the relationships the schools will have with the parish or parishes. Will the future system schools be independent of parishes?”

Improvements in leadership (n = 27, 15.2%) was the third highest commented theme. Of the 27 leadership responses, 16 commented on system/school leadership while six noted diocesan leadership. The other comments simply stated “leadership” as a need, and it couldn’t be determined as to the specific nature of the improvements that were suggested. System or school leadership comments included, “a stronger leader,” “stronger director of schools to lead the system,” “and “a leader who can devote more time to the schools.” One administrator wrote that the system needs “more central office staff.” Another stated the need to “determine who (what person) oversees the system.” Similarly, one administrator commented that the system should have “strong, central administration.” One pastor wrote, “[We need] strong leadership at the school and a desire to work with pastors and parishes.” Several comments were made regarding diocesan leadership. One administrator’s frustration was evident for diocesan leadership: “Our diocese has shown very little leadership in the area of school systems. More leadership there would be helpful.” Another administrator wrote the need for “more structure and guidance for the school as

they go through the process.” Finally, a pastor noted, “Clear communication from diocesan offices as to the pastor’s role in the school [would help].”

Increasing enrollment ( $n = 12$ , 6.7%) was the only other theme with responses of 10 or more. With the exception of two statements, pastors and school administrators made general statements regarding increasing enrollment. Statements made included, “more students,” “increasing enrollment,” “improved enrollment,” or “raising enrollment.” One administrator wrote that the system needed “improved efforts at managing enrollment,” and a pastor commented that the system needed “the ability to attract black and Hispanic students in the community.” The remaining 64 responses resulted in 23 different themes.

**Core Concept – Question Three.** To improve the school system model, it starts with effective diocesan, system, school, and parish leadership. From guiding the change process in forming the system to renewing the commitment to support Catholic education, strong leadership will help ease the frustration of role clarity of pastors, presidents, and principals in a new model, expand the financial resources outside of tuition and subsidy, adjust the system expenditures to grow or meet enrollment realities, and repair the relationship and involvement between the parish and the school system.

**Question Four: Do you have any further comments not covered in the survey?**

Since this question was looking for responses specifically related to the school system model, comments made outside of the system model were eliminated (e.g., nice survey, want to see the results of the study, etc.). A total of 49 responses were collected for this survey question, which included 50 themes. A total of 19 different themes were identified for this question. Comments that the system model was a strong educational model had the highest frequency of responses (n = 12, 24.0%). One administrator wrote, "The benefits outweigh the negative aspects of being part of a system." A pastor commented, "Overall school consolidation, now 25 years in progress in our community, has been a significant success." Two other pastors commented as to the benefits of the model: "We are blessed to have a healthy and growing system that has been in place for better than 20 years" and "This is a model that works."

Ironically, the next highest response theme centered on the model not being a viable option to run Catholic schools (n = 6, 12.0%). A school administrator noted, "I have a concern for Catholic schools in the US in the future and wonder about the 'system' idea. I think it is privatizing education, not necessarily making it Catholic." A pastor took a more specific approach to the concerns over the system model:

The model has been in effect for 10 years now. Enrollment has dropped 50%. Many Catholics still don't understand that we are a system since

many of them come from a parish-sponsored school. They seem incapable of thinking in a system way.

Another pastor of a different system commented on the challenges: "Enrollment has dropped 50% over the last 10 years." Finally, a pastor who also served as a school administrator had a good perspective: "I've been involved in two consolidations, one from each side, as president and as a pastor – the problems remain consistent."

Connection to the parish (n = 5, 10.0%) and a lack of financial stability (n = 5, 10.0%) were the final two higher frequency response themes for the last question. "The danger is that there is sometimes less ownership of the schools at the parish level when it is a system rather than parish schools," according to one pastor. Another wrote, "All five parishes have lost school identity under the new consolidation." Four of the five financial comments came from pastors. The only school administrator financial response commented on consolidation as a positive while the four pastor noted finances as negative. One pastor wrote, "We presently struggle to keep the school in solid financial ground while parishes are financially in trouble." The remaining 22 responses resulted in 15 different themes.

**Core Concept – Question Four.** The consolidated Catholic school system model is a viable concept that is not without its challenges. A system that works in one community may struggle in another. In either case, the supporting

parishes that are left with the sentiments of the “old” model feel separated from the consolidated school system.

### **Overall Theoretical Construct for Open-Ended Questions**

The K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a viable alternative to the parish-based educational model. While many of the struggles are solved with the “new” model, challenges of continuing to support Catholic education remain. There is no substitute, though, for ineffective leadership. Strong leadership will drive the success, mediocrity, or failure of the system model. The K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system has allowed Catholic education to continue in communities where it might have otherwise not been able to survive. This is a result of the financial savings, improved academics, and sense of collaboration and commitment among many stakeholders within and outside of the system.

If each action has an opposite reaction, the action of supporting a K - 12 consolidated system model is not limited to positive reactions. A significant reaction to the system model is the loss of parish identity and reduced support. The school system that has formed has taken the place of the parish in the minds of families, whether it is not attending mass on Sundays or being active in the parish. The separation from the parishes, lack of investment from parents in the



parish, and uncertainty as to their role in the new configuration has also led pastors to become less involved in the school (outside of presiding over mass).

## SUMMARY

Due largely to the unexplored field of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems, this study utilized quantitative research techniques to better understand the various structures of the system model, the factors that led communities to adopt the model, and the perceived viability of K - 12 Catholic school systems. Qualitative data analysis enhanced the study through participant responses of the strengths, challenges, and improvements of the system approach. Without the qualitative analysis, the study would be limited in depth and impact.

Sixty-six of 74 K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems and a total of 199 pastors and school administrators participated in the study. Most of the systems are found in the Great Lakes and Plains regions of the United States, and over half of the systems are found in urban settings. The average system has been consolidated for approximately 20 years, yet a span of 126 years separates the oldest and youngest systems. There is a diverse group in the number and structure of system elementary and middle/junior high schools, but all systems have only one high school. Approximately two-thirds of the systems are parish-based (single or multiple). Nearly two-thirds of the systems also have adopted

the president-principal leadership model. Almost 75% of the systems reported closing schools either at the time or since consolidation. Over half of the systems have a total enrollment of 600 or less students, and half of all systems report flat enrollment. Less than half of the systems, however, reported having balanced budgets.

Consistent with the research on school viability, financial challenges and enrollment decline were reported as the top two most significant factors for consolidation. Systems with 600 or fewer students ranked enrollment decline as a more important factor for consolidation than other systems. This study found, however, that respondents ranked *the system model improved enrollment* as one of the lowest areas on the perceived viability scale. On the other hand, one of the highest rated statements was *the system model is a model that will survive*.

Finally, participants responded to open-ended questions involving the strengths, challenges, and improvements to the system model. It is clear from participants that the system model has not only stabilized Catholic education in the community but also improved education as well. It is also clear, though, that the system model is not flawless. A major challenge to the system approach is the separation from the parish, which results in reduced support from pastors and parishioners.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This study investigated the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system structure and governance, factors leading to consolidation, and perceived viability of this alternative schooling model. For this study, viability was operationalized by school demographics and school finances. School demographics included region and location of the system, total system enrollment (K – 12), and enrollment trends. School finances included revenue sources – tuition, subsidy, and development – and the relationship between tuition cost and median household income.

The K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey was designed to solicit responses from school administrators and pastors on personal demographics, school system demographics and finances, factors that led to the consolidation, and perceptions of the viability of this emerging model. Personal demographics included seven questions. The major variables of the study, school system demographics and finances, included 30 questions. One question asked participants to rank the top five of nine factors leading to consolidation. Participants were also asked to rate nine viability statements using a four-point

Lickert scale (1 – 4). Four open-ended questions were the final questions of the survey and involved the strengths, weaknesses, and improvements of the system model. The survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, regression analysis, and grounded theory techniques to analyze responses to the open-ended questions.

Responses to the survey were obtained from 199 school administrators and pastors associated with 66 K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. This section summarizes the survey findings for each purpose of the study.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **Structure and Governance**

The first research question of the study was: What are the patterns of structure and governance in the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? Two major variables regarding structure and governance are discussed: school system demographics and school system finances.

### **School System Demographics**

The overwhelming majority of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems are found in the Great Lakes and Plains regions of the United States.

Half of these systems are urban and one-third are rural. This is compared to the national average where 31% of Catholic schools are considered urban and 21% are considered rural (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Migration to the suburbs where Catholic schools are not available (Haney & O'Keefe, 2007; Lundy, 1999) along with families moving to warmer climates (DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloeffel, 2009) could be two reasons why the consolidated system model is represented overwhelmingly in the northern parts of the United States and in urban and rural settings.

Most consolidated systems were established after 1987 with the average system starting in 1989, over two decades ago. The average number of principals within the system is less than the average number of schools or campuses, which leads one to believe that principals in the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system are often shared between buildings. Nearly half of the systems reported an elementary structure other than the traditional K - 8, K - 6, or K - 5 school. These systems have segmented campuses by grade level, such as K - 2 and 3 - 5.

Slightly less than two-thirds of the systems are parish-sponsored (by one or more parishes) whereas one-third are sponsored by the diocese. The majority of school boards within the system are advisory, but approximately one-quarter of systems have boards with limited jurisdiction. Nearly 80% of the systems reported having the president-principal model of school administration. This

represents a substantially higher percentage of schools using this form of administration than the national high school average of slightly less than 50% (James, 2009). The president-principal model is in place in 11 of 12 systems with a total enrollment of 1000 or more students. On the other hand, smaller systems with a total enrollment between 200 – 400 students have adopted the president-principal model at a lower percentage (5 of 10 systems).

Although it was originally thought that the K – 12 consolidated system was adopted to save schools from closing (Haney & O’Keefe, 2009), this study confirmed the opposite. Nearly 75% of all systems reported that they closed schools at the time or since consolidation. Approximately 18% of systems, however, reported opening new schools since consolidation.

Slightly more than half of the systems have a total K – 12 enrollment of 600 or fewer students. Nearly 20%, though, have a total enrollment of more than 1000 students. Over one-third of all systems have experienced an enrollment decline of more than 5% over the last three years, and very few systems reported enrollment growth of more than 5%. About half of the systems with 800 or fewer students reported an enrollment decline. School systems most likely to have stable enrollment are those with more than 800 students in grades K – 12. This equates to approximately 60 students in each grade level as a threshold of viability compared to James, et al (2008) threshold of 20 students per grade for

single, parish-based elementary schools to remain viable. Nearly half of the systems are supported by 2 – 5 parishes, and approximately one-third are supported by 6 – 10 parishes.

### **School System Finances**

**Tuition.** The average elementary tuition charged for one child within K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems is \$3,020 compared to \$3,383 nationally (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). Secondary tuition charged for one child in K – 12 systems is slightly higher at \$4,648 compared to \$8,192 nationally (McDonald & Schultz, 2010). While system elementary tuition is slightly below the national average, secondary tuition within the system is substantially less than the national average. The average median family income across communities adopting the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is approximately \$60,000, which equates to around 5% of total family income going to support one elementary child within the system. This compares to the average of elementary schools in St. Louis where tuition equals between 5 – 7% of family income (James, 2006 as cited in DeFiore, 2011). Over half of the K – 12 systems reported a reliance on tuition at less than 50% of total school income. This is less than the national Catholic school average to tuition dependency of 62% of total income (McDonald & Schultz, 2010).

**Subsidy.** Parish subsidy to K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems is high compared to the national average. Parishes associated with systems support Catholic schools on average at 46% of total parish income compared to the national average of 24% (DeFiore, in press). As a percentage of total school income, two-thirds of systems reported a reliance on subsidy at 20% or more of their budget. And more than half of this group reported subsidy at 31% or more of total income. The national average of elementary school reliance on subsidy is 22% (DeFiore, 2011).

**Development.** For Catholic schools, development income accounts for 9% of total school income (Taymons & Connors, 2009). Slightly more than half of the systems reported that development accounts for less than 20% of their total budget. This also means that a little less than half of the systems rely on development at 20% or more of total income, which is substantially higher than the national average. Nearly 70% of the systems have an endowment or separate foundation. Systems with endowments average approximately \$2.4 million in total assets, and systems with foundations average approximately \$3.2 million in total assets.



### **Factors of Consolidation**

The second research question for the proposed study was: What are the factors that led communities to adopt the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? Participants were asked to rank the top five of nine factors in order of importance for the reasons communities moved away from the parish-based approach and adopted the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system. System scores for all nine factors were generated and placed in order of importance. The top five factors, in order, associated with moving to the system model include: financial challenges, enrollment decline, centralize administrative responsibilities, building maintenance and facility upkeep, and inconsistent finances between schools.

The first two most important factors – financial challenges and enrollment decline – are not unique to K – 12 Catholic school systems. In fact, this study confirms prior research on regional Catholic schools where it was reported that schools reconfigured due to enrollment declines and financial pressures (Goldschmidt, O’Keefe, & Walsh, 2004). Prior studies on Catholic school closings and consolidations have also shown financial challenges and enrollment decline as the top reasons for the change (Burdick, 1996; Lundy, 1999; Mudd, 1989). What is unique with the system model perhaps, is the centralized administrative functions as a factor for adopting the system approach. As cited previously,

nearly 80% of all systems have centralized administrative functions by adopting the president-principal model of school administration. Additionally, all K - 12 systems have one school board – advisory or limited jurisdiction.

Further investigation occurred to compare system demographics and finances with factors leading to consolidation. An analysis of variance was conducted for each of the top five consolidation factors and the following school system demographics and finances areas: total enrollment; enrollment trends; tuition, subsidy, and development revenue as a percentage of total system income; and budget management. Centralizing administrative responsibilities and total system enrollment was significant ( $p = .003$ ). Further analysis showed that as total system enrollment increases, centralizing administrative responsibilities becomes a more important factor leading to the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. No further analyses were found to be significant.

### **Perceived Viability**

The third research question was: What variables predict the perceived viability of the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model? Two separate investigations were conducted on perceived viability: responses to opinion statements to create a viability mean and responses to open-ended questions on

the strengths, weaknesses, and improvements to the K – 12 consolidated system model.

### **Opinion Statements**

All participants were asked to rate nine opinion statements regarding the K - 12 consolidated Catholic school system model. Ratings ranged between 1 and 4 with 1 being strongly disagree, 2 meaning disagree, 3 being agree, and 4 meaning strongly agree. System scores were generated for each of the nine opinion statements. Based on the system scores, the top ratings (those closest to 4 – strongly agree) included: the change to form a system was necessary for survival, an effective leader currently leads the system, and the system model is one that will survive. On the other hand, statements receiving the lowest ratings (those closest to 1 – strongly disagree) were the system model improved enrollment, the system model improved parish finances, and a strategic plan is currently in place and followed. The final three statements received ratings above 3 (agree) and include: the system model improved school finances, fundraising, and buildings/facilities.

Further analysis took place regarding perceived viability by creating a perceived viability mean for each system and comparing system factors with the perceived viability mean. The following five opinion statements showed high

correlations and were used as the perceived viability mean: the system model will survive, the system model has improved finances for the system, the system model has improved development efforts, student enrollment has improved in the school system, and the system model has improved buildings/facilities. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted using the perceived viability mean on the following school system factors: number of schools, number of parishes, total system enrollment, tuition percentage, system debt, enrollment trend, budget, endowment, and tuition ratio. Of all the investigations conducted, enrollment trend was the only factor found significant in predicting perceived viability. As enrollment stabilizes or grows within a system, the system becomes more viable.

Independent analyses took place on each of the independent factors and opinion statements using stepwise multiple regressions. Systems with fewer schools identify the move to the system model as one of survival more so than systems with more schools. Systems with growing enrollment are more likely to have an adopted strategic plan. Systems that have a foundation that supports the schools are more likely to have an effective leader as the system administrator. Systems that have experienced recent enrollment growth are more likely to identify the K – 12 model as helping to improve enrollment compared to systems with declining or flat enrollment.

## Open-Ended Responses

Participants were asked to answer four open-ended questions: strengths of the system model, weaknesses of the system model, improvements to the system model, and further comments. Responses were analyzed using grounded theory procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 2008).

Participants responded by indicating many strengths of the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model, but the overall strength represented was centralizing leadership functions. Centralizing leadership has afforded the school system model to be more efficient (saving money), provide a seamless education (improving academics), renew commitment for Catholic schools, and provide opportunities for collaboration. Participants also identified significant challenges to the system model. The overall weakness to the model is the loss of parish identity within Catholic schools. The system has become a *pseudo-parish* and caused pastors to be less involved in the schools, reduced financial support from the parish, increased tuition, and the need for more development revenue to cover the operating gaps. Suggestions to improve to the system varied among participant responses, but the overall concept for improvements to the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system model centered on effective diocesan, system, school, and parish leadership. Further comments from participants

indicated that the system concept is a strong educational model with the overall challenge of the separation between parishes and the school system.

## CONCLUSIONS

K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems have average elementary tuition but substantially lower secondary tuition compared to the national average. Parishes financially support Catholic school systems at twice the national average when comparing the amount invested in Catholic schools as a percentage of overall parish income. The dependency on development income for smaller Catholic school systems (fewer students) is also substantially above nationally average. The low secondary tuition, perhaps, necessitates the high subsidy and development income to balance the budget. With limited dependency on tuition, it is not surprising that over half of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems report having at least one unbalanced budget within the last three years. Even with average to below average tuition, one-third of systems have experienced an enrollment decline of greater than 5% over the last three years. Over half of the systems indicated that enrollment has remained flat.

The two major factors leading to the system model – financial challenges and enrollment decline – are consistent with prior research on Catholic school closings and consolidations. While the system model was adopted primarily due

to these two top factors, forming the K – 12 Catholic school system has not been a success on both issues. Participants agree that the system model has improved finances, yet over half of the systems reported that they were not able to balance their operating budget recently. Furthermore, half of the systems reported having debt to another entity with the average system debt exceeding \$1 million, and nearly three-fourths of the systems reported that schools closed at the time of or since consolidation. Similarly, enrollment has not improved with the system model. The opinion statement *the system model improved finances* received the lowest rating among participants, and one-third of systems reported enrollment declines of greater than 5% in recent years.

The strongest predictor of perceived viability is enrollment trend. Systems with growing enrollment are more likely to be perceived as viable. Separate investigations on individual viability statements also yield important results. Systems with fewer schools identify the move to the system model as one of survival more so than systems with more schools. A strategic plan is most likely to be adopted and followed in systems that have experienced enrollment growth. Systems that have a separate foundation that supports the schools are more likely to have an effective leader. Finally, systems that have experienced recent enrollment growth are more likely to identify the K – 12 model as helping to improve enrollment compared to systems with declining or flat enrollment.

The primary purposes of this study were to identify patterns of structure and governance of the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system, determine the factors that led to the consolidated system model, and identify variables that help predict perceived viability of the system model. This study contributed to all three purposes. The descriptive statistics on structure and governance of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems is rich with data and interpretations. The major factors that led to the system model are consistent with prior research, but other factors were also identified that help understand better what led a community to adopt the model. It is also shown through this study that the viability of the system is dependent upon strong leadership. Furthermore, while the system model can be a viable option for communities considering this alternative approach, the separation from the parishes is a significant limitation.

Through this study, it was found that the viability of the system model is dependent upon high parish subsidies that are unlikely to continue. Even though adopting the system model allows for better opportunities to raise money outside of tuition and subsidy, the weak tuition base makes this approach risky. Relying on development income at a significantly higher rate than the national average has the risk of creating budget shortfalls when donors are not willing or able to continue funding the school significantly.



In summary, the following major conclusions, separated by each purpose, can be made regarding this study:

1. Structure and governance

- a. Nearly all of the systems are found in the Great Lakes and Plains regions of the United States, and most are in urban or rural areas.
- b. Systems were established, on average, in 1989.
- c. The average system has a total of three schools.
- d. The average system has a total student enrollment between 601 – 800 students, and enrollment has remained relatively flat.
- e. The average system depends on tuition revenue between 30 – 50%, subsidy at 20 – 30%, and development income of less than 20% of the total system budget.
- f. System elementary tuition averages \$3,019.79 and secondary tuition averages \$4,647.67. The average tuition as a percentage of household income is 6% across all systems.
- g. Systems reported, on average, that they have experienced both balanced and unbalanced budgets in the last three years.

2. Factors leading to consolidation system

- a. The major factors leading to the formation of the K -12 consolidation Catholic school system include financial challenges and enrollment decline, which is consistent with prior research.

3. Perceived viability

- a. Predictors of viability of the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system include total enrollment, enrollment trends, and tuition revenue.
- b. The separation from the parishes leads to reduced support from the pastor and parishioners.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

The majority of K – 12 Catholic school systems appear to be in declining markets of the northern parts of the United States and located in urban and rural settings. While it may not be the “golden ticket” to keep Catholic schools thriving, the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system approach may be the only way to perpetuate Catholic schools in certain areas. With flat or declining enrollment, efficiencies can be gained by moving to the system model through shared staff, buildings, and other resources that may help stabilize the position of Catholic schools in the region.

It should be noted that most systems have adopted the president-principal model of school administration, and it has been shown in this study that presidents leading the systems are viewed as effective. This critical component may be one of the keys to helping stabilize the schools through the system model. Yet it must be understood that this position involves, at times, a tremendous financial investment on part of the community. The efficiencies saved through shared staff could be lost by adopting the president-principal model and the associated “central office” staff that comes along with it as well. Strict care should be taken when investigating K – 12 Catholic school systems to determine not only if the system model is an appropriate alternative but whether or not the two-tiered leadership approach is one that will lead to a return on the investment.

The enrollment threshold for viable K – 12 Catholic school systems, especially those with the president-principal model, appears to be 800 students. The K – 12 system model can still help stabilize Catholic schools in a community when total enrollment is less than 800 students; however, the president-principal model with the complete “central office” staff may not produce the intended results that are needed to remain open. A careful study of the cost-benefit analysis of the president-principal model in smaller systems should be conducted. While the concept may bring in more development revenue, this

revenue may not exceed the investment of the president-principal model itself and may lead to an unbalanced budget.

The most significant challenge facing K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems today is the separation from the local parishes. This separation, along with the fact that parishes financially support systems as a percentage of their total income at twice the national average, cause pastors to become disinterested and unsupportive of Catholic schools. This is partly due to unclear roles on the part of pastors, but it is also a result of the major focus of parish involvement in the system centering on financial support alone. Steps should be taken to recognize and support the traditions of the parish and determine pastoral roles when forming the new system. Care should also be taken to help parishes reduce subsidy to the system to be more consistent with the national average. Doing so will give the parishes a more stable financial position over the long term.

Another significant challenge facing K – 12 Catholic school systems is balancing budgets. From the reports of this study, there are financial savings when moving to the system model through sharing of staff, buildings, and resources. This study also shows that development income within systems is substantially higher than traditional schools. However, tuition remains a smaller income source compared to the national average. This can be problematic as the system may be unable to adjust to declining enrollment. Since elementary tuition

charged within systems is within the national average, communities should consider beginning the system model with a consistent elementary tuition scale and increase tuition in step with inflation. Secondary tuition within systems, on the other hand, is substantially below the national average and the primary factor for the low tuition revenue stream. School leaders should begin an aggressive, phased process of charging and/or collecting more tuition at the high school level. This must also be coupled with a strong public relations and educational plan that will help parents understand the challenges of the lower tuition and what the educational benefits will be for their children as tuition increases.

Overall, the major implication for practice cannot be understated. That is, diocesan leadership must play an active, engaged, and supportive role within communities considering changing to a K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system. This is especially critical from the beginning of the change process to help individuals cope with the loss of the traditional parish school concept that has been in existence in many communities for over 100 years. Equally as important, though, is the need for guidance and support from the bishop and superintendent for pastors, presidents, and principals to understand their roles in the new governance structure. No longer are the pastors responsible for their parish school. The change forms a collaborative relationship with other pastors,

and they must understand the role they will have in authority in the system model. School administrators also need to understand their roles and accountability in the system model. Traditionally principals reported to the pastor, but in the new system it will be important to plan out the authority structure to determine who has ultimate authority to hire and terminate school administrators. To make things even more complicated – and highlight the need for diocesan guidance and support – the type of board will likely bring about changes to authority and accountability. As more and more schools use a board with limited jurisdiction, K – 12 systems using this form of governance from the beginning is just another fundamental shift away from tradition that will require a tremendous amount of time and energy on part of diocesan leadership.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Since this is the first major study on K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems, there are many future research endeavors that would help to create a more accurate picture of the complete benefits, limitations, and impact of this emerging model. In addition to the benefits of the three purposes of the study, all known K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States have been identified. This database of systems will afford future researchers access to these systems without spending substantial time attempting to locate all systems.

As evidenced through this study, a major challenge to the K - 12 consolidated system model is the separation from the parishes. A study of the attitudes, opinions, and practices of pastors of parishes associated K - 12 Catholic school systems is necessary. Such a study would uncover ways to strengthen the relationship between existing systems and parishes or nurture relationships between both when attempting to establish a system in a community struggling to keep Catholic schools available and affordable.

Another finding of this study was the unclear roles and expectations of pastors and school administrators in this “newly” formed system. A further study exclusively on governance of the systems would help identify accountabilities and roles of the Catholic schools office (diocese), school board, local school administrators, and pastors. Similarly, a study of the president-principal model within K - 12 Catholic school systems would help compare accountabilities and roles of presidents and principals of systems with multiple schools (and principals) to presidents and principals of single high schools (with a single principal).

A study (or multiple studies) focusing on the financial condition, Catholic identity, and/or educational impact of K - 12 Catholic school systems is warranted. School administrators and pastors cited the benefits of efficiencies of the system model yet over half reported having recent unbalanced budgets. An

exploration of the finances of systems would help compare systems and traditional schools. Another cited benefit of the system model is collaboration, which leads to better educational opportunities for students. A study of the educational impact of systems would help determine whether this is a perceived benefit or if student learning actually improves with the K – 12 Catholic school system. Furthermore, specific system characteristics could be identified for systems that have improved student achievement. Finally, the importance of maintaining the mission of Catholic identity and faith formation among students within the system model should be explored. The impact of moving away from parishes to form more of an independent system may or may not have an impact on whether a school system remains authentically Catholic. A study of this nature would help answer the question. Similar to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's viability profile, a study or multiple studies of finance, education, and Catholic identity would lead to the creation of a system viability profile. The profile would help diocesan leaders identify systems that appear unviable and intervene at earlier stages to reduce enrollment threats, minimize unbalanced budgets, and eliminate the accumulation of substantial debt.



### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Several limitations exist in this study. First, although a substantial response rate was obtained for the systems (88%), the individual response rate was less than 50%. This led to several systems having only one school administrator or pastor response. This limits the study since the unit of analysis of each research question was the system. When conducting the analyses, it became obvious that some questions on the survey instrument were unclear to participants. Additionally, since each administrator completed the survey, conflicting answers from each system often arose during the data entry phase when only one answer was correct. Finally, with limited significance found between the perceived viability mean and independent system variables, perhaps the perceived viability mean needed to be improved in order to create a better predictor of viability.

## APPENDIX A

### Superintendent Letter

**Kenith C. Britt**  
President  
Catholic Central School  
1200 East High Street  
Springfield, OH 45505  
937.925.0085  
president@ccirish.org

August 25, 2010

Dear Superintendent or Current Diocesan Administrator,

I am a doctoral candidate at The Catholic University of America and would greatly appreciate your help in a study on K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. This study will examine the structure of Catholic school systems, factors that led to the consolidation and change in structure, and the perceived benefits and limitations of this “new” approach compared to the traditional parish-based or diocesan school.

My preliminary research has yielded 62 K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems across the country in roughly 30 dioceses. **Attached to this letter is a listing of all the dioceses that I’ve found to have K – 12 school systems and the number in each diocese.** The definition of a K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system for my study is twofold: 1) the system is comprised of both elementary and secondary schools which is led by a single administrative unit (board, president, superintendent, director, etc.) and 2) the schools within the system were single parish-based, diocesan, or private schools prior to the change to a consolidated system.

Before I can proceed with my study, I need to collect information related to school systems in your diocese, especially if it is not listed on the attached sheet. Particularly, I will be attempting to collect the names of all the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems along with the administrative head (president, dean, director, etc) and their school addresses within your diocese.

Please include as much information as you can, and send an email to me in Word, Excel, or simply in the body of the email itself. **My email address is president@ccirish.org.**

Your assistance in this study is extremely important, as no study has ever been conducted to this extent on consolidated Catholic school systems. Please send me your corrected information within **one week** after receiving this letter. In the coming academic year, I hope to initiate my study by surveying all individuals associated with consolidated Catholic school systems. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

In humble service, I am,

Kenith C. Britt  
PhD Candidate  
The Catholic University of America

## APPENDIX B

### Verification Letter

**Kenith C. Britt**  
1171 Ryan Road  
Springfield, OH 45503  
937.925.0085  
president@ccirish.org

August 26, 2010

Dear Current School Administrator,

I am a doctoral candidate at The Catholic University of America and would greatly appreciate your help in a study on consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. This study will examine the structure of Catholic school systems, factors that led to the consolidation and change in structure, and the perceived benefits and limitations of this “new” approach compared to the traditional parish-based or diocesan school.

My preliminary research has yielded 62 K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems across the country in roughly 30 dioceses. The definition of a K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system for my study is twofold: 1) they system is comprised of both elementary and secondary schools which is led by a single administrative unit (board, president, superintendent, director, etc.) and 2) the schools within the system were single parish-based, diocesan, or private schools prior to the change to a consolidated system.

Before I can proceed with my study, I need to collect information related to your school system. Particularly, I will be attempting to collect the names of all the schools and principals within your system including the addresses and telephone numbers. Additionally, it would be of interest to collect the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your major supporting parishes and their pastors. A major supporting parish is identified as one supporting the system through subsidy and/or where your Catholic families are registered. Most school systems will have multiple schools and supporting parishes.

Attached to this letter is an example of the information that I am requesting. Please include as much information as you can, and mail the information to me in the enclosed envelope. If it is more convenient, you could email me the information as well in Word or Excel. **My email address is president@ccirish.org.**

Your assistance in this study is extremely important, as no study has ever been conducted to this extent on consolidated Catholic school systems. Please send me your corrected information within **one week** after receiving this letter. In the coming academic year, I will be sending surveys to you and all of the individuals associated with consolidated Catholic school systems. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

In humble service, I am,

Kenith C. Britt  
PhD Candidate  
The Catholic University of America

## APPENDIX C

### Survey Letter to Participants

**Kenith C. Britt**  
1171 Ryan Road  
Springfield, OH 45503  
937.925.0085  
president@ccirish.org

(Insert Date)

Dear **(insert name)** or Current School or Parish Administrator,

I am a PhD candidate at The Catholic University of America and would greatly appreciate your participation in a survey of K - 12 consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. This study will examine the structure of K – 12 consolidated Catholic school systems, factors that led to the consolidation and change in structure, and the perceived viability of this approach compared to the traditional parish-based or diocesan school. As a Catholic school administrator for nearly a decade, I understand the importance of working to help Catholic schools remain viable.

The attached survey requires some background information regarding your school system, and the survey should take approximately 30 – 60 minutes to complete. Survey questions include topics such as a) enrollment, b) finance, c) reasons for the change in structure, and d) perceptions on the viability of this model. **Your participation is completely voluntary, and you have the right to refuse to answer any question.**

No individual, school system, or parish will be identified in the study. The only foreseeable risk is the amount of time involved in participating in the survey. Although there is no direct benefit to your school system, a potential benefit may be experienced through the research findings.

A summary of the research findings will be available within 12 – 18 months. **I ask that you not write your name, phone number, or email address on the survey so that your privacy may be protected.** If you are interested in receiving results of the study, please write or email to the address above. You may request these findings whether you participate in the study or not.

Feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns. My contact information is found above.

I have enclosed an addressed, stamped envelope for you to return the survey. Please return this survey by **(insert date here)**. Your assistance in this study is extremely important, as there is a limited population of consolidated Catholic school systems in the United States. I do hope that you decide to participate.

In humble service, I am,

Kenith C. Britt, PhD Candidate  
The Catholic University of America

## APPENDIX D

### Survey Instrument



## K – 12 Consolidated Catholic School System Survey

The purpose of this survey is determine the factors that led communities to consolidate elementary and secondary schools to form a system, the different types of structures of school systems that exist, and the extent that the K – 12 consolidated Catholic school system is a viable model. Many dioceses use different terms for a consolidated school system while some do not use the word system at all. For the purposes of this study, a consolidated Catholic school system is a group of schools within a community or region led by a single administrative unit (president/director/ceo and/or board). You many consider yourself a “school” with a single or multiple campuses as opposed to a “school system,” but for the purposes of this study, the term “school system” will be used.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and your responses will remain confidential.

-----

### *Introduction and Demographic Information*

Please mark an X on only one line for each question.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What is your current position?                                  | 4. State in life:                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Pastor                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A. Clergy                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. Principal                              | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Religious                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. President/Director                     | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Layperson                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Principal and President/Director       |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. Other _____                            | 5. How long have you been ordained or vowed?          |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> A. Not a priest or religious |
| 2. How long have you served in your current position?              | <input type="checkbox"/> B. 1 – 5 years               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. First year                             | <input type="checkbox"/> C. 6 – 10 years              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. 2 – 5 years                            | <input type="checkbox"/> D. 11 – 15 years             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. 6 – 10 years                           | <input type="checkbox"/> E. More than 15 years        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. 11 – 15 years                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. More than 15 years                     | 6. Highest degree earned                              |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> A. Bachelors                 |
| 3. How long have you served in the ministry of Catholic education? | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Masters                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. First year                             | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Specialist                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. 2 – 5 years                            | <input type="checkbox"/> D. Doctorate                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. 6 – 10 years                           | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Other _____               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. 11 – 15 years                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. More than 15 years                     | 7. Gender   |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> A. Male                      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Female                    |

### *School System Information*

Please consult your business manager if you are unsure of the answers to this section

1. In what year was did the schools consolidate?  
Year \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ D. Religious
  - ☐ E. Corporate/Private
  - ☐ F. Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what zip code is the school system located?  
Zip code \_\_\_\_\_
3. In what NCEA region does your school system exist?
  - ☐ A. New England  
(CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)
  - ☐ B. Mideast  
(DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA)
  - ☐ C. Great Lakes  
(IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)
  - ☐ D. Plains  
(IA, MN, MS, NE, ND, SD)
  - ☐ E. Southeast  
(AL, AK, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)
  - ☐ F. West/Far West  
(AK, AR, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OK, OR, TX, UT, WA, WY)
4. What location does your school system exist?
  - ☐ A. Inner-city
  - ☐ B. Urban
  - ☐ C. Suburban
  - ☐ D. Rural
5. What is the sponsorship of the school system?
  - ☐ A. Parish
  - ☐ B. Inter-Parish
  - ☐ C. Diocesan
6. What is the authority of the current school board?
  - ☐ A. Advisory/Consultative
  - ☐ B. Limited-Jurisdiction
  - ☐ C. Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. Who makes the final decisions regarding school finances and other governance issues?
  - ☐ A. President/Director
  - ☐ B. Principal
  - ☐ C. Board
  - ☐ D. Catholic Schools Office
  - ☐ E. Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many schools/campuses are considered part of the school system?  
List number \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many principals are part of the school system?  
List number \_\_\_\_\_
10. To whom do the principals report to in terms of finances, curriculum, etc.?
  - ☐ A. President/Director
  - ☐ B. Board
  - ☐ C. Pastor
  - ☐ D. Catholic Schools Office
  - ☐ E. Other \_\_\_\_\_

11. To whom does the president/director report to for final authority?

- ☐ A. Board
- ☐ B. Catholic Schools Office
- ☐ C. Pastor/Dean
- ☐ D. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ E. Not Applicable

12. Did any schools/campuses close when (at the time) the school system was established?

- ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ B. No

13. Have any schools/campuses closed since the school system was established?

- ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ B. No

14. Have any schools/campuses opened since the school system was established?

- ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ B. No

15. How many parishes support the school system through a direct financial subsidy?

- ☐ A. 0
- ☐ B. 1
- ☐ C. 2 – 5
- ☐ D. 6 – 10
- ☐ E. More than 10

16. Besides direct financial support in the way of subsidy, what other ways do the parishes support the school system?

**(Please check all that apply.)**

- ☐ A. Financial assistance
- ☐ B. Building repairs
- ☐ C. Utility payments
- ☐ D. No support
- ☐ E. Other \_\_\_\_\_

17. Not including PK programs, describe how the elementary school buildings are structured.

**(Please check all that apply.)**

- ☐ A. K – 8
- ☐ B. K – 6
- ☐ C. K – 5
- ☐ D. K – 4
- ☐ E. K – 3
- ☐ F. K – 2
- ☐ G. Other \_\_\_\_\_

18. Describe how the junior high/middle school building is structured.

**(Please check all that apply.)**

- ☐ A. 6 – 8
- ☐ B. 7 – 8
- ☐ C. 7 – 9
- ☐ D. No jr hs or ms building

19. Describe how the high school building is structured.

**(Please check all that apply.)**

- ☐ A. 6 – 12
- ☐ B. 7 – 12
- ☐ C. 9 – 12
- ☐ D. 10 – 12
- ☐ E. Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. What is the total enrollment of the school system (K – 12)
- ☐ A. Less than 200  
☐ B. 200 – 400  
☐ C. 401 – 600  
☐ D. 601 – 800  
☐ E. 801 – 1000  
☐ F. More than 1000
21. What is the average Catholic tuition for each level of your school system?
- Elementary \_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary \_\_\_\_\_
22. What percentage of the school system's operating budget comes from tuition and fees?
- ☐ A. Less than 20%  
☐ B. 20 – 30%  
☐ C. 31 – 50%  
☐ D. 51 – 75%  
☐ E. More than 75%
23. What percentage of the school system's operating budget comes from parish subsidy?
- ☐ A. No subsidy  
☐ B. Less than 20%  
☐ C. 20 – 30%  
☐ D. 31 – 50%  
☐ E. 51 – 75%  
☐ F. More than 75%
24. What percentage of the school system's operating budget comes from development and fundraising?
- ☐ A. Less than 20%  
☐ B. 20 – 30%  
☐ C. 31 – 50%  
☐ D. 51 – 75%  
☐ E. More than 75%
25. Does the school system have debt to the diocese/archdiocese or any other entity?
- ☐ A. Yes  
(If so, how much \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ B. No  
☐ C. Uncertain
26. Have any parishes accumulated debt to the school system?
- ☐ A. Yes  
(If so, how much \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ B. No  
☐ C. Not Applicable
27. Describe the enrollment of the school system over the last three years (or since consolidation).
- ☐ A. Enrollment has declined 5% or more  
☐ B. Enrollment has remained within 5%  
☐ C. Enrollment has grown 5% or more
28. Describe the finances of the school system over the last three years (or since consolidation).
- ☐ A. Budget has not balanced  
☐ B. Both balanced and unbalanced budgets  
☐ C. Budget has balanced
29. Does the school system have its own endowment?
- ☐ A. Yes  
(Amount \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ B. No

30. Does the school system have a separate foundation?

☐ A. Yes

(Total Assets \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ B. No

*Structural Change and Viability*

1. What factors led the community to adopt the school system model. **(Please rank the top 5 in order of importance with 1 being the most important. Please leave the remaining four factors blank.)**

- ☐ A. Building maintenance and facility upkeep
- ☐ B. Centralize administrative responsibilities
- ☐ C. Decline of parish support (subsidy)
- ☐ D. Decline of quality leadership
- ☐ E. Enrollment Decline
- ☐ F. Expand/coordinate development/fundraising programs
- ☐ G. Financial challenges
- ☐ H. Inconsistent quality of education among schools
- ☐ I. Inconsistent finances between schools (tuition, salaries, building maintenance)

2. Please rate the following statements. **4 – Strongly Agree (SA), 3 – Agree (A), 2 – Disagree (D), and 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD)**

Statement	<u>SA</u> 4	<u>A</u> 3	<u>D</u> 2	<u>SD</u> 1
a. The change in structure to form a school system was necessary for the schools to survive.				
b. The system model has improved the parish finances (i.e., reduced subsidy).				
c. A well-defined strategic plan is in place and followed.				
d. An effective leader currently leads the school system.				
e. The school system model is a model that will survive.				
f. The system model has improved finances of the school system itself.				
g. The system model has improved fundraising and development efforts.				
h. Student enrollment has improved in the school system model.				
i. The system model has improved buildings/facilities.				

### Open-Ended Questions

Please complete your answers in the spaces below.

1. What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the school system model?
2. What do you feel are the greatest challenges of the school system model?
3. What would improve the school system model?
4. Do you have further comments not covered in the survey?

## APPENDIX E

### U.S. Consolidated Catholic School Systems Listing



## U.S. Consolidated Catholic School Systems by Diocese

System and Schools	Address	City	State	Zip	Diocese
Holy Spirit Catholic Regional School	601 James I. Harrison, Jr. Parkway	Tuscaloosa	AL	35405	Birmingham
Holy Spirit Middle/High School	601 James I. Harrison, Jr. Parkway	Tuscaloosa	AL	35405	
Holy Spirit Elementary School	711 James I. Harrison, Jr. Parkway	Tuscaloosa	AL	35405	
Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic School	16 Morton Road	McClellan	AL	36205	Birmingham
Sacred Heart Primary School	16 Morton Road	McClellan	AL	36205	
Sacred Heart Academy	16 Morton Road	McClellan	AL	36205	
Sacred Heart Preparatory	16 Morton Road	McClellan	AL	36205	
Minot Catholic Schools	316 11th Ave NW	Minot	ND	58703	Bismarck
Little Flower Elementary School	800 University Avenue West	Minot	ND	58703	
Bishop Ryan High School	316 11th Avenue Northwest	Minot	ND	58703	
Mecklenberg Area Catholic Schools	1123 South Church St	Charlotte	NC	28203	Charlotte
	7702 Pineville-Matthews Rd	Charlotte	NC	28226	
Charlotte Catholic High School	3100 Park Road	Charlotte	NC	28209	
Holy Trinity Catholic Middle School					
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School	4225 Shamrock Drive	Charlotte	NC	28215	
St. Ann Catholic School	600 Hillside Ave.	Charlotte	NC	28209	
St. Gabriel Catholic School	3028 Providence Rd.	Charlotte	NC	28211	
St. Mark Catholic School	14750 Stumptown Rd.	Huntersville	NC	28078	
St. Matthew Catholic School	11525 Elm Lane	Charlotte	NC	28227	
St. Patrick Catholic School	1125 Buchanan Street	Charlotte	NC	28203	
Catholic Central School	1200 E. High St	Springfield	OH	45505	Cincinnati
Catholic Central Elementary School	800 Lagonda Avenue	Springfield	OH	45503	
Catholic Central Junior/Senior High School	1200 E. High St	Springfield	OH	45505	
Notre Dame Schools	2220 Sunrise Ave	Portsmouth	OH	45662	Columbus
Notre Dame Junior/Senior High School	2220 Sunrise Ave	Portsmouth	OH	45662	
Notre Dame Elementary School	1401 Gallia Street	Portsmouth	OH	45662	
Holy Trinity Catholic Schools	2600 Avenue A	Fort Madison	IA	52627	Davenport
Holy Trinity Catholic Junior/Senior High School	2600 Avenue A	Fort Madison	IA	52627	
Holy Trinity Catholic Elementary School	413 Avenue C	West Point	IA	52657	
Burlington Notre Dame	702 S Roosevelt Ave	Burlington	IA	52601	Davenport
Burlington Notre Dame Middle/High School	702 S Roosevelt Ave.	Burlington	IA	52601	
Burlington Notre Dame Elementary School	702 S Roosevelt Ave.	Burlington	IA	52601	
Prince of Peace Catholic Education System	312 South 4th Street	Clinton	IA	52732	Davenport
Prince of Peace Academy	312 South 4th St.	Clinton	IA	52732	
Prince of Peace Preparatory	312 South 4th St.	Clinton	IA	52732	
Regina Catholic Education Center	2140 Rochester Ave	Iowa City	IA	52245	Davenport

Regina Catholic Middle/High School	2150 Rochester Ave.	Iowa City	IA	52245	
Regina Catholic Elementary School	2150 Rochester Ave.	Iowa City	IA	52245	
St. Albert Catholic Schools	400 Gleason Avenue	Council Bluffs	IA	51503	Davenport
St. Albert Junior/Senior High School	400 Gleason Avenue	Council Bluffs	IA	51503	
St. Albert Elementary School	400 Gleason Avenue	Council Bluffs	IA	51503	
Bosco System	PO Box 106	Gilbertville	IA	50634	Dubuque
Immaculate Conception Center	P.O. Box 256	Gilbertville	IA	50634	
Cedar Valley Catholic Schools	3231 W. 9th Street	Waterloo	IA	50702	Dubuque
Columbus Catholic High School	3231 West 9th Street	Waterloo	IA	50702	
Blessed Sacrament Grade School	600 Stephen Avenue	Waterloo	IA	50701	
Sacred Heart Grade School	620 West 5th Street	Waterloo	IA	50702	
St. Edward Grade School	139 E. Mitchell	Waterloo	IA	50702	
Holy Family Catholic Schools	2005 Kane Street	Dubuque	IA	52001	Dubuque
Wohlert Catholic	2005 Kane Street	Dubuque	IA	52001	
Mazzuchelli Middle School	2005 Kane Street	Dubuque	IA	52001	
Resurrection School	4300 Asbury Rd.	Dubuque	IA	52002	
St. Anthony School/OLG	2175 Rosedale	Dubuque	IA	52001	
Holy Ghost School	2981 Central Ave.	Dubuque	IA	52001	
St. Columbille School	1198 Rush St.	Dubuque	IA	52003	
Marquette Catholic Schools	502 Franklin Street	Bellevue	IA	52031	Dubuque
Marquette Catholic High School	503 Franklin Street	Bellevue	IA	52032	
St. Joseph Elementary School	405 Franklin St.	Bellevue	IA	52031	
Newman Catholic Schools	2445 19th St. S.W.	Mason City	IA	50401	Dubuque
Newman Catholic Middle/High School	2445 19th St. S.W.	Mason City	IA	50401	
Newman Catholic Elementary School	2000 S. McKinley	Mason City	IA	50401	
DuBois Area Catholic School System	200 Central Christian	DuBois	PA	15801	Erie
DuBois Central Catholic Middle/High School	200 Central Christian Rd	DuBois	PA	15801	
DuBois Central Catholic Elementary School	200 Central Christian Rd	DuBois	PA	15801	
Vincennes Catholic Schools	210 Barnett St	Vincennes	IN	47591	Evansville
Rivet Middle/High School	210 Barnett St.	Vincennes	IN	57591	
Flaget Elementary School	800 Vigo St.	Vincennes	IN	57591	
Washington Catholic Schools	201 N. E. Second St.	Washington	IN	45701	Evansville
Washington Catholic High School	201 N. E. Second St.	Washington	IN	45701	
Washington Catholic Middle School	201 N. E. Second St.	Washington	IN	45701	
Washington Catholic Elementary School	310 N. E. Second St.	Washington	IN	45701	
Fargo Catholic Schools Network	5600 25th Street S.	Fargo	ND	58103	Fargo
Holy Spirit Elementary	1441 Eighth Street N.	Fargo	ND	58102	
Nativity Elementary	1825 11th Street S.	Fargo	ND	58103	
Shanley Middle/High School	5600 25th Street S.	Fargo	ND	58104	
Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools	123 E. Eleventh St.	Traverse City	MI	49684	Gaylord
Holy Angels Elementary	130 East Tenth Street	Traverse City	MI	49684	
Immaculate Conception Elementary	218 Vine Street	Traverse City	MI	49684	
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Middle School	1601 Three Mile Road	Traverse City	MI	49684	
St. Francis High School	123 East Eleventh	Traverse City	MI	49684	

	Street				
Manistee Catholic Central Schools	1200 U.S. 31 South	Manistee	MI	49660	Gaylord
Manistee Catholic Central Elementary/High School	1200 U.S. 31 South	Manistee	MI	49660	
Greater Muskegon Catholic Schools	1145 West Laketon Ave	Muskegon	MI	49441	Grand Rapids
Muskegon Catholic Elementary School	1145 West Laketon Ave	Muskegon	MI	49441	
Muskegon Catholic High School	1145 West Laketon Ave	Muskegon	MI	49441	
Billings Catholic Schools	120 South 34th Street	Billings	MT	59101	Great Falls-Billings
St. Francis Primary	511 Custer Avenue	Billings	MT	59102	
	1734 Yellowstone Avenue	Billings	MT	59102	
St. Francis Intermediate		Billings	MT	59102	
St. Francis Upper School	205 North 32nd Street	Billings	MT	59101	
Billings Central Catholic High School	3 Broadwater Avenue	Billings	MT	59101	
ACES Xavier Educational System	101 E. Northland Ave.	Appleton	WI	54911	Green Bay
	1600 W Prospect Avenue	Appleton	WI	54914	
Xavier High School		Appleton	WI	54914	
St. Joseph Middle School	2626 N Oneida Street	Appleton	WI	54911	
St. Bernadette Elementary	2331 E Lourdes Drive	Appleton	WI	54915	
Catholic Central Elementary	313 S State Street	Appleton	WI	54911	
St. Pius X Elementary	500 W Marquette	Appleton	WI	54911	
	1810 N McDonald Street	Appleton	WI	54911	
St. Thomas More Elementary		Appleton	WI	54911	
Twin City Catholic Education System	1050 Zephyr Drive	Neenah	WI	54956	
St. Gabriel	900 Geiger St.	Neenah	WI	54956	Green Bay
St. Margaret Mary	610 Division St.	Neenah	WI	54956	
St. Mary Elementary	540 Second St.	Menasha	WI	54952	
Seton Catholic Middle School	312 Nicolet Blvd.	Menasha	WI	54952	
St. Mary Central High School	1050 Zephyr Drive	Neenah	WI	54956	
Unified Catholic Schools of Oshkosh	110 N Sawyer St.	Oshkosh	WI	54902	Green Bay
St. Francis Cabrini Elementary School	619 Merritt Avenue	Oshkosh	WI	54901	
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Elementary School	1207 Oregon St	Oshkosh	WI	54902	
St. John Neumann Middle School	10 N Sawyer St	Oshkosh	WI	54902	
Lourdes High School	110 N Sawyer St.	Oshkosh	WI	54902	
Lebanon Catholic School	1400 Chestnut Street	Lebanon	PA	17042	Harrisburg
Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School	2001 Clinton Avenue	Coal Township	PA	17866	Harrisburg
Our Lady of Lourdes High School	2001 Clinton Avenue	Coal Township	PA	17866	
Our Lady of Lourdes Elementary School	2001 Clinton Avenue	Coal Township	PA	17866	
Butte Central Catholic Schools	9 S Idaho	Butte	MT	59701	Helena
Butte Central High School	9 S Idaho	Butte	MT	59701	
Butte Central Elementary/Middle School	1100 Delaware Avenue	Butte	MT	59701	
Missoula Catholic Schools	320 Edith St.	Missoula	MT	59801	Helena
St. Joseph Elementary School	503 Edith St.	Missoula	MT	59801	
Loyola Sacred Heart High School	320 Edith St.	Missoula	MT	59801	
Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools	63 24th Street North	Battle Creek	MI	49015	Kalamazoo

St. Joseph Elementary School	47 North 23rd Street	Battle Creek	MI	49015	
St. Joseph Middle School	44 North 25th Street	Battle Creek	MI	49015	
St. Philip High School	20 Cherry Street	Battle Creek	MI	49017	
Catholic Schools of Greater Kalamazoo	1000 West Kilgore Road	Kalamazoo	MI	49008	Kalamazoo
Hackett Catholic Central High School	1000 West Kilgore Road	Kalamazoo	MI	49008	
St. Monica Elementary School	530 West Kilgore Road	Kalamazoo	MI	49008	
St. Augustine Cathedral School	600 West Michigan Ave.	Kalamazoo	MI	49007	
Lake Michigan Area Catholic Schools	915 Pleasant St.	St. Joseph	MI	49085	Kalamazoo
Lake Michigan Catholic High School	915 Pleasant St.	St. Joseph	MI	49085	
Lake Michigan Catholic Middle School	915 Pleasant St.	St. Joseph	MI	49085	
St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School	3165 Washington Ave.	St. Joseph	MI	49085	
Leavenworth Regional Catholic Schools	320 N. Broadway	Leavenworth	KS	66048	Kansas City (Kansas)
Xavier Elementary	721 Osage	Leavenworth	KS	66048	
Immaculata High School	600 Shawnee Street	Leavenworth	KS	66048	
Aquinas Catholic Schools	521 S. 13th Street	La Crosse	WI	54601	La Crosse
Aquinas High School	315 11th Street South	La Crosse	WI	54601	
Aquinas Middle School	315 11th Street South	La Crosse	WI	54601	
Blessed Sacrament School	2404 King Street	La Crosse	WI	54601	
Cathedral School	1319 Ferry Street	La Crosse	WI	54601	
St. Patrick School	127 11th Avenue North	Onalaska	WI	54650	
Regis Catholic Schools	2728 Mall Drive	Eau Claire	WI	54701	La Crosse
Regis Middle/High School	2100 Fenwick Avenue	Eau Claire	WI	54701	
Immaculate Conception School	1703 Sherwin Avenue	Eau Claire	WI	54701	
St. James/St. Mary School	2502 11th Street	Eau Claire	WI	54703	
Chippewa Area Catholic Schools	1316 Bel Air Blvd	Chippewa Falls	WI	54709	La Crosse
St. Charles Borromeo Primary School	429 W Spruce St	Chippewa Falls	WI	54709	
Holy Ghost Elementary School	436 W Main St	Chippewa Falls	WI	54709	
Notre Dame Middle School	1316 Bel Air Blvd	Chippewa Falls	WI	54709	
McDonell Central Catholic High School	1316 Bel Air Blvd	Chippewa Falls	WI	54709	
Marshfield Area Catholic Schools	710 S Columbus Ave	Marshfield	WI	54449	La Crosse
St. John's & Our Lady of Peace	307 N Walnut Ave	Marshfield	WI	54449	
Columbus Catholic Middle & High Schools	710 S Columbus Ave	Marshfield	WI	54449	
Newman Catholic Schools	619 Stark Street	Wausau	WI	54403	La Crosse
Newman Catholic Elementary School	604 N. 6th Ave.	Wausau	WI	54401	
Newman Catholic Elementary School	615 Stark St.	Wausau	WI	54403	
Newman Catholic Middle School	225 S. 28th Ave.	Wausau	WI	54401	
Newman Catholic High School	1130 W. Bridge St.	Wausau	WI	54401	
Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools	1004 First Street	Stevens Point	WI	54481	La Crosse
St. Bronislava School	3301 Willow Dr.	Plover	WI	54467	
St. Stanislaus/St Stephen Schools	2150 High St.	Stevens Point	WI	54481	

St. Peter Middle School	708 1st St.	Stevens Point	WI	54481	
Pacelli High School	1301 Maria Dr.	Stevens Point	WI	54481	
Assumption Catholic Schools	1120 Lincoln Street	Wisconsin Rapids	WI	54494	La Crosse
Assumption High School	445 Chestnut St.	Wisconsin Rapids	WI	54494	
Assumption Middle School	440 Meed St.	Wisconsin Rapids	WI	54494	
Central Catholic Jr/Sr High School	2410 S. 9th Street	Lafayette	IN	47909	Lafayette
St. Lawrence	1902 Meharry Street	Lafayette	IN	47904	
St. Mary School	1200 South Street	Lafayette	IN	47901	
St. Boniface School	813 North Street	Lafayette	IN	47901	
Messmer Catholic Schools	742 West Capitol Drive	Milwaukee	WI	53206	Milwaukee
Messmer Catholic High School	742 West Capitol Drive	Milwaukee	WI	53206	
Messmer Catholic Preparatory School	3027 North Fratney Street	Milwaukee	WI	53212	
St. Rose and St. Leo Catholic School	514 North 31st Street	Milwaukee	WI	53208	
St. Joseph Catholic Academy	2401 69th Street	Kenosha	WI	53143	Milwaukee
St. Joseph Catholic Academy - Secondary	2401 69th Street	Kenosha	WI	53143	
St. Joseph Catholic Academy - Elementary	2401 69th Street	Kenosha	WI	53143	
St. Mary's Springs Academy	114 Amory St.	Fond du Lac	WI	54935	Milwaukee
St. Mary's Springs High School	255 County Road K	Fond du Lac	WI	54935	
St. Mary's Springs Elementary and Middle School	114 Amory St.	Fond du Lac	WI	54935	
New Ulm Area Catholic Schools	515 North State St	New Ulm	MN	56073	New Ulm
Cathedral High School	600 N. Washington St.	New Ulm	MN	56073	
St. Anthony Elementary/Holy Trinity Middle School	515 N. State St	New Ulm	MN	56073	
Immaculate Heart Central Schools	1316 Ives Street	Watertown	NY	13601	Ogdensburg
Immaculate Heart Central Junior/Senior High School	1316 Ives Street	Watertown	NY	13601	
Immaculate Heart Central Intermediate School	733 South Massey Street	Watertown	NY	13601	
Immaculate Heart Central Elementary	122 Winthrop Street	Watertown	NY	13601	
Owensboro Catholic School System	1524 West Parrish Ave	Owensboro	KY	42301	Owensboro
Owensboro Catholic Elementary K-3 Campus	4017 Frederica Street	Owensboro	KY	42301	
Owensboro Catholic Elementary 4-6 Campus	525 East 23rd Street	Owensboro	KY	42301	
Owensboro Catholic Middle School	2540 Christie Place	Owensboro	KY	42301	
Owensboro Catholic High School	1524 W. Parrish Avenue	Owensboro	KY	42301	
The St. Mary Catholic School System	1243 Elmdale Rd	Paducah	KY	42003	Owensboro
St. Mary Catholic Middle/High School	1243 Elmdale Rd	Paducah	KY	42003	
St. Mary Catholic Elementary School	1243 Elmdale Rd	Paducah	KY	42003	
Marquette Academy	1000 Paul St.	Ottawa	IL	61350	Peoria
Marquette Academy High School	1000 Paul St.	Ottawa	IL	61350	
Marquette Academy Elementary Campus	1000 Paul St.	Ottawa	IL	61350	
Schlarman Academy	2112 N. Vermilion	Danville	IL	61832	Peoria

Rapid City Catholic School System	300 Fairmont Blvd.	Rapid City	SD	57701	Rapid City
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Elementary	431 Oakland St.	Rapid City	SD	57701	
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Middle School	431 Oakland St.	Rapid City	SD	57701	
St. Thomas More High School	300 Fairmont Blvd.	Rapid City	SD	57701	
Roanoke Catholic School	621 N. Jefferson St.	Roanoke	VA	24016	Richmond
Roanoke Catholic School - Lower School	621 N. Jefferson St.	Roanoke	VA	24016	
Roanoke Catholic School - Upper School	621 N. Jefferson St.	Roanoke	VA	24016	
Bay Area Catholic Schools	607 E. South Union St.	Bay City	MI	48706	Saginaw
All Saints Central Middle/High School	217 S. Monroe St	Bay City	MI	48078	
St. James School	715 14th St.	Bay City	MI	48078	
St. John School	619 Main St.	Essexville	MI	48732	
Holy Trinity School	1004 S. Wenona St.	Bay City	MI	48706	
St. Stanislaus School	900 S. Grant St.	Bay City	MI	48708	
Saginaw Area Catholic Schools	P.O. Box 6577	Saginaw	MI	48608	Saginaw
St. Stephen	1300 Malzahn	Saginaw	MI	48602	
St. Thomas Aquinas	2136 Berberovich	Saginaw	MI	48603	
Nouvel Catholic Central	2555 Wieneke	Saginaw	MI	48603	
Schools of the Sacred Heart	1715 Octavia St.	San Francisco	CA	94109	San Francisco
Stuart Hall High School	1715 Octavia St.	San Francisco	CA	94109	
Convent of the Sacred Heart High School	2222 Broadway St.	San Francisco	CA	94115	
Stuart Hall for Boys	2222 Broadway St.	San Francisco	CA	94115	
Convent of the Sacred Heart Elementary School	2222 Broadway St.	San Francisco	CA	94115	
St. Bernard's Catholic School	222 Dollison Street	Eureka	CA	95501	Santa Rosa
St. Bernard's Catholic School - Secondary	222 Dollison Street	Eureka	CA	95501	
St. Bernard's Catholic School - Elementary	222 Dollison Street	Eureka	CA	95501	
Bishop Garrigan Schools	1224 McCoy St.	Algona	IA	50511	Sioux City
Bishop Garrigan High School	1224 N. Mc Coy	Algona	IA	50511	
Seton Grade School	808 E. Lucas	Algona	IA	50511	
Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools	1018 Grandview Blvd.	Sioux City	IA	51103	Sioux City
Bishop Heelan High School	1021 Douglas St.	Sioux City	IA	51105	
Nativity School	4243 Natalia Way	Sioux City	IA	51106	
Immaculate Conception School	3719 Ridge Ave.	Sioux City	IA	51106	
St. Michael School	4105 Harrison St.	Sioux City	IA	51108	
Blessed Sacrament School	3030 Jackson St.	Sioux City	IA	51104	
Sacred Heart School	5010 Military Rd.	Sioux City	IA	51103	
Gehlen Catholic School	709 Plymouth St NE	Le Mars	IA	51031	Sioux City
Gehlen Catholic High School	709 Plymouth St NE	Le Mars	IA	51031	
Gehlen Catholic Elementary School	709 Plymouth St NE	Le Mars	IA	51031	
Kuemper Catholic School System	109 S. Clark Street	Carroll	IA	51401	Sioux City
Holy Spirit	201 S. Clark Street	Carroll	IA	51401	
St. Angela	116 S. East Street.	Carroll	IA	51401	
St. Lawrence Center	1519 N. West Street	Carroll	IA	51401	
Kuemper High School	109 S. Clark Street	Carroll	IA	51401	

Remsen St. Mary's Catholic Schools	523 Madison	Remsen	IA	51050	Sioux City
St. Mary High School	523 Madison St.	Remsen	IA	51050	
St. Mary Center	321 Fulton St.	Remsen	IA	51050	
Spalding Catholic Schools	510 Broad St Box 168	Granville	IA	51022	Sioux City
Spalding Catholic Junior/Senior High School	510 Broad St Box 168	Granville	IA	51022	
Spalding Catholic - Alton Center	510 Broad St Box 168	Granville	IA	51022	
Spalding Catholic - Hospers Center	510 Broad St Box 168	Granville	IA	51022	
St. Edmond Catholic School	501 N. 22nd Street	Fort Dodge	IA	50501	Sioux City
St. Edmond Elementary School	2321 6th Ave. N.	Fort Dodge	IA	50501	
St. Edmond Middle/High School	501 N. 22nd St.	Fort Dodge	IA	50501	
Storm Lake St. Mary's Catholic Schools	304 Seneca St.	Storm Lake	IA	50588	Sioux City
Storm Lake St. Mary's Elementary School	312 Seneca St.	Storm Lake	IA	50588	
Storm Lake St. Mary's High School	312 Seneca St.	Storm Lake	IA	50588	
Roncalli Schools	1400 North Dakota St.	Aberdeen	SD	57401	Sioux Falls
Roncalli Junior/Senior High School	1400 N. Dakota St.	Aberdeen	SD	57401	
Roncalli Elementary School	501 3rd Avenue SE	Aberdeen	SD	57401	
Roncalli Primary School	419 1st Avenue NE	Aberdeen	SD	57401	
Souix Falls Catholic Schools	3100 W. 41st St	Sioux Falls	SD	57105	Sioux Falls
	1800 S. Katie Ave.	Sioux Falls	SD		
St. Katharine Drexel School	Suite 2			57106	
Holy Spirit Catholic School	4309 S. Bahnson Ave.	Sioux Falls	SD	57103	
St. Lambert School	1000 S. Bahnson	Sioux Falls	SD	57103	
Saint Mary School	2001 S. 5th Ave.	Sioux Falls	SD	57105	
St. Michael School	1610 S. Marion Road	Sioux Falls	SD	57106	
O'Gorman Junior High School	3100 West 41st Street	Sioux Falls	SD	57105	
Joplin Area Catholic Schools	930 Pearl Avenue	Joplin	MO	64801	
McAuley High School	930 Pearl	Joplin	MO	64801	Springfield-Cape Girardeau
St. Mary's Elementary School	505 West 25th	Joplin	MO	64804	
St. Peter's Middle School	802 Byers	Joplin	MO	64801	
Springfield Catholic Schools	3520 S. Culpepper Circle Suite C	Springfield	MO	65804	Springfield-Cape Girardeau
Springfield Catholic HS	2340 S. Eastgate	Springfield	MO	65809	
St. Agnes School	531 South Jefferson	Springfield	MO	65806	
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Elementary	2200 W. Republic Road	Springfield	MO	65807	
Immaculate Conception School	3555A S. Fremont	Springfield	MO	65804	
Trenton Catholic Academy	175 Leonard Ave.	Hamilton	NJ	08610	Trenton
Trenton Catholic - Lower School	177 Leonard Ave.	Hamilton	NJ	08610	
Trenton Catholic - Upper School	175 Leonard Ave.	Hamilton	NJ	08610	
Kateri Catholic School System	3225 Pickle Road	Oregon	OH	43616	Toledo
Kateri Catholic Academy	3225 Pickle Road	Oregon	OH	43616	
Cardinal Stritch High School	3225 Pickle Road	Oregon	OH	43616	
Sandusky Central Catholic Schools	410 West Jefferson St.	Sandusky	OH	44870	Toledo
Sandusky Central Catholic Elementary School	410 West Jefferson Street	Sandusky	OH	44870	

St. Mary Central Catholic Junior/Senior High School	410 West Jefferson Street	Sandusky	OH	44870	
Loyola Catholic School	145 Good Counsel Drive	Mankato	MN	56001	Winona
Loyola Catholic Primary School	145 Good Counsel Drive	Mankato	MN	56001	
Loyola Catholic Intermediate School	110 North 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	Mankato	MN	56001	
Loyola Catholic High School	145 Good Counsel Drive	Mankato	MN	56001	
Rochester Catholic Schools	1710 Industrial Drive NW	Rochester	MN	55901	Winona
Holy Spirit School	5455 NW 50th Ave	Rochester	MN	55901	
Lourdes High School	621 West Center St	Rochester	MN	55902	
St. Francis School	318 SE 11th Ave.	Rochester	MN	55904	
St. John/St. Pius School	1205 NW 12th Ave	Rochester	MN	55901	
SS John and Paul School	541 W 34th Street	Ashtabula	OH	44004	Youngstown
SS John and Paul Elementary School	2150 Columbus Avenue	Ashtabula	OH	44004	
SS John and Paul High School	541 W 34th Street	Ashtabula	OH	44004	
Notre Dame School	261 Elm Road	Warren	OH	44483	Youngstown
Notre Dame - Blessed Sacrament School	3020 Reeves Road NE	Warren	OH	44483	



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