

# The Promise of Catholic Schools for Educating the Future of Los Angeles



“When I leave for school in the morning, my family knows that I will be safe and secure in my surroundings and that I will be shaped into a well-rounded person.”

CEF ALUMNUS, CLASS OF 2007

LMU|LA School of Education

# **The Promise of Catholic Schools**

## **For Educating the Future of Los Angeles**

### **Introduction**

Ever since the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk*, educators have been concerned about the quality of our national schools. Particular concern has focused on the school experience of ethnic minority and students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds who do not succeed at school in alarming numbers. In large urban areas such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, there is special concern because these major regions are majority ethnic minority and the future viability of our major cities depends on the ability of Latino, African American, and low-SES students to receive a quality education. Without such an education the future generation of our major cities will not be prepared to function as part of an educated citizenry or in the workforce. Thus, during the past 30 years there have been numerous reform efforts in public and private education focusing on closing the achievement gap and documenting best practices in urban education. Some of these efforts have focused on the unique ability of Catholic schools to provide a quality education for ethnic minority and low SES students, often at much less cost than public schools.

While there are studies from the 1980s and 1990s and much anecdotal evidence about the efficacy of Catholic education for ethnic minority and poor students, there is little recent data on this topic. In today's climate of assessment and accountability, there

is a need to measure the success of Catholic schools, especially in the inner city. Such data could encourage continued support for the Catholic school system but also provide an important dialogue with public education as both systems look to best practices for educating students who have not traditionally done well in school. In this context, the Loyola Marymount University (LMU) School of Education engaged in a pilot phase of a research initiative to examine the success factors of students attending inner-city Catholic schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese. This pilot study was focused only on a particular set of students in Los Angeles Catholic schools that received funding from the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) for a specific period of time. The results of this pilot study indicate that Catholic schools are making a major contribution in Los Angeles to ethnic minority and low SES students. While further phases of study are needed, these data support the axiom that “Catholic education is an advantage for life” – not just for the individual but also for society.

By entering into a historic agreement with the Catholic Education Foundation and the Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles (DCS), LMU was able to conduct a study that explored the promise of Catholic Schools for educating the future of Los Angeles. To continue to capture data, LMU is working with the CEF and DCS to assist schools in creating a culture of evidence where their results are used for continuous school improvement.

Initial findings from the study include:

- CEF tuition awardees are succeeding academically despite many personal and financial difficulties

- Parents of CEF tuition awardees perceive Catholic schools as partners in raising their children
- CEF alumni believe that Catholic schools have a profound impact on their lives and society
- Catholic school principals confirm that CEF tuition awards are key to keeping many urban schools open
- CEF alumni are committed to social justice

### **The Context for Catholic Education**

From their foundations, Catholic schools were dedicated to teaching the poor and ethnic immigrant groups. Elizabeth Seton, for example, started one of the first Catholic schools in the U.S. in 1810, which had the mission of being a free common school for the poor. As (Buetow, 1985) has indicated, many believe that she laid the foundation for the Catholic school pattern as it eventually evolved in the U.S. (p. 20). As Buetow (1985) further notes, later Catholic schools comprised several minority groups of immigrants (p. 35).

Foundational Catholic education documents have indicated the importance of Catholic schools and the type of Catholic school system that would best serve the mission of the Church to immigrant populations and the poor. Since the time of Vatican II in particular, a number of Church documents have been written on the subject of education. Several of these documents contain sections which discuss and build upon the ideas of inculturation as articulated in Vatican II and afterwards: *To Teach as Jesus Did* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972); *The Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic

Education, 1977); *Lay Catholics In Schools: Witnesses To Faith* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982). These documents help give an understanding of the relationship between faith and culture in Catholic schools. Faith becomes concrete in a particular culture and it is as cultural beings that we each experience our sense of the sacred. By emphasizing the importance of honoring culture and working with culture, these Church documents reveal one of the unique characteristics of Catholic schools and one that is a basis for their success in educating students from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Taken as a whole, the Church documents from Vatican II and others on education give the impetus for a Catholic approach to cultural diversity. The key elements are the openness to educational change and to new pedagogical styles, a desire to infuse the gospel message in all settings, and openness to culture and to a plurality of perspectives. Public schools are struggling to meet the challenge imposed by the changing demographics in the U.S. Many public school administrators are at a loss as how to form a cohesive school-wide community in the face of so much diversity. Although the issues and the demographics are the same for both public and Catholic schools, Catholic schools are better able to respond than public schools due to their flexibility, local control, ability to function as a community, and their tradition of educating the poor and immigrant children.

The work of Andrew Greeley and James S. Coleman and his associates strongly suggests that Catholic and other private schools are far better equipped to meet the educational needs of poor and ethnic minority students than the public schools. Greeley (Greeley, 2002) reported that ethnic minority Catholic school students were twice as

likely to have more than five hours of homework a week, and were nearly a third more likely to say that they were confident they could graduate from college when compared to public minority students from an equal family background. He further reported that Catholic school minority students were half a standard deviation above their public school counterparts in standardized achievement tests. (Greeley, 2002)

James Coleman's research on private and public schools confirms Greeley's observations. Coleman and Hoffer's (J. S. Coleman & Hoffer, 1987) report (commonly referred to as the third Coleman Report) reported that:

The achievement growth benefits of Catholic school attendance are especially strong for students who are one way or another disadvantaged: lower socioeconomic status, Black or Hispanic. (p. 213)

The dropout rates from Catholic schools are strikingly lower than those from public schools. The reduced dropout rate holds both for those who show no signs of problems as sophomores and for those who as sophomores are academically or disciplinarily at risk of dropping out. (p. 212)

Coleman tried to explain the results of his 1987 study as well as of a previous (J. H. Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982) study that indicated the superior academic quality of private schools for all students, most notably for minorities. He concluded that what is unique in a religiously based private school is that it acts as a functioning community for the student. This sense of community is so strong that it can help a student overcome deficiencies in the home environment. This type of community seldom exists in public schools and ordinarily is lacking in independent private schools.

As stated above, Catholic schools have had a tradition of educating poor and ethnic minority school children. Research shows that Catholic schools provide a better education to minority and at-risk students than public schools (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993); Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey & Youniss, 2000; Greeley, 2002). The research of James Coleman indicates that it is the ability of the Catholic school to form a sense of community that makes the difference for disadvantaged students.

Ouchi (2003) found that Catholic schools in his national study operate on one half to one fourth the budget per student than public schools yet consistently outperform public schools. Some have commented that this difference is accounted for by the “selection factor,” that Catholic schools only select top performing students from families devoted to education. Ouchi concluded that the performance in Catholic schools was attributed to the characteristics of Catholic education rather than the selection factor. In particular, he cited that Catholic education’s commitment to the idea of school as a community makes a key difference, a finding supported by previous research (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman). Additionally, Ouchi found that there were other keys to school success that were exemplified by the Catholic school structure. Schools with a strong, entrepreneurial principal, where budget and educational decisions were controlled locally, where teachers and principals are accountable for performance, with a decentralized decision making system, and a burning focus on student achievement are those that are the most successful.

In their edited book examining African American students in Catholic schools, Jordan Irvine and Foster (Irvine & Foster, 1996) note several common themes that ran

across the chapters. These included: a commitment to high academic achievement that was held by teachers, administrators, and parents; a rigorous academic curriculum; the importance of a nurturing community. While there were a variety of experiences of school presented in the book, the overwhelming sense is that Catholic schools provided a solid educational framework for these African American students, many of whom cited their experience in Catholic education as the academic foundation of their future success.

## **Methodology**

### **Setting**

The study was conducted in one of the most ethnically and economically diverse Catholic school systems in the United States. The elementary and high schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are located in three counties in Southern California: Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties. Catholic schools are located as far north as Santa Maria and as far south as Long Beach.

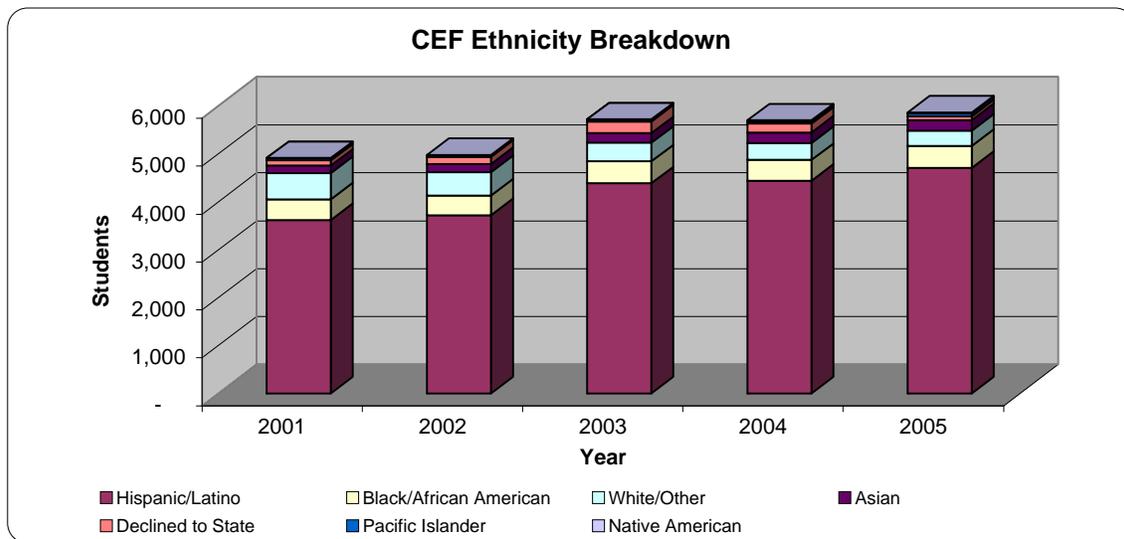
In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, there are 28 Diocesan and Parish high schools, 22 Private high schools, 9 Private elementary schools, and 216 Diocesan and Parish elementary schools. Private schools are schools that are sponsored by a religious order (e.g. the Jesuits). For 2007-2008, according to data from the Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles (<http://www.la-archdiocese.org>) all of these schools enroll close to 88,000 students. Enrollment data for the previous academic years are presented in the table appendix of this paper.

The study focuses on the students who have been supported by the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) in the years 2001-2005. This group of students was

selected for the study primarily because they represent the most underserved students in the Catholic school system in this region and more closely resemble the economic, ethnic and personal backgrounds of their peers in the schools they would attend if their Catholic school was not available to them. Other reasons for selecting this group include: (a) multiple years of data available through the CEF on each student, (b) the sample size could be tracked according to each student's record, (c) the students in the survey were attending Archdiocesan schools (as opposed to private Catholic schools), which serve the poor in the poorest neighborhoods and (d) the researchers were able to contact students and their families directly to determine if they continued and graduated after transferring their Catholic high school.

The CEF was founded in 1987 to provide tuition assistance to students who would otherwise not be able to attend Catholic schools due to financial limitations. As of 2007, the CEF has provided about \$80 million in tuition assistance to 88,000 students. The CEF primarily supports students in schools that receive a subsidy from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Out of the 50 high schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the CEF support students in 30 of these high schools and 8 of those schools are subsidized. The CEF supports 167 of the 225 elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and 44 of those schools are subsidized.

An overwhelming majority of the students the CEF supports are ethnic minorities. The following chart and table represents information on the ethnic background of CEF students from 2001 – 2005.

**Chart 1: Ethnic Background of CEF Students****Table 1: Ethnic Background of CEF Students**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>2001</b>		<b>2002</b>		<b>2003</b>		<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	3,621	73.76%	3,723	74.86%	4,382	76.66%	4,439	77.96%	4,706	80.31%
Black/African American	426	8.68%	409	8.22%	457	8.00%	432	7.59%	457	7.80%
White/Other	548	11.16%	485	9.75%	389	6.81%	351	6.16%	322	5.49%
Asian	155	3.16%	170	3.42%	200	3.50%	219	3.85%	215	3.67%
Declined to State	109	2.22%	146	2.94%	241	4.22%	186	3.27%	83	1.42%
Pacific Islander	50	1.02%	39	0.78%	44	0.77%	40	0.70%	54	0.92%
Native American	-	0.00%	1	0.02%	3	0.05%	27	0.47%	23	0.39%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4,909</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>4,973</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,716</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,694</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,860</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

By definition of its mission, the CEF supports families who are living in or at the threshold of poverty. The following chart provides information on income guidelines that qualify a family for a CEF award:

**Table 2: CEF Income Guidelines**

Household size	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
1	\$12,319	\$12,483	\$12,842	\$13,246	\$13,918	\$13,918	\$14,707	\$15,020	\$15,646
2	\$16,535	\$16,819	\$17,357	\$17,850	\$18,673	\$18,673	\$19,718	\$20,306	\$21,060
3	\$20,751	\$21,154	\$21,872	\$22,455	\$23,427	\$23,427	\$24,731	\$25,611	\$26,490
4	\$24,967	\$25,490	\$26,387	\$27,060	\$28,181	\$28,181	\$29,738	\$30,917	\$31,922
5	\$29,182	\$29,825	\$30,902	\$31,664	\$32,935	\$32,935	\$34,748	\$36,207	\$37,337
6	\$33,398	\$34,161	\$35,417	\$36,269	\$37,689	\$37,689	\$39,759	\$41,508	\$42,763
7	\$37,641	\$38,496	\$39,931	\$40,873	\$42,443	\$42,443	\$44,768	\$46,820	\$48,199
8	\$41,830	\$42,832	\$44,446	\$45,478	\$47,197	\$47,197	\$49,779	\$52,116	\$53,620

### Students in the Study

The primary participants in the study were students composed of the population of Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) funded students who were 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in 2000-2001 and continued to 9<sup>th</sup> grade; 567 student records were examined to answer the research question on 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade continuation rates. Of these 42.3% of the students were male, and 57.5% were female. The following table represents the ethnic background of these students:

**Table 3: Student Ethnic Background  
(Continuation Rate Sample)**

	Number	Percent
Asian	19	3.40
Black/African American	37	6.50
Declined to State	3	0.50
Hispanic/Latino	432	76.20
Pacific Islander	6	1.10
White/Other	70	12.30
Total	567	100.0

The next study participants were CEF funded high school students. Student records of these students were examined in order to analyze their individual progress and graduation from 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This sample contained 205 student records. We believe the decrease in sample size from the previous sample is due to fewer students being awarded CEF scholarships in high school, among other factors. Of these 40% were male and 59.5% of the students were female (0.5% declined to state their gender). The following table represents the ethnic background of these students:

**Table 4: Student Ethnic Background  
(Graduation Rate Sample)**

	Number	Percent
Asian	6	2.93
Black/African American	9	4.39
Declined to State	2	0.98
Hispanic/Latino	163	79.51
Pacific Islander	1	0.49
White/Other	24	11.70
Total	205	100.00

### **Respondents in the Study**

Parents of students who were receiving a CEF scholarship were asked to complete a survey about their experience of Catholic schools. The 1808 parents who completed the survey were diverse in ethnic background, and levels of education. The following tables represent the demographic information of the parents who completed the survey:

**Table 5: Parent Ethnic Background**

	Number	Percent
Asian	66	3.65
Black/African American	131	7.25
Declined to State	10	0.55
Hispanic/Latino	1417	78.37
Pacific Islander	17	0.94
White	92	5.09
Other	75	4.15
Total	1808	100.00

Catholic school principals in the 197 schools with students receiving CEF funding were asked to complete a survey about their experience of the Catholic schools and the CEF program. The 136 principals who completed the survey were all serving as principals of Catholic elementary or high schools. On average, the principals in the study had served Catholic schools as a teacher or administrator for 23 years. During that time, the average length of service as a principal was 6 years.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Data for the study were collected from various stakeholders and participants of Catholic schools in Los Angeles. All Participants and Respondents had a connection or were impacted by the Catholic Education Foundation at some point in their lives. Some of the data sources include information directly from student records from the Catholic schools and records from the Catholic Education Foundation. Data were gathered under a Agreement providing for the confidentiality of the students by using only a CEF-created Student ID tracking number.

Data collection was focused on two cohorts of CEF-supported students: (a) Data were gathered on one cohort of CEF-supported students to investigate continuation rates.

These students completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Catholic schools in 2000/2001 and were followed into the fall of 2001 to confirm their enrollment at either a Catholic or other high school.

(b) For the second cohort of CEF-supported students, data were collected on students who were enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade at a Catholic high school in 2001 and graduated from high school in 2005.

These students as well as their parents and principals were asked to complete surveys. Data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methodology to answer three questions that initiated the research.

To answer the first research question, “What are the continuation rates for CEF supported students?” a sample of students were examined who were 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in 2000-2001 and studied whether or not they continued to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The entire population was 603 student records; of these there were 567 complete student records. After accounting for missing data the sample size for continuation rates was 567 students. Given the population of students studied and their socioeconomic backgrounds, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation is a milestone achievement and continuing on to high school is not taken for granted. The focus of this question is continuous enrollment of these CEF students from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The purpose of this question was two fold: (a) To determine how many students who graduate from a Catholic elementary school continue on to high school, and (b) To determine how many students continue on to a Catholic high school, where tuition costs tend to be much higher than the tuition of an elementary school. All of the 567 students in this cohort received tuition support from the CEF and completed elementary school as 8<sup>th</sup> graders in 2001.

*Continuation rate* was defined as the percentage of students who completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Spring 2001 and continued on to 9<sup>th</sup> grade in Fall 2001. A student who enrolled in either a Catholic high school or any other high school as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader in the fall of 2001 was deemed as having *continued*. Our study found certain students who returned to attend Catholic high school in later grades. Continuation rates were calculated by dividing the number of students that continued onto 9<sup>th</sup> grade in fall of 2001 by the total sample size of 567.

For the second research question, “What is the graduation rate of CEF-supported students,” data analysis still focused on the numbers of students from the above cohort who enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in Fall 2001 and who continued to receive CEF funding because they attended one of the 30 Catholic high schools CEF supports [i.e. not private Catholic high schools]. The population of this group was 241 students from which there were 205 complete student records. After accounting for missing data the sample size for this question was 205. These students were followed from Fall 2001 until June 2005.

*Graduation rate* in this study was defined as the percentage of students who were enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in Fall 2001 and graduated with a high school diploma in June 2005. The study tracked students who left Catholic high schools [moved away, affordability, etc] in this cohort. Graduation rates were calculated by dividing the number of students who graduated with a high school diploma by the total cohort sample size of 205.

The third research question used both qualitative and quantitative methodology. To answer the question, “What is the long-term impact of the CEF and Catholic schools on students, principals, and parents?” data from principals, parents and CEF alumni

surveys were analyzed. These respondents included current elementary and high school principals, parents of CEF students on record for the years 2001-2007 and CEF alumni in years 1987-1993 and 2002-2007 (the first five years of the CEF program and the most recent five years). A CEF alumnus is defined as any student who received a tuition award for any duration. These surveys were not limited to the 2001-2005 years of the study because the questions did not specifically relate to those students.

The principal survey was completed by 136 Catholic school principals, or 70% of the principals at the 197 schools CEF supports. The principal surveys asked questions on the impact of CEF support to the school and students, and the effect of Catholic education on the development of students (moral, faith, critical thinking, sense of social justice). Demographic information on the principal was also collected (e.g. number of years of service to Catholic schools). The principal surveys were analyzed using qualitative methods. Themes were extracted from the question that asked, "What difference has financial support from the CEF made to the lives of the students in your school?" Qualitative methodology was also used to analyze the responses to the question that asked principals to share stories of individual students who have been impacted by the CEF support. A copy of this survey can be found in the appendix of this report.

The parent surveys were completed by 1808 parents out of a total mailing of 9833, reflecting an 18.39% response rate. The response rate could have been higher. Thirty percent of the surveys were returned as undeliverable. Thus, if only surveys that were actually delivered are considered, the response rate would be 35%. The children of these parents all received funding from the CEF (continuous or not) from 2001 to 2007. Some of the parent respondents had children who had already graduated from high school

while other parents still had children who were enrolled in either elementary school or high school. Each parent received the survey in English and Spanish and was asked to complete whichever version they felt comfortable completing.

Descriptive statistics were used to study data on questions that were answered using a Likert scale. These questions focused on demographic information, perceptions of the effectiveness of Catholic schools for college preparation, faith development, and personal development (e.g. “I feel that my child’s Catholic school education made him/her closer to God and the Church”). Themes were extracted from answers to Question 18, 19, and 20, which were more open-ended in nature. These questions asked parents to describe their involvement with Catholic schools and the difference that Catholic schools made on the lives of the children. A copy of the survey is included in the appendix of this study.

Over 15,000 surveys were sent to CEF alumni that were in the first and most recent five-year periods between 1987 and 2007 using their last known address. The alumni in the first five years were almost entirely returned for lack of current address information. These families are transient due to their economic situation and all attempts to locate them either directly or through the school were made more difficult because of constant address changes. There was some confusion between the families who received a student survey and a parent questionnaire in responding to both, so the alumni response (which was mailed second) of only 314 was disappointing. Furthermore, the CEF defines an alumni as any student who received a tuition award. The questionnaire was directed to students who had graduated from high school. This confusion also contributed to the low response rate. With such a small response sample, only the qualitative data were used for

this study. Answers to open ended questions were analyzed. A copy of the alumni survey can be found in the appendix of this paper.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The students supported by the CEF have overwhelmingly benefited from a Catholic School education; they are continuing and graduating at rates that far exceed their peers in other schools. Their families and communities are also benefiting and Catholic schools have clearly made a difference in educating the SES student.

An analysis of the continuation and graduation rates shows that these students are staying in school, while their counterparts (based on public school data) are dropping out of school at rates as high as 55% between 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades. The Catholic school students are staying in school despite many personal difficulties. Catholic schools keep “at risk” students in a safe, respectful and trusting environment where they can learn. Furthermore, the study confirmed the parents play a very important role in the education of children enrolled in Catholic schools. The parents in this study have trust and faith in the educators of Catholic schools that is hard to replicate in public school settings. The principals confirm support from the CEF plays an important role in recruiting and retaining students, allowing Catholic schools to impact urban education in Los Angeles. Finally, CEF alumni are making contributions to society and attribute their life success to their Catholic school education.

## **Continuation Rates**

CEF supported students are graduating and moving on to Catholic high schools at a perfect rate. An analysis of the data revealed that 100% of the CEF supported students who completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade at an elementary school enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade the following year. Out of these 567 students, 69% continued on to a Catholic high school while others attended a non-Catholic high school (e.g. public school, charter school, other private school). Two subsets of these students were analyzed to determine the impact of two special CEF programs to assist these particular students. One subset of 22 of these students were part of a special program of the CEF called the *SOS Program* (Save our Students) who are the most “at risk” of all the students in the study. Some of the circumstances of these students include living in shelters, with guardians, having parents incarcerated or deceased, and exposed to gang and drug violence. The other subset of 134 students was part of a program designed by the CEF to encourage CEF eighth graders to go on to Catholic high school by being selected by their elementary school principal for CEF high school support. Each elementary school principal is able to nominate 2 students for this award. Of the total 156 students in both of these cohorts, a remarkable 100% enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade after graduating from elementary school.

The 100% continuation rate is an important statistic Catholic schools are able to keep students in a safe place where learning can take place. The longer these students stay in school, the better their chances for graduating high school, entering college and having a successful life. Coleman (1987) stated that students in Catholic schools were more disciplined than their counterparts in public schools. Thus, the longer these students are enrolled in Catholic schools, the more likely they are to develop work habits

and study skills that will help them in their future education and become contributing members of our society and economy.

### **Graduation Rates**

Students who are supported by the CEF are graduating from high school at an extraordinary rate, particularly compared to their counterparts in local public schools. The cohort of students who entered high school in Fall 2001 and completed 12<sup>th</sup> grade in June 2005 was studied. Of the 205 students who were part of this cohort, 97.5% (200 students) graduated from high school with a diploma. Of these 200 students, 85.4% (171 students) remained in Catholic high school from 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade continuously. 29 of the students who graduated from high school did not complete their high school education in a Catholic school. Of the remaining 5 students who did not complete high school in either a Catholic high school or non-Catholic high school, one earned a high school diploma through a General Education Development (GED) test, 2 students dropped out of school and did not complete high school and 2 students declined to provide information on completion of their high school diploma. It is important to note the two who dropped out – one was a young man with severe learning disabilities and left in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and the other, a young woman, suffered severe depression when her family moved out of state in her senior year and she was unable to adjust to public school.

Catholic schools are retaining ethnic minority students in high school at a much higher rate than the public schools. Almost 90% of the students in this study identified themselves as ethnic minorities. Nine out of the 205 students were part of the SOS Program and remarkably, 100% of the SOS students graduated from high school. One

hundred thirteen out of the 205 students were part of the 8<sup>th</sup> graders who were given special CEF awards to go on to Catholic high school and 99% of these principal-recommended students completed high school (1 student completed high school through the GED).

Graduation rates for the students in this study are high despite the fact that these students have to travel longer distances to attend school when compared to their public school peers. The average distance from a CEF student's home zip code to the nearest public high school is 1.96 miles. The average distance from a CEF student's home zip code to their Catholic high school is 5.04 miles. Thus, on average, CEF students travel an extra 3.08 miles to attend a Catholic school. These students travel more than twice the distance from their local public schools and many take public transportation.

The graduation rate for Catholic schools represents a significant difference from graduation rates of public high schools. According to data in the California Department of Education web site, in the 2004-2005 school year, the graduation year of this study, only 66.4% of students enrolled as 12<sup>th</sup> graders in the Los Angeles Unified School District graduated from high school. Graduation rates for Los Angeles Unified School district are calculated using the definition of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Just as in this study, students are tracked from their first year in high school until graduation as 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

The ethnic background of the students in this cohort of CEF students that graduated in 2004-2005 mirror the ethnic background of the students enrolled in schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District:

**Table 6: Los Angeles Unified School District Student Ethnic Background**

	Number	Percent
American Indian	2,189	0.3%
Asian	27,992	3.8%
Black/African American	86,316	11.6%
Filipino	16,118	2.2%
Hispanic/Latino	539,876	72.8%
Multiple/No Response	78	0.0%
Pacific Islander	2,282	0.3%
White/Other	66,432	9.0%
Total	741,283	100%

Source: California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office

Forty three percent of the CEF students who graduated from Catholic high schools are in schools located within the area served by LAUSD. For comparison, the graduation rate for all of Los Angeles County high schools is 79.5% while the California state-wide graduation rate is 85%. The CEF student's Catholic School graduation rate of 97.5% is especially important when one remembers that the sample consisted of students who are traditionally labeled "at risk" for dropping out of high school.

### **Impact of Catholic Schools**

Catholic schools have made an impact on the lives of families and communities. Parents attribute the success of their children due to the Catholic education that they received. Principals also acknowledge the importance of Catholic schools in the moral development of the students they serve. Most importantly, principals stated the support they received from the CEF to help their most "at risk" students allowed many urban Catholic schools to continue to serve the poorest of the poor.

CEF students have a strong commitment to promoting social justice. 80% of CEF alumni state, "Working to promote Social Justice is important to me." CEF alumni are

involved in volunteer work and service-related occupations that make a difference to the lives of others. One alumnus stated, “I have chosen a career working at the local human services agency. I volunteer at my children's schools, sports programs and any administrative work. I volunteer providing information to farm workers, job search assistance to homeless, and career guidance to those outside of my work who just need help.” The commitment to social justice starts early in the lives of these CEF students. In 2006, the CEF started the alumni fund and encouraged CEF alumni to donate money to this fund. Since 2006, 586 current CEF awardees donated back to the CEF, in one case taping their lunch money to an envelope, to help others despite having their own limited resources. Out of the 586 students, 69 have donated more than once to the CEF alumni fund.

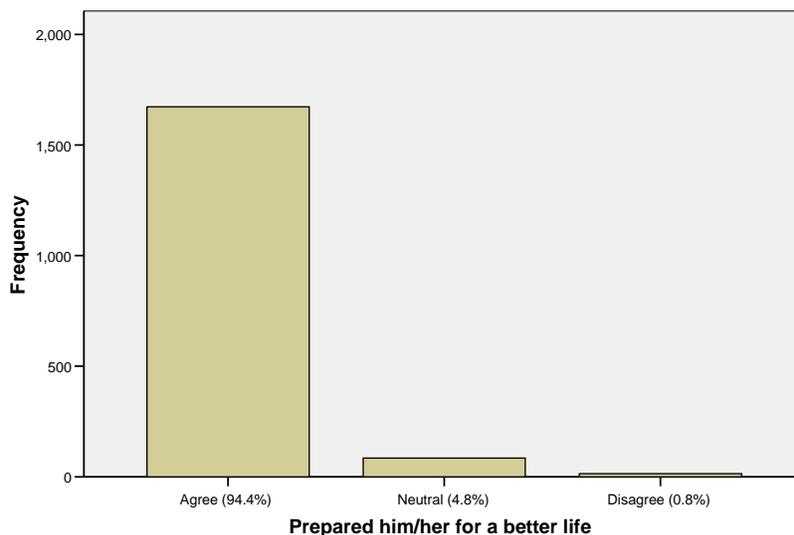
Catholic schools are making a difference in the lives of CEF students, their families, and society. Sixty Eight percent of CEF graduates report they agree that “Catholic schools make a difference in society.” One alumnus states, “Without my Catholic school education I would not be the person I am and have the knowledge I have about my religion and the world around me. My education has taught me to look at the world with my eyes wide open and to embrace everyday as if it were the last and to always keep God’s love alive in my heart.

### **Parent Voices: The Effect of Catholic Education on their Children**

Analyses of 1,808 parent surveys provide evidence that Catholic schools are able to engage parents in meaningful partnerships as co-educators in ways that other types of schools have not been able to do. Foremost, parents believe Catholic schools provide a

safe haven for their children from the violence in their neighborhood. Parents have a bond of trust with the school, the principal and the teachers in educating and doing what is best for their children. Regardless of their financial resources, CEF parents see the value in contributing whatever they can, and often at great sacrifice, towards the tuition for their children.

Parents believe that Catholic schools prepared their children for a better life, as illustrated in the chart that follows.

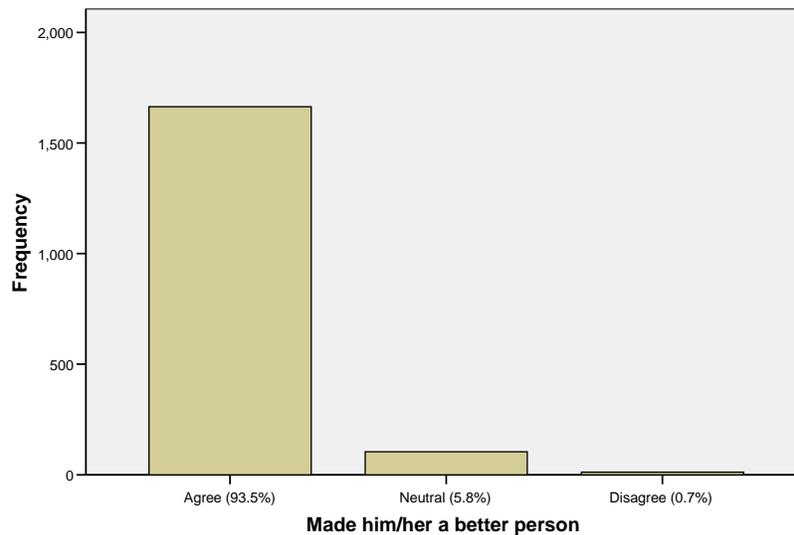


**Chart 2: Principal Response #1**

Answers to the open-ended questions also illustrate this point. One parents says, “[My child] is being geared towards the right direction. He will succeed in life and not have to struggle as I have for many years. I would like to thank (the CEF) for giving my children the opportunity for a better life style”. Another parents says, “I always wanted my daughter to have a good education and a better opportunity for the future. I saw the difference between kids attending public school and Catholic school”. However, a better

life is not only equated with success. To many parents, a better life for their children includes being able to care for others as illustrated in this quote, “Well, all my daughters have lived a better life because of their Catholic education. They know how to respect adults and they really know God”.

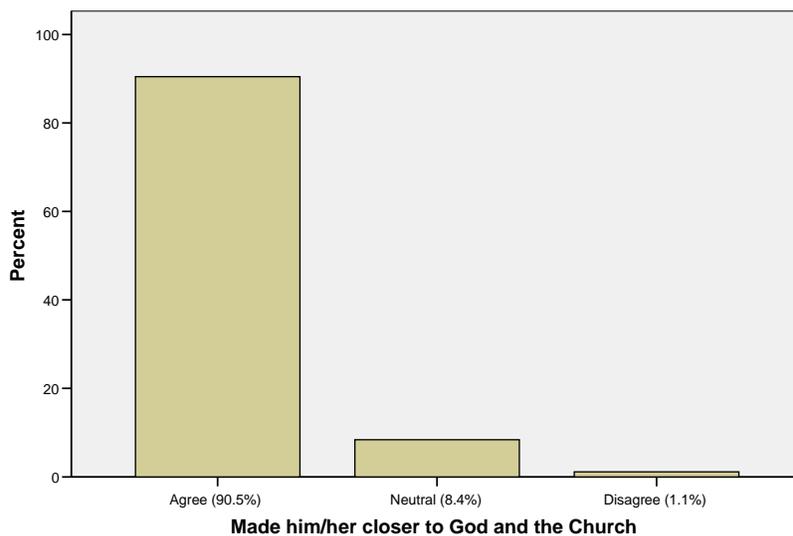
When asked to evaluate the statement on the effectiveness of influencing the development of their children, 93.4% of the respondents stated that Catholic schools made their children better people. This finding is illustrated in the table below:



**Chart 3: Principal Response #2**

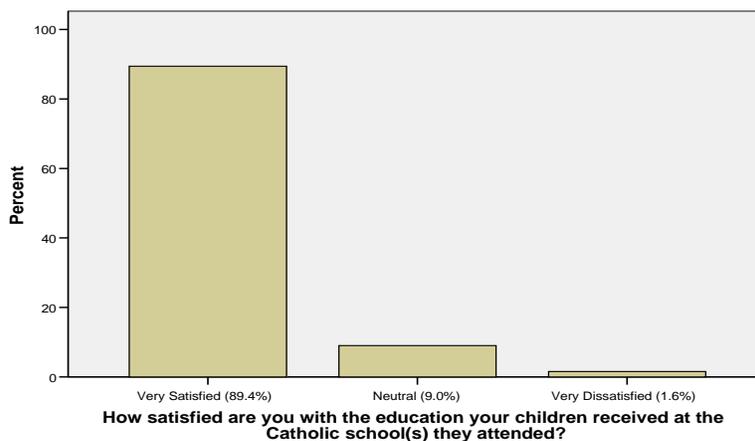
Many parents equate become a better person with faith development. One parent stated, “[Catholic education] made him a better person who understands God...he impacts those around him in a positive way”. Another parent states, “We feel that [our children] receive more because of the religious aspects integrated with the educational learning they receive. This teaches them early on about being good Christians and learning how to love all of God’s people”. When asked if they agreed or disagreed on

whether Catholic education brought their children closer to God and the Church, 90.5% of the parents responded that they agree as illustrated in the table that follows.



**Chart 4: Principal Response #3**

Due to the positive effects of Catholic schools on their children, parents reported very high satisfaction with the education their children received.



**Chart 5: Principal Response #4**

On the surface, it may seem that parent satisfaction with Catholic schools may not be a significant finding. One may argue that these parents are making the conscious decision and financial sacrifice to send their children to Catholic schools and thus one should not be surprised that these parents express high satisfaction with the education with Catholic schools. However, when one remembers that these parents are mostly ethnic minorities, poor, and not highly educated, it becomes significant that Catholic schools are able to engage these parents who fit a profile of parents who are often silenced in public schools.

### **Principal Voices**

Principals make the case for CEF students and the financial support CEF provides for them. Catholic school principals confirm that CEF support is vital to keeping a school open. In some cases, the CEF provides tuition assistance to a third of the enrollment in a school. This support not only benefits individual awardees but also provides a critical tipping point in resources for keeping a school open. One principal states, “CEF funding is why our school continues to exist”.

The Principals validated the contribution of Catholic schools to the overall development of the lives of their students. The principals were asked to evaluate the effect of Catholic schools on student life, moral development, spiritual development, development of critical thinking skills, instilling a sense of social justice, and faith development. The data is illustrated in the following table:

**Table 7: Principal Responses**

Item	Strongly Agree
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the lives of your students.	97%
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the moral development of your students.	94%
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the critical thinking of your students.	85%
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to your students' perspectives of social justice.	84%
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to your students' faith development.	94%

Despite what they feel are successful aspects of Catholic schools, these principals acknowledge that many of their students are succeeding despite the great odds into which they were born. When asked to describe the family circumstances of one student a principal stated “\_\_\_\_ is an outstanding student. Unfortunately, she has witnessed her mother being physically abused and has affected her emotional well being. However, being in a Catholic environment has been a healing process for \_\_\_\_”. Another principal states that her student “is living with her grandmother. \_\_\_\_’s mother is a drug addict and a prostitute. \_\_\_\_ does not know who her father is. The biological mother has children from four different men. The children are being cared for by relatives. \_\_\_\_ has days when she is very emotional and days where she has a lot of trouble focusing”.

## **Conclusion**

Catholic schools in the United States were created to educate the poor and immigrant children. Initial evidence from this study suggests that the CEF and the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools continue to live up to this mission of providing hope to children who might not be able to dream of a future without this support. These students will be the future leaders of this three-country Archdiocesan region. Inspired by the values and support of a Catholic education they will be well positioned to help build the Los Angeles of the future.

With a 97.5% high school graduation rate, what is it about Catholic schools that produce that result among the poorest and most marginalized students in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, when their peers are dropping out at rates as high as 55%? From the surveys, conclusions and “best practices” can be drawn as follows:

1. There are high levels of trust and communication between parents, teachers, students and principals around the education process.
2. There are personal relationships between the school and the families; the principal knows every child and every family.
3. Catholic schools provide the hope and path forward for impoverished students to see their future and continue with their education, especially evidenced in the subset of SOS students.
4. Morals and values are taught and reinforced.
5. Students and their parents are grateful for tuition support and sacrifice to pay part of the tuition bill.

6. With only 69% of the students matriculating from Catholic elementary school to Catholic high school, the special eighth grade awards are critical, since the barrier to entry is the increased tuition for Catholic high school.

Future studies on the effectiveness of Catholic school education should focus on achievement data and the cost/benefit analysis of Catholic schools vs. alternative schools. Achievement data would include: reading and other standardized test scores, college attendance and graduation, curriculum studied, careers and professions, and evidence of gratitude and appreciation for a Catholic school education. Cost/benefit analysis would include comparative data for: the cost to educate a child, break-even analysis for classrooms and schools, cost of administration, curriculum, and offering extra-curricular activities.

For this study, an attempt was made to collect College Board scores; however only half of the student data could be matched with the College Board database. Going forward, the CEF and the Catholic schools will coordinate with the standard testing agencies in collecting data based on the needs identified in this study which include PSAT, SAT and ACT sitting rates and raw scores, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) reading scores, and tracking students beyond high school graduation.

For those researchers working on the study, this was the first opportunity to review the individual accomplishments of poor and marginalized students. Catholic school data is recorded by diocese according to the aggregate results of all schools and students. This study provided a close look at SES students who could be compared with

their peers by neighborhood, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, and eventually their scholastic achievements, which will be explored in the next phase. For this phase, continuation and graduation rates were extraordinary and lead in to the next study.

These study results make the case for continued and increased investment in CEF students, keeping all seats filled in LA Archdiocesan urban schools, and follow on studies to analyze best practices in school leadership and operating models. Why is it that minority students report placing such a value their Catholic school experiences? The importance of this work is powerfully illustrated by a female who was able to graduate from a Catholic high school only because of a tuition award from the CEF and then went on to graduate from college: “I’m not dead, in jail, nor struggling to pay child support. In fact I actually have a college degree. If you would have told me that at the age of 8, I would never have believed you” (personal communication, CEF Alumnus, Class of 1999).

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## About the Authors

- ***Edmundo F. Litton, Ed.D.***: Dr. Litton is an Associate Professor in the School of Education and the Chair of the Department of Specialized Programs in Urban Education. At LMU, he coordinates Catholic School programs for teachers and teaches courses on multicultural education. He has graduate degrees from Georgetown University and the University of San Francisco. Prior to becoming a faculty member at LMU, he was a teacher in the Archdiocese of San Francisco.
- ***Shane P. Martin, Ph.D.***: Dr. Martin is the Dean of the School of Education. Dr. Martin is a recognized expert in the field of Catholic schools and diversity and has authored several publications and is a regular speaker on this topic. He is active in the charter school movement as a board member for Greendot Public Schools, and also serves as a board member for Teach For America Los Angeles and the Loyola High School Board of Regents.
- ***Ignacio Higareda, Ph.D.***: Dr. Higareda is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education. At LMU, Dr. Higareda teaches courses on Educational Psychology and Educational Measurement. He has a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Southern California.
- ***Julie A. Mendoza, Ed.D.***: Dr. Mendoza was a contributing author to the Harvard Civil Rights Project Dropout study and helped conceptualize UC/ACCORD's College Opportunity Ratio (COR), an indicator that reports the effectiveness of California public high schools in producing college-eligible graduates. She completed a Doctor of Education degree from Harvard University.

# Appendix

## Appendix A

### Enrollment in Archdiocese of Los Angeles Schools

Year	Total Enrollment
2000-2001	99,708
2001-2002	98,697
2002-2003	96,114
2003-2004	93,872
2004-2005	92,860
2006-2007	89,490

## Appendix B

### Principal Survey *Loyola Marymount University School of Education*

28 August 2006

Dear Catholic School Principals,

The Catholic Education Foundation and the Department of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have embarked on a study to begin documenting the impact of Catholic Schools on the lives of the students you serve. This will be a multi-phase study that will be carried out over the next few years. The Loyola Marymount University School of Education has been asked to lead this very important study.

For this first phase of the study, one of the things we would like to do is receive input from Principals, such as yourself, who have students who are receiving financial support from the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF). We would also like to interview students who have graduated. We would appreciate it if you could take a moment to complete the attached questionnaire.

All information will be kept confidential.

Please send completed questionnaires by September 15, 2006 to Dr. Edmundo F. Litton, Project Director, either via email to [elitton@lmu.edu](mailto:elitton@lmu.edu) or regular mail to:

School of Education, Loyola Marymount University  
One LMU Drive, University Hall 2612  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Thank you in advance for assisting us in this important study.

Sincerely,

***Edmundo F. Litton, Ed.D.***

***Shane P. Martin, Ph.D.***

***Ignacio Higareda, Ph.D.***

***Julie A. Mendoza, Ed.D.***

*Loyola Marymount University*  
*School of Education*

**Catholic Schools Research Project**  
**Principal Questionnaire**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- 
- 
1. How many years have you served as principal of your current school? \_\_\_\_\_
  2. How many years have you served as a teacher/administrator in a Catholic school?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. Have you served as a teacher/administrator in a public school? If so, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. What difference has financial support from the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) made to the lives of the students in your school? Please provide examples (including names of students if possible) of the impact CEF awards have made in the lives of your students.

5. Identify 1 or 2 students who were supported by the Catholic Education Foundation and share their stories with us. We are particularly interested to learn how these CEF scholarship recipients have impacted society after graduation.

6. Please circle the number which most closely matches your belief about the following statements according to the following rating system.

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Slightly disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Slightly agree; 5 = Strongly agree

The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the lives of your students.	1	2	3	4	5
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the <b>moral development</b> of your students.	1	2	3	4	5
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to the <b>critical thinking</b> of your students.	1	2	3	4	5
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to your <b>students' perspectives of social justice</b> .	1	2	3	4	5
The Catholic education experience contributes significantly to your <b>students' faith development</b> .	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix C

### Parent Survey

The Catholic Education Foundation and the Department of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are doing a study with Loyola Marymount University to know more about the importance of Catholic schools in the lives of the families whose children go to Catholic schools. We need you to take a few minutes to answer the questions about your family's experience. Your answers are confidential.

#### Background Information

	Parent or Guardian #1	Parent or Guardian #2
1. What city, state, and country were you born in?	City: State: Country:	City: State: Country:
2. What is your racial or ethnic background?	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/a <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> African American Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/a <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> African American Other: _____
3. What is your highest level of education completed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School Number of Grades _____ <input type="checkbox"/> High School Number of Years _____ Did you Graduate? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School Number of Grades _____ <input type="checkbox"/> High School Number of Years _____ Did you Graduate? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree
4. Did you attend Catholic schools for any part of your education? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Where? _____  What grades? _____	Where?  What grades? _____
5. What is your current occupation?		

6. What language(s) do you speak at home (check all that apply)?

- English     Spanish     Mandarin     Filipino     Japanese     Korean  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you married? Yes  No

8. Are you a single parent? Yes  No

9. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many children live at home? \_\_\_\_\_

11. How many of your children went to Catholic elementary school? \_\_\_\_\_

12. How many of your children went to Catholic high school? \_\_\_\_\_

**How do you feel about the following statements (check one answer)?**

13. I feel that my child's Catholic school education prepared him/her for college.

- Agree     Neutral     Disagree

14. I feel that my child's Catholic school education prepared him/her for a better life.

- Agree     Neutral     Disagree

15. I feel that my child's Catholic school education made him/her a better person.

- Agree     Neutral     Disagree

16. I feel that my child's Catholic school education made him/her closer to God and the Church.

- Agree     Neutral     Disagree

17. I feel that my child's Catholic school education made our family closer to God and the Church.

- Agree     Neutral     Disagree

18. How do you support your child's Catholic school education?

Financially \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Work at School \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

19. Why did you send your child to a Catholic school?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

20. What does your child's education in a Catholic school mean to your family and your community?

My Family \_\_\_\_\_

My Community \_\_\_\_\_

21. How satisfied are you with the education your children received at the Catholic school(s) they attended?

- Very satisfied     Neutral     Very dissatisfied

22. Tell us the most important part about your child's Catholic school education.

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Please let us contact you for a personal interview:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to call you: \_\_\_\_\_

La Fundación Católica de Educación y el Departamento de Escuelas Católicas en la Archidiócesis de Los Ángeles han emprendido un estudio con la Universidad de Loyola Marymount para documentar el impacto de escuelas Católicas en las vidas de las familias que asisten a tales escuelas.

De antemano le agradecemos su cooperación en completar este cuestionario referente a su experiencia con escuelas Católicas. Sus respuestas son confidenciales.

### Información Personal

	Padre o Guardián #1	Padre o Guardián #2
1. ¿Dónde nació? ¿En qué ciudad, estado, y país nació usted?	Ciudad/Pueblo: Estado:  País:	Ciudad/Pueblo: Estado:  País:
2. ¿Con qué grupo racial o étnico se identifica?	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/a <input type="checkbox"/> Asiático <input type="checkbox"/> Isleño Pacífico <input type="checkbox"/> Blanco <input type="checkbox"/> Afro Americano Otro: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/a <input type="checkbox"/> Asiático <input type="checkbox"/> Isleño Pacífico <input type="checkbox"/> Blanco <input type="checkbox"/> Afro Americano Otro: _____
3. ¿Cuál fue el grado más alto de educación que usted completó?	<input type="checkbox"/> La Primaria ¿Hasta que nivel de grado? ____ <input type="checkbox"/> La Secundaria/Preparatoria ¿Hasta qué año? _____ ¿Usted se graduó? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Vocacional <input type="checkbox"/> Estudio a nivel universitario	<input type="checkbox"/> La Primaria ¿Hasta que nivel de grado? ____ <input type="checkbox"/> La Secundaria/Preparatoria ¿Hasta qué año? _____ ¿Usted se graduó? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Vocacional <input type="checkbox"/> Estudio a nivel universitario
4. ¿Usted asistió a escuelas católicas para parte de su educación?	¿Dónde?  ¿Qué nivel de grado?	¿Dónde?  ¿Qué nivel de grado?
5. ¿Cuál es su ocupación?		

6. ¿Qué idioma (o idiomas) utiliza usted normalmente en su casa (marque e identifique todo aquellos que se apliquen)?

Inglés     Español     Mandarín     Filipino     Japonés     Coreano

Algún otro idioma (por favor especifique): \_\_\_\_\_

7. ¿Usted es casado?  Sí  No

8. ¿Eres madre soltera o padre soltero?  Sí  No

9. ¿Cuántos hijos tienes? \_\_\_\_\_

10. ¿Cuántos hijos mantiene económicamente? \_\_\_\_\_

11. ¿Cuántos de sus hijos asistieron la primaria en una escuela católica?

12. ¿Cuántos de sus hijos asistieron la secundaria (preparatoria) en una escuela católica?

**¿Cómo se siente usted acerca de las siguientes declaraciones?**

13. Yo siento que la educación en la escuela católica preparó a mi hijo/a para la universidad.

De Acuerdo  Neutral  En Desacuerdo

14. Yo siento que la educación en la escuela católica preparó a mi hijo/a para una vida mejor.

De Acuerdo  Neutral  En Desacuerdo

15. Yo siento que la educación en la escuela católica hizo de mi hijo/a una persona mejor.

De Acuerdo  Neutral  En Desacuerdo

16. Yo siento que la educación en la escuela católica ha acercado a mi hijo/a a Dios y a la Iglesia

De Acuerdo  Neutral  En Desacuerdo

17. Yo siento que la educación en la escuela católica ha acercado a nuestra familia a Dios y a la Iglesia.

De Acuerdo  Neutral  En Desacuerdo

18. ¿Cómo apoya usted la educación en la escuela católica de su hijo/a?

Económicamente \_\_\_\_\_

Voluntario/a de un proyecto \_\_\_\_\_

Trabaja en la escuela \_\_\_\_\_

Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

19. ¿Por qué mandó se usted a su niño a una Escuela católica?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. ¿Qué significa para su family y su comunidad la educación de su hijo/a en la una escuela católica?

Para mi familia

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Para mi comunidad

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21. ¿Está usted satisfecho(a) con la educación que recibieron sus hijos en las escuelas católicas?

Muy satisfecho     Neutral     Muy descontento

22. ¿Cuál fue el aspecto más importante de su experiencia con escuelas católicas?

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Nos da permiso de comunicarnos con usted para hacer una entrevista? Si usted esta de acuerdo de ser parte de una entrevista, por favor complete la siguiente información personal:

Su nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Su número de teléfono: \_\_\_\_\_  
Que hora del día es mejor para llamarle por teléfono? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Alumni Survey

The Catholic Education Foundation and the Department of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have embarked on a study to document the impact of Catholic schools to the lives of the students we serve. We would appreciate if you could take a moment to complete this questionnaire in regards to your background and school experience.

1. Gender:  Male  Female
  2. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
  3. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. What is your racial or ethnic background? (Select all that apply)  
 Latino/a  Asian  Pacific Islander  White  African American  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  5. What is/are the zip code(s) of the neighborhood(s) where you grew up?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Do you live in the neighborhood where you grew up?  
 Yes  No  In a similar neighborhood
  7. What is the highest level of education that your mother/guardian completed?  
 Never attended school  
 Attended Elementary School  Completed Elementary School  
 Attended Middle School  Completed Middle School  
 Attended High School  Completed High School  
 Attended College  Completed College  
 Started Professional Degree (e.g. PhD/MD)  Completed Professional Degree  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
-

8. What is the highest level of education that your father/guardian completed?

- Never attended school
- Attended Elementary School
- Attended Middle School
- Attended High School
- Attended College
- Started Professional Degree (e.g. PhD/MD)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Completed Elementary School
- Completed Middle School
- Completed High School
- Completed College
- Completed Professional Degree

9. Did your mother attend Catholic school?  Yes  No  
 If YES, for how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Did your father attend Catholic school?  Yes  No  
 If YES, for how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What language did you most frequently use at home? (Select all that apply)

- English
- Spanish
- Mandarin
- Filipino
- Japanese
- Korean
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have children?  Yes  No  
 If YES, how many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Are your children enrolled in Catholic elementary or secondary schools now?  
 Yes  No

14. If your children have graduated from elementary or high school, did they attend Catholic schools?  
 Yes  No  Not applicable

15. What factors influenced your decision to send or not send your children to Catholic school?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Please answer the following questions about your elementary and secondary school education if they apply to you:

16a. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

Where did you complete elementary school? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What year did you graduate from elementary school? \_\_\_\_\_

If you attended a Catholic elementary school, what grades did you attend? (Select all that apply)

Kinder    1st    2nd    3rd    4th    5<sup>th</sup>    6th    7<sup>th</sup>    8th

**16b. HIGH SCHOOL:**

Where did you complete high school? \_\_\_\_\_

If you attended a Catholic High School, what public high school would you have attended had you not gone to Catholic High School? \_\_\_\_\_

What year did you graduate from high school? \_\_\_\_\_

If you attended a Catholic high school, what grades did you attend? (Select all that apply)

9th    10th    11th    12th

17. Did you go to college/university?    Yes    No

If YES, please specify the name of the College/University \_\_\_\_\_

18. What is your highest level of education?

- High School Diploma    MA/MS degree  
 BA/BS degree    Ed.D./Ph.D./MD/DDS/JD  
 Vocational    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

19. What is the highest level of education you hope to complete?

- High School Diploma    MA/MS degree  
 BA/BS degree    Ed.D./Ph.D./MD/DDS/JD  
 Vocational    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

20. What is your highest level of education within a Catholic school system?

- High School Diploma    MA/MS degree  
 BA/BS degree    Ed.D./Ph.D./MD/DDS/JD  
 Vocational    Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

21. During your Catholic education experience, did an adult/counselor talk to you about how to choose a college/university or a career?    Yes    No

21a. Please describe the nature of this relationship (e.g. frequency of consultation) and the impact this relationship had on your choice to pursue a college/university education and your career?

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22. At your high school, would you say that most adults you met:

- Believed you would succeed in college?
- Believed you could succeed in college, but only if you changed a lot?
- Did not believe you would succeed in college? or
- Did not have an opinion about whether or not you would succeed in college?

23. Did a counselor or teacher at your high school explain to you what classes you would have to take if you wanted to go to one of California's 4-year public universities?

- Yes    No

24. What is your current occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

25. How do you feel about this statement? "My Catholic school education prepared me academically for college-level work?"

- Strongly disagree    Slightly disagree    Neutral    Slightly agree    Strongly agree

25a. Please explain how your Catholic school education prepared you academically for college-level work:

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25b. Please explain how your high school could have better prepared you for college?

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26. Compared to your peers that lived in your neighborhood and attended public high schools, do you feel that your Catholic school education better prepared you for college and/or your career?

- Yes    No

Please explain your answer:

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27. How do you feel about this statement? My education in a Catholic school impacted my faith development or spiritual life?

- Strongly disagree     Slightly disagree     Neutral     Slightly agree     Strongly agree

27a. Please explain how Catholic school education made a difference in your faith or spiritual life:

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28. How do you feel about this statement? “My Catholic education impacted my ability to make ethical and moral decisions.”

- Strongly disagree     Slightly disagree     Neutral     Slightly agree     Strongly agree

28a Please explain how Catholic school education made a difference in your ability to make social and ethical and moral decisions:

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29. How do you feel about this statement? “Working to promote social justice is important to me?”

- Strongly disagree     Slightly disagree     Neutral     Slightly agree     Strongly agree

29a. Please specify the types of activities you are involved in (e.g. community service, volunteer work) to promote social justice.

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30. Do you support your Catholic elementary, high school, or college?  Yes  No  
Please explain how you support your Catholic school OR why you do not support your Catholic school:

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31. Do you mentor others?  Yes  No  
How so and who do you mentor?

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If you do not mentor others, what are the primary reasons?

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32. What was the most important aspect of your Catholic school experience?

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33. How satisfied were you with the education you received at your Catholic school(s)?  
 Very satisfied  Somewhat satisfied  Neutral  Somewhat dissatisfied  Very dissatisfied

34. How do you feel about this statement: “Catholic schools make a difference in society.”

Strongly disagree  Slightly disagree  Neutral  Slightly agree  Strongly agree  
Please explain your answer:

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35. If you could change anything about your Catholic School experience, what would it be?

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36. How do you feel about this statement: “Overall, Catholic school education made a difference in my life”

Strongly disagree     Slightly disagree     Neutral     Slightly agree     Strongly agree

Please explain your answer:

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