

Summer July 2014

# Catholic School Leaders' Perceptions of Governance Models in Los Angeles Parochial Schools

Kristopher Leo Knowles

*Loyola Marymount University*, [knowles@stlmschool.org](mailto:knowles@stlmschool.org)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), and the [Education Policy Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Knowles, Kristopher Leo, "Catholic School Leaders' Perceptions of Governance Models in Los Angeles Parochial Schools" (2014).  
*LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations*. 201.  
<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/etd/201>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in LMU/LLS Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@lmu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@lmu.edu).

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Catholic School Leaders' Perceptions of Governance Models in Los Angeles Parochial Schools

by

Kristopher Knowles

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,

Loyola Marymount University,

in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

2014

Catholic School Leaders' Perceptions of Governance Models in Los Angeles Parochial Schools

Copyright © 2014

by

Kristopher Knowles

**Loyola Marymount University  
School of Education  
Los Angeles, CA 90045**

This dissertation written by Kristopher Knowles, under the direction of the Dissertation Committee, is approved and accepted by all committee members, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

*May 25, 2014*  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dissertation Committee

*Mary L. McCullough*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary McCullough, Ph.D., Committee Chair

*Kevin Baxter*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Baxter, Ed.D., Committee Member

*Frank Montefano*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Montefano, Ed.D., Committee Member

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am extremely grateful for the guidance, leadership, and insight provided to me by my dissertation chair, Mary McCullough. The help from my dissertation committee members Kevin Baxter and Frank Montejano is also greatly appreciated.

I am eternally grateful to my beautiful wife Fatima and daughter Amaya for always being there for me throughout all of the challenges and hard work the past three years have presented.

I also would like to acknowledge my cohort 8 colleagues, especially Camryn Connelly, Catherine Muzzy, and Elisabeth Gregg (my Catholic school cronies) for support and encouragement.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction.....	1
Historical Perspective .....	1
Organizational and Authority Structures .....	2
The Principal/Pastor Dynamic .....	3
Statement of the Problem.....	5
Research Questions.....	6
Governance Models .....	7
Purpose of the Study .....	7
Significance of the Study .....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Servant Leadership.....	9
Methodology .....	11
Limitations and Delimitations.....	12
Conclusion .....	13
<b>CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Introduction.....	14
Servant Leadership.....	14
Servant Leadership and Listening.....	14
Servant Leadership and Community Building.....	15
Servant Leadership and Organizational Structure .....	16
History of American Catholic Schools .....	17
Genesis of Catholic Schools in America .....	18
The Proliferation of Parochial Schools .....	19
The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore .....	22
Catholic Schools and Canon Law .....	23
Enrollment Trends of Catholic Schools.....	24
Staffing Trends in Catholic Parish Schools .....	26
Viability of Catholic Schools.....	28
Effectiveness of Catholic Schools .....	29
Emerging Alternative Governance Models .....	30
School System versus System of Schools.....	31

Consultative School Boards.....	32
Boards of Limited Jurisdiction.....	32
Diocesan Schools/Canonical Administrators.....	34
Conclusion .....	35
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Introduction.....	37
Research Questions.....	37
Methodology.....	38
Sample.....	39
Instrumentation .....	39
Research Procedures .....	42
Data Analysis .....	43
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Introduction.....	45
Data Analysis .....	46
Response Rates .....	46
Demographics .....	47
Factor Analysis .....	48
Descriptive Statistics.....	51
Inferential Statistics .....	57
Narrative Responses.....	59
Summary of Findings.....	64
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>66</b>
Introduction.....	66
Exploration of Findings .....	66
Lack of Clearly Defined Levels of Authority .....	67
Perceptions Regarding Emerging Governance Models .....	69
The Roles of Leaders in Governance.....	70
Recommendations.....	71
Future Studies .....	72
Final Thoughts .....	74
<b>APPENDIX A.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>82</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Organization of Survey Instrument.....	42
2. Economic Level of Pastors' Parishes.....	49
3. Demographics .....	50
4. Factor Loadings for Governance Models Examined in Questions 7-20.....	51
5. Factor (Loads) in Relation to Leadership Position and Governance Model Addressed.....	52
6. Consultative Board Survey Items .....	54
7. Board of Limited Jurisdiction Survey Items.....	55
8. Canonical Administrator Survey Items.....	57
9. Consultative Versus Authoritative Voice .....	58
10. Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Consultative Boards .....	59
11. Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Boards of Limited Jurisdiction.....	60
12. Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Canonical Administration...	61



## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study was to provide insight to the perspectives of leaders and individuals in authority within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles system of Catholic parochial schools regarding current models of governance, levels of authority, and decision-making processes. There is a lack of clearly-defined levels of decision-making authority from the bishops to the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools down to the individual schools.

The pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel shared their perspectives of current governance structures and elements of three emerging alternative governance models. Data were analyzed through a factor analysis of the survey items to explore the strength of the three categories of the governance models represented by the three groups of questions. Next, the descriptive statistics of the specific questions relating to each of the three governance models and community voice were compiled. A Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each group of questions to measure internal consistency.

In order to explore relationships between perceptions among the three independent variable groups (pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel), a Chi-square analysis was run for each of the questions on an ordinal scale.

The study showed significant differences in participant responses between the three groups surveyed. However, there was agreement that community voice must be incorporated into governance, but only in a consultative manner. There was also agreement that a strong governing presence at the central office would be beneficial.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

#### **Introduction**

Since the peak of Catholic school enrollment in the 1960s, nearly half of all Catholic schools in the United States have closed (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2011). In order to provide increased sustainability for a system of schools with a rich history of educating millions of youths in the United States, an examination of the current governance model is needed and alternative models must be examined. The traditional governance model of the Catholic parochial school follows an authoritarian model where the pastor of the parish is ultimately responsible for all decisions made in the parish and school (Haney, O'Brien, & Sheehan, 2009). The ideal model of governance for Catholic parochial schools should strive to reach community consensus regarding important policy decisions (Haney et al., 2009).

This chapter addresses the issues surrounding governance of Catholic parochial schools in the United States and introduces a quantitative study focused on the perceptions and opinions towards current and alternative governance models through a lens of servant leadership. The discussion includes historical perspectives of Catholic education in America and an examination of traditional authority structures. The problem statement and research questions are introduced, and the theoretical framework of servant leadership is examined.

#### **Historical Perspective**

Catholic schools gained initial momentum in the mid-1800s when a wave of anti-Catholic sentiments surfaced in public school systems throughout the United States, a society dominated by Protestant faith (McDonald, 2001; Russo, 2009). Catholics in the United States experienced

severe prejudice and were not allowed to practice or develop their faith within the public education system, even as Protestant children enjoyed this privilege. In 1884, the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore set forth a mandate stating that every parish in the United States must open a Catholic school, and Catholic parents were obligated to send their children to a Catholic school to ensure an education grounded in the Catholic faith (Brown, 2010). While the goal of having a Catholic school in every parish across the nation never materialized, the growth in number of schools and student enrollment was significant (McDonald, 2001).

### **Organizational and Authority Structures**

The Catholic Church is organized into subunits known as dioceses. The diocesan bishop is the sole responsible authority for all decisions made within the diocese. Canon 806 (Canon Law Society, 1983) stated that the bishop has ultimate authority and decision-making power within his diocese. Canon 803 stated,

A Catholic school is understood to be one which is under the control of the competent ecclesiastical authority or of a public ecclesiastical juridical person, or one which in a written document is acknowledged as Catholic by the ecclesiastical authority. (Canon Law Society, 1983, as cited in Schafer, 2004, p. 146)

The ecclesiastical authority referred to the bishop of the diocese, while the specific definition of the competent ecclesiastical authority or the public ecclesiastical juridical person was not specified in the Canon documents. In most cases when referring to parochial schools, the competent ecclesiastical authority referred to the pastor of the parish community.

The code of Canon law defined the diocesan bishop as the ultimate ecclesiastical authority. Thus by definition, the bishop has ultimate authority over the governance and decision making in Catholic schools due to the fact that the schools lie within the diocese. Since the schools were to operate alongside the parish and have always been associated with the parish in which they reside, the schools by default were governed as a part of the larger parish institution, and therefore administered under the parish juridical structure (Brown, 2010; Weiss, 2007). Regarding the oversight of the larger body of schools in the diocese, it is common for bishops to delegate some of the decision-making authority to a superintendent, who acts as a delegate of the bishop (Weiss, 2007). The superintendent of schools, in the traditional parochial school model, is limited to an advisory capacity in decision making at the local school level.

Canon 519 explained, “The pastor is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him ... He carries out for his community the duties of teaching, sanctifying, and governing” (Weiss, 2007, p.14). Thus, according to Canon 519, the direct control of Catholic schools under the individual parish juridical structure lies solely with the pastor of the parish (Weiss, 2007). The pastor is responsible by Canon law for the teaching (education) of those in his parish. This gives pastors an overwhelming authority to govern and control the decision-making processes of the parish school.

### **The Principal/Pastor Dynamic**

The Code of Canon Law (1983) and the 1884 Third Plenary Council of Baltimore mandated the creation of parochial schools (Brown, 2010); however, they did little to define the organizational structures under which these schools are to operate. One crucial element not

present in church documents is the role of school administration with respect to the governance and decision making within the operation of Catholic schools.

The shared vision of leadership between the two essential players in Catholic school governance at the local level, the principal and pastor, is of paramount importance for the well-being and vitality of Catholic schools and their relationship to the parish in which they reside for the benefit of children's faith formation (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009; Weiss, 2007). Adding to the complexity of this relationship is the relatively recent influx of lay people assuming leadership roles and teaching positions formerly held by orders of sisters in Catholic parochial schools. In a qualitative study using a multiple case study model, Belmonte and Cranston (2009) frequently observed conflict between the school principal and the parish pastor. Much of this tension stemmed from the fact that parish priests were accustomed to school principals being from a religious order, and so assumed and expected the new lay leadership would mirror the work habits and governance structures of religious institutions.

Another source of tension stems from the difference in leadership styles between parish priests and school principals. Belmonte and Cranston (2009) noted the priests' leadership styles were based on traditional hierarchical structures, while principals strived to establish a more collaborative leadership style. The priests' assumptions correlated to the canonical divisions of authority in the Catholic Church, which gave ultimate authority to bishops, who in turn appointed and delegated this authority to pastors.

Last, the study found that the frequent interference and quest for control exhibited by priests was excessive in the eyes of principals. A major implication of Belmonte and Cranston's (2009) study was that there must be a uniform effort from both principal and pastor to establish a

working relationship where both individuals can stand on equal ground in an effort to build collaboration in leadership that bridges the parish with the school. Belmonte and Cranston suggested priests “build a culture . . . that seeks to promote trust, community, and shared decision-making” (p. 311). The division of authority in the traditions of the Catholic Church supports the idea of the pastor holding ultimate authority. Within the context of Catholic schools, this structure of authority needs to be evaluated and restructured to promote a collaborative approach and shared leadership between pastors and principals.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Code of Canon Law (1983) and the 1884 Third Plenary Council of Baltimore mandated the creation of parochial schools (Brown, 2010); however, they did little to define the organizational structures under which these schools are to operate. The lack of specificity regarding levels of authority and decision-making processes in church doctrine has created a vast “system of schools” with little central office authority. Thus, there is a lack of accountability given the autonomy each school site has under the direct authority of the parish pastor. In 2013, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Department of Catholic Schools consisted of 270 parish and diocesan elementary and secondary schools, which had an enrollment of over 80,000 students (K. Baxter, personal communication, September 4, 2013). Albeit an expansive body of schools, administrators, teachers, and students, there is a lack of clearly defined levels of decision-making authority from the bishops to the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools down to the individual schools.

This unclear definition and function related to decision-making authority is evident when examining the recent announcement by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Department of Catholic

Schools that a mandatory calendar extension would take place during the 2011-2012 school year (Rivera, 2011). The Superintendent of Catholic Elementary Schools made the announcement in January 2011 at an Archdiocesan principals' meeting. Following the announcement there was a great deal of resistance to the decision to expand the school year by groups of pastors, principals, teachers, and parents (Rivera, 2011). As a result of this resistance, 30% of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese made the decision not to extend their school year.

The proposed policy change to extend the school year in the Catholic schools of Los Angeles was based on sound research regarding student achievement and summer learning loss, and the policy aimed to make the Catholic schools in Los Angeles a stronger system of schools. The reaction of the schools within the system demonstrates the need for inquiry into and clarification of levels of authority with regard to decision-making within the system.

Throughout the nation, there are many alternative governance models being used in Catholic school systems, which add clarity to the decision-making processes through specification of decision making and authority structures and provide greater hope for the viability of Catholic schools (Haney, 2011). Successful governance models from systems of Catholic schools need to be identified and explored for possible alternatives in the context of the current governance systems of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

### **Research Questions**

This study provides insight into two questions regarding governance models and decision-making processes within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic elementary schools.

1. What are the perceptions of Catholic school leaders (pastors, principals, and Diocesan personnel) regarding the current authority structures governing Catholic parish elementary schools within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles?
2. To what extent is there openness among these leaders to consider identified alternative Catholic school governance models?

### **Governance Models**

The governance models examined in this study are the consultative board model, the board with limited jurisdiction model, and the canonical administrator model. The consultative board model is the model most common among the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic schools. This governance model employs a board with no decision-making power that serves only to advise the pastor and principal in governance issues. The board with limited jurisdiction is granted decision-making power in areas specified by the pastor. In the canonical administrator model, the pastor relinquishes his position of ultimate authority in the governance of the school to another party (Haney, 2011).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study is to identify the perspectives of leaders and individuals in authority within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles system of Catholic parochial schools regarding current models of governance, levels of authority, and decision-making processes. With insight into these perspectives, a further investigation into the readiness of church and school leaders (i.e., pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel) to examine alternative governance models with clearly defined levels of authority, decision-making procedures, accountability systems, and local autonomy was executed.



## **Significance of the Study**

This study demonstrates significance through two key lenses. First and foremost, this study provides insight into current leaders' readiness to consider alternative governance models for the parochial system of schools with the aim of providing stability, autonomy with accountability, and eventually viability to a system of schools, which has a successful track record of serving the marginalized populations of Los Angeles (Higareda, Martin, Chavez, & Holyk-Casey, 2011). Not only is the viability of the parish schools critical to the most vulnerable populations of the city, it is also important for the public education system. Nationwide, Catholic schools have relieved a financial burden of over 21 billion dollars from public school systems, already struggling to finance their current educational missions (Higareda et al., 2011).

Second, this study explores the possibility of providing the community members of the Catholic schools greater voice into the mission and vision of the schools. The current model of governance, which boils down to a single male voice maintaining ultimate authority over all policy and decisions, must be examined to ensure a stable and just distribution of authority and decision-making power for the future viability of the system of Catholic schools.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Examining the governance model of a large institution requires an examination of leadership. It is through the leadership style, motives, and models that decision-making processes and levels of authority become practice. The lens of servant leadership provided an effective frame for this research. The Catholic education institution aims to emulate the actions and words of Jesus. The life of Jesus and the leadership roles he portrays in the New Testament

are reflected in modern ideas about servant leadership (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Jesus led as a humble man with compassion and caring for the well-being and development of all. This study examines the role of servant leader not only through the individual, but also through the larger construct of the Catholic parochial school organization.

### **Servant Leadership**

The theory of servant leadership was developed by Robert Greenleaf (1977) in his work *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Power of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Greenleaf (1977) explained that a servant leader is one who serves first. The servant leader leads by bettering and empowering those who are being led. Four themes recurred throughout the work of Greenleaf (1977) and Culver (2009) that are germane to this dissertation: building community, listening to community members, examining the structure of organizations with the intent to bring about positive transformation, and leading with a sense of humility and authenticity. Servant leadership provides a framework that Catholic parochial schools can aspire to emulate.

In the following section, each of the recurrent themes is examined through the lens of the organizational structures and decision-making processes within the Catholic parochial schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

**Servant leadership and building community.** The servant leader aims to build community in an organization (Culver, 2009; Greenleaf, 2012). Part of building community is bringing the constituents of an organization in and not pushing them away. Greenleaf (1977) described this process as follows: “The servant leader always accepts and empathizes, never rejects. The servant as leader always empathizes, always accepts the person but sometimes refuses to accept some of the person’s effort or performance as good enough” (p. 20). This

statement raises an important point: acceptance and empathy are compatible with maintaining high standards and expecting the best from others. However, servant leaders never lose sight of the value and importance of the community members, and never mistake the need to expect improvement at the expense of the rejection of the individual.

Culver (2009) explained the building of community through servant leadership as an effort to “flatten the hierarchy by sharing leadership responsibility through our organization” (p. 116). The hierarchy model promotes the grasping for power and superiority (Culver, 2009; Greenleaf 1977). Culver (2009) continued,

Rather than succumb to power leadership, a servant leader seeks stabilization of the community. This stabilization is rooted in the conceptualization of the purpose of the organization. When we focus on the reason we are in business, we can align our management with that purpose. (p. 116)

Catholic parochial schools are in the business of educating the youth of the parish with an emphasis on grounding instruction in the Catholic faith. The efforts to build community in the Catholic parochial school must keep the education of the whole child at the forefront of all management and leadership decisions.

From the level of the individual school to the level of the diocese, the servant leadership framework offers a powerful means to help build a stronger community of Catholic parochial schools. Another aspect of building this community is communication that ensures all constituents are listened to and brought into the communication process.

**Servant leadership and social justice.** Education, according to Freire (1974), is an act of love. Education through a lens of servant leadership engages students, parents, teachers, and all

other community members in educational endeavors with a sense of love and caring. Greenleaf (1977) stated, “human service that requires love cannot be satisfactorily dispensed by institutions that live separate from community” (p. 38). Therefore, in an organization where the basic tenants of servant leadership as discussed above are not present, and a community building effort is not at the forefront of the organization’s efforts, education, a human service that requires love, cannot take place.

Looking from another angle, Kool and Van Dierendonck (2012) used a quantitative structural equation model to show that organizations operating under the tenants of servant leadership promoted interactional justice, optimistic attitudes, and commitment to change. These are the desired outcomes of effective leadership. A sense of justice among community members, positive attitudes, and a desire to create meaningful change are the fruits of effective implementation of servant leadership.

### **Methodology**

This quantitative study was conducted in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, within the Catholic parochial schools and the Department of Catholic Schools. The study gathered perceptions from principals, pastors, and assistant superintendents from the Department of Catholic Schools regarding current consultative board models of governance and alternative models including boards with limited jurisdiction and corporate boards. A vertical sampling of participants covered each level of authority starting with the pastor, who maintains the ultimate authority of the schools, the principal, who manages the day-to-day operations of the school, followed by the Department of Catholic Schools assistant superintendents, who maintain an advisory role to both the principal and pastor.

Data were collected using a quantitative survey administered to pastors and principals of Los Angeles Archdiocesan parochial schools and the staff of the Department of Catholic Schools. The quantitative survey gathered data regarding the perceptions of current decision-making processes and levels of authority within the current parochial school organization and gauged the openness among these individuals to consider the three identified alternative governance models for Catholic parochial schools.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

A noteworthy limitation of this study was the researcher's direct involvement in the system being examined. As a principal at a parochial school within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the researcher had informed opinions regarding both the current system as well as the three proposed governance models prior to the design and implementation of the study. Therefore, the potential existed for researcher bias.

Another limitation of the study stemmed from the vast socioeconomic diversity among Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. School leaders in the sample had a wide range of realities in terms of funding and economic and social capital. These realities potentially influenced their views regarding governance models and their readiness to explore the qualities of the models being investigated.

Lastly, two of the three dissertation committee members held leadership roles in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles at the time of data collection. Their input was included in the study, and they had a unique perspective as they were directly involved in the development of the survey instrument and the study.

A delimitation was the difficulty of measuring the variables proposed in the research question, specifically the variables implicated by measurements of perceptions and openness. Care was required when developing the survey instrument and implementing the measurement scales for these two items.

The context of the study was also a delimitation. This study gathered data exclusively from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles; therefore, discoveries and conclusions may not be applicable to the diverse dioceses throughout the nation.

Lastly, this study focused exclusively on Catholic parochial schools educating youth from preschool to middle school. Thus, the findings are not generalizable to Catholic high schools.

### **Conclusion**

Alternative Catholic parochial school governance models are showing promise throughout the United States for improving the viability of the schools (Haney, 2011). The dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter Two discusses the pertinent literature behind the topic of Catholic school governance models; Chapter Three describes the quantitative research design, data collection, and data analysis protocols; Chapter Four presents the results; and Chapter Five concludes the study and discusses the significance of the findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

This study gave insight into the perceptions of Catholic parochial school leadership on current governance structures and to gauge leaders' openness to alternative governance models. The following review of literature frames the current governance models of Catholic parish schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, as well as explores three new and innovative models of governance being implemented throughout the United States.

The literature review is organized into four sections. Section one focuses on a framework of servant leadership. Section two presents the history of Catholic schools in the United States and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Section three reviews scholarship on pastoral leadership in Catholic parish schools. Section four describes three alternative models of Catholic school governance being implemented across the nation. The examination of the literature serves to justify the research being conducted in the area of Catholic school governance in Los Angeles, as well as gives relevance to the three governance models proposed in this quantitative study.

#### **Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership provides a frame for governance and decision-making models grounded in social justice.

#### **Servant Leadership and Listening**

Organizational structures, such as decision-making processes and levels of authority, are put in place to ensure the smooth and successful operation of the organization itself. Successful operation of an organization requires a leader to possess the abilities to adapt to changing

environments and to identify problem areas that need to be addressed. True servant leaders are able to respond to problem areas by first having the insight to listen (Greenleaf, 1977). A servant leader's ability to listen is a direct result of the position he/she takes with respect to others within the organization; the servant leader leads from within, not from above. Culver (2009) explained the importance of a servant leader's listening skills in the following excerpt:

One of the defining qualities of servant leaders is their ability to listen. They make no assumptions of how things are; they continually seek information from others to see how things are perceived. Problems of which we might not have been aware often are revealed if we just listen to what is on others' minds. (p. 104)

This is not to suggest that effective servant leaders are swayed by every problem statement brought their way (Culver, 2009). Rather, the effective servant leader listens to all but acts with good judgment. Not every problem brought to a leader is worthy of exploration, but the simple act of listening to and hearing from the community members promotes a healthy organization where communication is fluid among all stakeholders.

### **Servant Leadership and Community Building**

Listening and valuing individuals builds community throughout organizations. A progressive leader who strives to build community will lead not as a dictator, but rather as one who shares leadership responsibility with other members of the organization (Sergiovanni, 1994). This community-building aspect of servant leadership transforms power from authoritarian form to one that empowers all members of the community to work with intrinsic purpose towards the accomplishment of the organization's goals in alignment with the



organization's mission. Leadership becomes the responsibility of all community members, and all community members work in tandem with equal obligation (Sergiovanni, 1994).

In a study on the decline in Catholic school enrollment, McLellan (2000) found that an important attitudinal factor for parents choosing to leave Catholic schools was the lack of input parents had in the schools' decision-making processes. As mentioned above, not all input from community members can be put into action or used to bring about organizational change, but the act of listening can give community members a sense of belonging through being heard (Sergiovanni, 1994).

### **Servant Leadership and Organizational Structure**

In examining structures of leadership such as decision-making processes and levels of authority, the structure of the organization itself, which scaffolds these structures of leadership, is routinely neglected (Greenleaf, 1977). An organizational tradition that is often overlooked is the “hierarchical principle that places one person in charge as the lone chief atop a pyramidal structure” (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 61). The current authority model within the Catholic parochial school of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, set in place by Canon Law, matches the above description. One individual, the pastor, sits atop the pyramidal structure.

Greenleaf (1977) suggested an alternative to the lone figure on top from the ancient Roman tradition called *primus inter pares*—first among equals. In this model, the servant leader leads from the position of peer, working at the same level as others within the organization. While the ultimate authority still lies with the servant leader, the leader is not set apart from others within the organization.

Greenleaf (1977) argued that the pyramidal structure is flawed in several ways. First, he claimed the model is “abnormal and corrupting” (p. 63). Abnormal because the pyramidal model creates an individual without peers, where natural and fluid communication can no longer exist. The subordinates may not openly communicate with the elevated authority figure, as they are no longer peers and the authority figure may pose a threat. The pyramidal model “weakens informal links, dries up channels of honest reaction and feedback, and creates limiting chief-subordinate relationships” (p. 63). Furthermore, the pyramidal structure stifled the potential leadership capabilities of community members (Greenleaf, 1977). As educational leaders we strive to create communities of professional learning and collaboration, which requires leadership from within. The servant leadership model can help promote this professional community by modeling and sharing leadership from within.

### **History of American Catholic Schools**

Catholic education has been an ongoing activity in North America since the beginning migration of Catholic persons to the New World (Buetow, 1970). It began with the Spanish Crown’s objectives in dealing with the Native Americans in the fifteenth century, which were “reduction to village life, Christianization, civilization, and final racial fusion with the colonists” (Buetow, 1970, p. 2). Since the early times of colonization and Christianization of the Native Americans, Catholic education has bloomed to a massive system spanning from preschool to university. The following discussion examines the foundations and history of Catholic education in America.

## **Genesis of Catholic Schools in America**

During the colonial period of American history, education was seen as a private matter and was a task undertaken primarily by churches (Buetow, 1970). This philosophy helped to lay the foundation for the American Catholic school system. At the beginning of our nation's history, the Catholic was "an insignificant and powerless minority" (Buetow, 1988, p. 22). The schools of the day were predominately Protestant in philosophy and teachings (Buetow, 1970). Not only was the dominant philosophy Protestant, there was an overt anti-Catholic tone in the early United States (Buetow, 1985). This feeling of anti-Catholicism only increased with the influx of large numbers of Irish and southern European immigrants to the U.S. during the 19th century (Buetow, 1985).

In 1784 the first diocese in North America, the Diocese of Baltimore, was established. John Carroll was named Bishop of the Diocese of Baltimore, thus becoming the first American Bishop. Carroll saw education as the primary means to lead evangelization efforts in the young nation (Kealey & Kealey, 2003). In an effort to create an educated population of leaders, Carroll founded Georgetown College in 1791. In his first pastoral letter to Rome in 1792, Carroll proclaimed, "I have considered the virtuous and Christian instruction of youth as a principal object of pastoral solicitude" (Buetow, 1970, p. 45). Georgetown, and later St. Mary's Seminary, Visitation Academy, and St. Mary's College served as institutions of higher learning grounded in Catholic teachings with the purpose of strengthening and perpetuating a healthy Catholic faith in the United States (Kealey & Kealey, 2003).

Carroll was not solely responsible for the institutions that opened after Georgetown College. Rather, Carroll as the leader of the only diocese in the United States at the time,

empowered other visionary leaders with that responsibility. The Sulpicians (St. Mary's College and Seminary), and the Visitation Sisters (Visitation Academy) led the charge to open educational institutions. The most notable leader to receive support from Carroll was St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Kealey & Kealey, 2003). St. Elizabeth formed the Sisters of Charity in 1809, a group of noble women dedicated to teaching and caring for the sick and poor. St. Elizabeth is considered the mother of American Catholic education.

Carroll's leadership in America's early Catholic Church built community and empowered capable leaders to further the mission of the Church, an exemplary model of servant leadership.

### **The Proliferation of Parochial Schools**

The beginning of the American public school system in the early nineteenth century, called common schools, was infused with a strong Protestant affiliation (Buetow, 1970; McLaughlin, O'Keefe, & O'Keefe, 1996). With regards to the teaching of scripture and the Bible, which was allowed in early American schools, the tie to the Protestant faith was explicit (McLaughlin et al., 1996). The father of the American public school, Horace Mann, described the King James (Protestant) version of the Bible as "the book of every Christian, and thus all-inclusive" (McLaughlin et al., 1996, p. 8). However, the King James Version of the Bible was significantly different from the Douay-Rheims version of the Bible, which was read by Catholics (McLaughlin et al., 1996).

The disparity between the teachings and scriptures desired by the Catholic population and those being used in common schools led to protests by Catholic leaders in the United States. One of the most notable leaders in this arena of protests was Archbishop John Hughes of New York, known by the nickname "Dagger John" (Buetow, 1970). Hughes was an aggressive

advocate for the rights of Catholic schools and Catholic school children (Buetow, 1970). In 1840, Hughes argued in front of the Public School Society of New York that because public funds were being used to support the common schools, which educated children from a Protestant point of view, the funds should also be used to support children in the eight Catholic Parish schools in New York (Buetow, 1970; Kealey & Kealey, 2003). The Public School Society rejected Hughes' efforts by denying any portion of school funds to be used to support Catholic schools (Buetow, 1970; Kealey & Kealey, 2003).

An unintended result of Hughes' efforts was the passing of the Maclay Bill in 1842. The Maclay Bill stated that no public funds were to be provided to any public school teaching a religious sectarian curriculum (Buetow, 1970). The Maclay Bill dealt a blow to Hughes' efforts to secure public funds for Catholic schools, but it also aided Hughes' efforts for the rights of Catholic school children by eliminating the anti-Catholic Public School Society and replacing it with an elected school board structure in a city with an increasingly Catholic population (Buetow, 1970). By 1850, about 75% of school children in New York were Catholic (Kealey & Kealey, 2003). The increase in the Catholic population was largely due to the massive number of new immigrants to America, the Catholic population grew from 500,000 in 1829 to over 8,000,000 in 1884 (Buetow, 1970).

As the door closed on hopes of supporting Catholic schools with public funds, Hughes focused his efforts on the creation of a strong Catholic school system in New York (Buetow, 1970). In an 1850 pastoral letter Hughes wrote, "Schoolhouses first, and churches afterward" (Kealey & Kealey, 2003, p. 39). During his tenure as Bishop and later Archbishop of New York, Hughes opened fifty Catholic schools (Kealey & Kealey, 2003).

Other historical factors catalyzed the creation of parochial schools in the mid to late nineteenth century. The debate regarding the use of the King James Version of the Bible brought about considerable anti-Catholic sentiment and violence towards the Catholic community in the diocese of Philadelphia. Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick advocated for the use of the Catholics' own Bible in the common schools; this proposition was met with great hostility by the Know-Nothing nativists, who insisted the United States was a Protestant nation (Buetow, 1970). This debate sparked riots across Philadelphia in the summer of 1844, in which many Catholic schools and churches were burned (Buetow, 1970).

In 1875 the debate over the existence and funding of Catholic schools reached the highest office in the land. President Grant, in his annual message to Congress, encouraged the creation of a Constitutional amendment that would forever eliminate public funds being made available to schools "under the control of any religious sect or denomination; nor shall any monies so raised or lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or denominations" (Buetow, 1970, p. 157). In reaction to Grant's plea, a United States representative from Maine, James G. Blaine, proposed the Blaine Amendment that prohibited the use of public funds for sectarian schools. The amendment passed the House of Representatives, but narrowly failed to pass the Senate by just four votes. The Catholic response to this attempt, published in *The Catholic World*, was that should the Blaine Amendment pass, that no monies of the land should be granted to the current common school system, as they are sectarian (Protestant) (Buetow, 1970).

The political climate and anti-Catholic sentiments of the nineteenth century created an environment ripe for the advancement and overarching Catholic Church support of parochial schools. The trend of opening Catholic schools continued throughout the century. In 1884 there

were already approximately 2,500 schools educating over a half-million students (Moreau, 1997). The global Catholic Church leadership also helped to empower a growing parish school model (Fogarty, Sanchez, Hubbard, & Larkin, 1985). In 1876, the Congregation of Propaganda issued a statement declaring parochial schools were to be established where none were in existence, and that those in existence were to be strengthened (Fogarty et al., 1985). The parochial school, according to the Propaganda, was the ultimate symbol of a successful parish community (Fogarty et al., 1985).

### **The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore**

The American leaders of the Catholic Church aligned with the global leadership in their position on parochial schools during the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884. The primary motivation for the Council's decrees, which made parochial school a mandate and not merely a recommendation, was the concern that a growing secular society in the United States was threatening the propagation of the Catholic faith (Gleason, Borders, Pilarczyk, & McManus, 1985). Gleason et al. (1985) stated, "The conciliar decrees left no doubt that the bishops saw a fundamental split between the Catholic view and the secular view" (p. 276). The Council mandated the establishment of a parochial school in each parish that did not already have one and stated that every Catholic family was obligated to send their children to a parochial school (Gleason et al., 1985).

These mandates were accompanied by eight decrees aimed at improving parochial schools: pastors were to be trained in the ways of pedagogy, pastors were to be in direct supervision of their schools, pastors were to teach religion classes in their schools when possible, the system of parochial schools was to actively involve the laity in the schools, each diocese was

to appoint a board of examiners to govern the schools, teachers were to be highly qualified and regularly tested for competence, religious communities were encouraged to create teacher preparation programs, and the establishment of schools for lay teachers was encouraged (Gleason et al., 1985).

### **Catholic Schools and Canon Law**

As mentioned earlier, the efforts by the Grant administration in 1875 to pass the Blaine Amendment had significant impact on the formation of Catholic parochial schools in the United States. The Blaine Amendment aimed to prohibit any public funds from going to sectarian schools. During this time, sectarian was little more than a code for “Catholic” (DeForrest, 2003). This is evident due to the fact that in the day’s common schools, regular reading of the King James Bible was a part of the accepted and promoted curriculum (DeForrest, 2003). It was not religion Blaine wanted out of common schools; it was Catholicity (DeForrest, 2003).

Although the Blaine Amendment failed on the federal level, it provoked the majority of states to amend their constitutions with regards to funding sectarian schools (Buetow, 1970; DeForrest, 2003; Russo, 2009). Because these state amendments prohibited public funds from going to the Catholic school system, as the system of Catholic schools grew, it did not fall under the governance of the states (DeForrest, 2003). This being the case, Catholic school governance was guided by Canon Law, and therefore, bishops, pastors, and other church leaders maintained direct control over all aspects of governance and operations (Russo, 2009). Because Catholic school governance structures have come to be under the rule of Canon Law, it is necessary to examine what Canon Law states about schools and education.



The most recent version of the code of Canon Law was established in 1983. Canons relating to Catholic schools were included in Book III of the Code of Canon Law, “The Teaching Office of the Church” (Canon Law Society, 1983). The Canons delineated where the responsibility of education lies and detailed the levels of authority in the governance of schools.

According to Canon 794, the Church has both the right and the duty to educate the youth, and furthermore, the pastor has the responsibility to ensure opportunities for Catholic education exist for families. Canon Law also expressed the responsibility of the parent in being advocates for their child’s education. According to Canon Law, parents are obliged to choose the best available means of providing their children with a Catholic education. These requirements closely resembled the declarations of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore of 1884 (Brown, 2010).

Catholic school governance as outlined in Canon Law falls under the powers of the bishops and pastors (Russo, 2009). Only a bishop or a pastor may deem a school to be “Catholic” (Grochowski, 2008; Russo, 2009). A school can be Catholic only when being directly led by a pastor or bishop, when it is directed by a public ecclesiastical juridical person, such as a religious order, or when the school has been recognized by an ecclesiastical authority in writing as being Catholic (Grochowski, 2008; Russo, 2009). The ecclesiastical authority refers to the bishop.

### **Enrollment Trends of Catholic Schools**

Enrollment in Catholic schools has been on a steady decline since the 1960s (Baker & Riordan, 1998). The average percentage of children in a diocese in the United States enrolled in Catholic schools has dropped from 10% to about 4% (Baker & Riordan, 1998). A review of

current literature highlights several reasons for the decline in Catholic school numbers in the past half century: demographic shifts in the Catholic population, rising costs of a Catholic education, lack of support from Church leadership, and theological and attitudinal shifts in the Catholic community (Greeley, McCready, & McCourt, 1976; McLellan, 2000).

One aspect to be considered in the discussion regarding enrollment trends in Catholic schools is the population shift of Catholics during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1964, there were equal numbers of Catholic elementary school aged children living in urban and suburban environments, but by the year 1974, the number of students living in the suburban environments was double that of urban environments (Greeley et al., 1976). While the population of Catholics grew in suburban areas, there was not an equal growth in newly built Catholic schools for the children to attend (Greeley et al., 1976). In 1974, 38% of Catholic parents reported not sending their children to a Catholic school because no Catholic schools were available to them (Greeley et al., 1976).

At the same time the population shift was happening, there was also a shift in staffing trends from religious to laity, which drove the price of tuition higher, placing Catholic elementary schools out of financial reach for many urban Catholic families (Greeley et al., 1976). While staffing shifts have increased the costs of Catholic schooling, Greeley et al. (1976) also point out the financial situation of the American Catholic has improved such that, with real income doubling during the 20th century, the Catholic family can continue to afford a Catholic education.

A lack of support and a seeming lack of willingness to be innovative in the financial and authority structures within American Catholic schools were highlighted in Greeley et al. (1976).

The authors stated,

Changes in the administration and financing of Catholic education would be absolutely imperative to making such funds available, but there is so much caution and fear and mediocrity in the leadership of the American church that it seems much easier to close schools down or refuse to build new ones than to risk innovative techniques of administering and funding Catholic Schools. (p. 324)

While this statement may be viewed as an extreme position in regards to the effectiveness and innovation of American Catholic leaders, it does point out the important fact that the decision-making structures in the Catholic system are top-down, and they lack a community-based voice. As Greeley et al. contend, “attendance declines and construction comes to a halt because those in decision-making positions are unaware of the support for and the importance of Catholic schools for the overwhelming majority of American Catholics” (p. 326). The lack of community voice and the hierarchical nature of Catholic decision-making structures have led to a disconnect between those in authority positions and the community at large. To achieve a system of governance more closely tied to the model given to the faithful by Jesus, a model of servant leadership, the authority must come from within and among the community and not from above them.

### **Staffing Trends in Catholic Parish Schools**

Financial viability of Catholic schools has been of particular concern in recent years. Staffing trends in Catholic schools are one of the primary causes of financial stress. The

composition of Catholic school staff has shifted from a population of primarily religious women to one of laity. During the beginning of the Catholic school boom, religious staff members made up 90% of school staff (Convey, 1992). In recent years, this number has been reduced to less than 8% (Caruso, 2012). The total number of religious faculty and staff working in American Catholic schools has dwindled from a robust 104,314 in 1965 to a mere 4,977 in 2011 (Caruso, 2012). This decline has been more pronounced in parish schools than in privately owned Catholic schools (Convey, 1992).

Many successes of the Catholic school system in the United States were due to the sacrifices made by religious women (Buetow, 1989; Caruso, 2012). The sisters, the foundation of American Catholic schools, survived with very little pay, often lacking the basic necessities such as adequate housing and food (Caruso, 2012). These sacrifices made possible the founding and successful operation of Catholic schools from the funds from Sunday collections alone (Caruso, 2012).

With the transition from the religious sisters to the laity came a significant loss in the labor subsidy being provided, which markedly increased the schools' financial burdens (Caruso, 2012). The financial demands of the new salaries and benefits of a lay workforce meant a dramatic increase in tuition, an expense passed on to the families of Catholic school students. This burden often proved to be too much for the budgets of many families (Caruso, 2012).

The transition from a workforce of religious women willing to make extreme sacrifices for the goal of providing a Catholic education to the children of the Church, to a workforce of laity in need of just wages has proven to be a difficult obstacle for Catholic schools, and a major

cause of the closure of more than 1600 Catholic schools in the past two decades (Brinig & Garnett, 2010).

### **Viability of Catholic Schools**

The demographic shifts in Catholic school staffing and the decrease in enrollment have placed a financial burden on parishes and families, having a tremendous negative impact on the viability of Catholic schools (Harris, 2000). In the early years of the parochial school model, parishes could often finance school with the Sunday collections alone (Wuerl, 2008). The demographic shifts and the increased number of laity working in the Catholic schools have made this impossible. In 1994, the average Catholic parochial school budget was over 560,000 dollars, of which, an average of 25% came through parish subsidies (Harris, 2000). The remaining 75% of the school budget has come through raising tuition costs and increased pressure to fundraise (Harris, 2000). In a typical Catholic parochial school, tuition covers only 70% of the school's operational costs (Wuerl, 2008).

The families making the effort to send their children to Catholic schools have carried a large portion of the financial burden. In 1994, the average two-child household attending Catholic schools dedicated more than 11% of the family budget to tuition (Harris, 2000). The above cycle of increasing staffing costs coupled with fewer families able to pay tuition has created a dire situation for Catholic parochial school viability.

In a changing financial landscape, principals and other leaders within Catholic parochial schools can benefit tremendously through the utilization of the expertise found among the community members (Dwyer, 2010). Thus through investigation of effective governance models

which utilize these community resources, the insecurity with regards to viability can be diminished.

### **Effectiveness of Catholic Schools**

The justification for an empirically based examination of alternative governance models lies within the need to find ways to ensure the viability of Catholic parochial schools. The effectiveness of Catholic parochial schools has been documented for all demographic categories of students, but most importantly, the effectiveness of Catholic schools has recently been documented for students of marginalized populations in urban environments.

In a mixed-methods study conducted within the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles by Litton, Martin, Higareda, and Mendoza (2010), students considered “at-risk,” who were recipients of tuition assistance from the Catholic Education Foundation in Los Angeles consistently out-performed students from similar demographics in local public schools. Litton et al. (2010) discovered that in a cohort of 200 students who began Catholic high school in the fall of 2001, 97.5% graduated from high school by June of 2005. This is substantially higher than the graduation rate of 66.4% for students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (Litton, Martin, Higareda, & Mendoza, 2010).

Examination of parent voices in the Litton et al. (2010) study also provided data supporting the effectiveness of Catholic schools. Over 1,800 parents were surveyed by Litton et al., and the data showed parents of students in Catholic schools felt “a meaningful partnership as co-educators” (p. 362). Parents in the sample reported that the faith-based education their children were receiving not only prepared them academically for their future life and studies, but also that the Catholic school environment made their children “better people” (p. 363). The

parents felt their children were well-prepared to be both constructive and caring members of society.

Litton et al. (2010) pointed out an obvious bias in the data being collected from parents of Catholic school students, as these parents made the choice to send their students to Catholic schools. Litton et al. (2010) provided a counter argument to this possible bias by pointing out that all of the parents surveyed received tuition assistance from the Catholic Education Foundation, and represented the lower socioeconomic and mostly minority groups. These parents, although receiving tuition assistance, were still making significant financial sacrifices to make Catholic school attendance possible for their children. To maintain quality Catholic education for all students, especially those from underprivileged populations, governance models that can best sustain the system of Catholic schools must be explored.

### **Emerging Alternative Governance Models**

The governance of Catholic schools throughout the nation is guided by Church doctrine found in Canon Law. These laws do not provide specific policies that all schools must adhere to and follow, but rather they provide a general framework for how the work of the schools should be conducted in order to be a successful mission of the Catholic Church (Haney et al., 2009). This being said, there exists a wide variety of governance models in place throughout the Catholic schools in the United States.

There are two general principles guiding these governance models: the principle of subsidiarity and the principle of collaboration (Haney et al., 2009). The principle of subsidiarity states that the responsibility for governing a specific level within the hierarchy of the church structures should be accomplished at that very level (Haney et al., 2009). In the case of Catholic

schools, the principle of subsidiarity signifies that the leaders at the school site itself, specifically the parish pastor and the school principal, should manage the school. The principle of collaboration is an important corollary, stating that the successful implementation of any governance model requires the individuals within the system to be effective both as individuals and as collaborators working together as a team (Haney et al., 2009).

### **School System versus System of Schools**

The principle of subsidiarity employed in the governance of Catholic schools creates a governance framework unique from the traditional governance of current public schools in the United States (Sabatino, Huchting, & Dell'Olio, 2013). The Catholic schools can be viewed as a system of schools rather than a school system. That is to say each individual school exists as an independently functioning entity within a larger system. This structure differs from current public school models, where the policies are determined at the district level. This situation creates a great deal of autonomy for Catholic schools. This autonomy can be a tremendous benefit to the Catholic schools as they can truly be governed in a manner which best serves the local population according to its specific needs (Sabatino et al., 2013).

If this system of schools is to best serve each individual community of parents and students according to specific needs, there must be a voice from that community that is heard during governance and local decision-making processes. The three emerging governance models described below aim to include that voice through a lens for servant leadership so that each individual community can be served according to their specific needs.



### **Consultative School Boards**

The traditional model for Catholic school governance is a parochial school. A parochial school is a school serving one single Catholic parish. In this model, which has a high degree of site-based management, the pastor, given authority from the bishop, serves as the CEO of all parish education, including the parish school. The principal is hired by the pastor to be the primary administrator of the school and oversee day-to-day operations.

The consultative school board, mandated by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to be in place by 2008, is a board consisting of a variety of community members with the task of using their expertise to advise the school administration and pastor in school-related management issues. While the consultative board lacks authority in decision-making, it does have power in that many decisions ultimately made by the pastor and principal are done so in an open forum where community input is heard (Haney et al., 2009).

### **Boards of Limited Jurisdiction**

A board with limited jurisdiction holds authority over decisions made in specified aspects of school governance. The areas included in this authority structure are defined by the bishop, with some specific areas excluded, including any aspects of Catholic identity (Haney et al., 2009), which remain with the ecclesiastical authority. The board with limited jurisdiction has been used widely across the nation as an alternative governance model for Catholic schools; four out of the five model configurations of Catholic school governance outlined in Haney and O'Keefe (2009) employ a board with limited jurisdiction in their structure.

An interesting aspect of the model configurations outlined in Haney and O’Keefe (2009) is the use of a multiple school governance model. In four out of the five model configurations discussed, the governance structure included multiple parish schools under the guidance of one governance structure. This aspect allows for the maintenance of site-based management which has traditionally allowed Catholic schools to implement programs and make local changes in an effective manner with the added stability of collaboration and shared decision making among a small group of schools.

The possibilities for the implementation of this model for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic schools are intriguing, as this structure would give a voice to a centralized power such as the Department of Catholic Schools, while maintaining the autonomy that comes with site-based management.

A board with limited jurisdiction must be constructed with clear definitions of the specific policy areas in which it will have authority and must have clear and rigorous standards for board membership (Haney & O’Keefe, 2009). The competent authority (bishop) must approve policy specifications and standards for board membership.

The Healey Education Foundation Catholic School Development Program has helped over 50 Catholic schools develop boards of limited jurisdiction. According to a study by Geruson, Healey, Sabatino, Ryan, and Haney (2013), these boards have played an integral role in the continued sustainability of these schools through “strong leadership, sound fundraising, strategic enrollment marketing, and mission-driven, data informed culture” (p. 188). Boards of limited jurisdiction provide meaningful community voice to the governance of Catholic schools.

## **Diocesan Schools/Canonical Administrators**

The third model examined is the diocesan school, or school governed by a canonical administrator. In the hierarchical structures of the Catholic Church, the bishop or archbishop is ultimately responsible for designating decision-making authority to an individual for Catholic schools. In the traditional model of governance, the bishop or archbishop assigns this authority of canonical administrator to the pastor of the parish in which the school resides. The pastor is the ultimate authority in the traditional parochial school. A growing number of Catholic schools are shifting to governance by canonical administrators other than the parish pastor (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2011). In these schools, the ecclesiastical authority to be the canonical administrator for the school is granted to an individual or entity to manage all aspects of the school's governance and decision making. Often, the entity granted ecclesiastical authority from the bishop is the diocesan office of education, in Los Angeles known as the Department of Catholic Schools.

An example of the canonical administrator model of Catholic school governance can be found in the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut. A study by Meitler Consultants in 2003 showed a lack of clearly defined authority as well as a void in leadership in the Bridgeport Catholic schools (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2013). Based on these findings, Bishop William E. Lori announced in 2009 the formation of the Bridgeport Roman Catholic Schools Corporation. Under the Bishop's right according to the Canon Law, the Bishop appointed the superintendent of schools, Margaret Dames, the canonical administrator of all Catholic schools in the Diocese (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2013).

As of 2011, the Bridgeport Roman Catholic Schools Corporation governed 33 Catholic elementary schools and five high schools with an enrollment of over 11,000 students (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2013). The Corporation has provided enhanced enrollment and financial policies which have helped the schools thrive (Goldschmidt & Walsh, 2013).

### **Conclusion**

From the beginning of our nation's formal education system to the present situations facing youth in East and South Central Los Angeles, Catholic schools have proven to be a symbol of hope and motivation for young people. Today is a time of crisis for many of these institutions. Financial pressures from shifts in personnel and declines in enrollment have forced over half of the nation's Catholic schools—schools shown to be effective for the most marginalized and needy students—to close their doors. Work must be done to ensure these schools are remaining relevant in today's society and have the necessary tools to ensure their survival.

The way Catholic elementary schools are governed appears to remain stagnant until new configurations and ideas are brought forward in response to this crisis. Examining the governance and decision making processes of Catholic schools through a lens of servant leadership highlights areas of concern that should be reconsidered, especially practices of involving community members in decision-making processes and providing a voice to all stakeholders regarding the governance of our Catholic schools. Canon Law has provided a basic structure, but it is far from limited to the one-voice one-decision dogma that accompanies Canon Law. It may be time to engage the leaders of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles elementary

schools with the ideas of exploring these innovative models of governance that prove effective for many schools across the nation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

Throughout the United States, Catholic parish schools have employed alternative governance in order to build community and ensure the vitality of their schools. In order for conversations to begin regarding the possibility of employing alternative governance models in the parish schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, it is important to identify and understand the perspectives of people currently holding positions of authority within the system regarding these alternative models. This quantitative study examined the perceptions of the Los Angeles Archdiocese Catholic parochial school leadership with regards to current authority and decision-making structures and gauged these leaders' openness to alternative governance models including the utilization of advisory boards, boards of limited jurisdiction, and canonical administrators (e.g., the Department of Catholic Schools) as decision-making authorities.

This chapter restates the study's central research questions, describes the sample of leaders who completed the quantitative survey, describes the survey instrument used to collect the data, outlines the specific procedures used to collect data from the sample, and explains the procedures used to approach the data for analysis.

#### **Research Questions**

This study provided insight into two questions regarding governance models and decision-making processes within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic parish schools.

1. What are the perceptions of Catholic school leaders (pastors, principals, and Archdiocesan personnel) regarding the current authority structures governing Catholic parish elementary schools within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles?
2. To what extent is there openness among these leaders to consider identified alternative Catholic school governance models?

The review of literature provided evidence of the effectiveness of Catholic schools in educating the poor and marginalized populations of Los Angeles (Higareda et al., 2011; Litton et al., 2010). With the changing demographics of the leaders, faculties, and students in today's Catholic schools, economic realities are challenging the viability and future of many Los Angeles Catholic schools. Throughout the nation, Catholic schools are facing similar challenges. Successful Catholic schools have implemented new governance configurations to address the challenges being faced. The new configurations utilize community resources, give voice to community members, and provide support for educational leaders. The questions asked in this study gauged the openness of pastors and principals in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to consider the elements contained within new configurations for Catholic school governance.

### **Methodology**

This study was a non-experimental, quantitative study aimed at gauging the openness of principals and pastors in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to consider implementing the governance elements found in three identified governance models: the traditional model with a consultative school board, an alternative model with a board with limited jurisdiction, and an alternative model with an education professional appointed as the canonical administrator.

## **Sample**

The sample selected for this study was a nonrandom sample. This technique was most suitable for the research being conducted because in order to successfully address the research questions, data needed to be collected from a specific group of individuals, namely the principals, pastors, and Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools personnel within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

The sample size for the study was  $N = 423$  individuals. The sample was divided into the three categories of individuals being surveyed: pastors ( $n = 204$ ), principals ( $n = 219$ ), and Department of Catholic Schools personnel ( $n = 10$ ). This sample represented one pastor from each of the 225 Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, one principal from each of the schools (with the researcher omitted), and 10 Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools superintendent and assistant superintendents.

## **Instrumentation**

Data were collected from participants using a 27-question survey. The survey consisted of six introductory demographic questions, followed by 14 questions addressing characteristics of the three identified governance models, six questions addressing elements of community voice, and one open-ended question regarding community voice and participation.

Table 1 describes the question topics and placement, as well as the final randomized order of questions.



Table 1

*Organization of Survey Instrument*

Question Number	Question Topic	Question Sub-Topic
1-6	Demographics	
7-12	Traditional Governance Model– Consultative Boards	
13-16	Boards of Limited Jurisdiction	
17-20	Canonical Administrator/Diocesan School	
21-26	Community Voice	21-22 Parent Voice 23-24 Parishioner Voice 25-26 Local Community Members – Outside Parish
27	Open-Ended Question	

*Note:* Questions 1 through 27 were assigned specific data criterion.

Because the survey instrument was created to gauge the participants’ attitudes regarding the aspects of specific governance models, an attitude scale was used for questions 5 through 26. Specifically, the questions used a 5-point Likert scale with the categories strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). Each response level was assigned the following numerical values for purposes of data analysis: SA = 5, A = 4, U = 3, D = 2 and SD = 1.

**Reliability and validity.** After the initial draft of the survey instrument was constructed, several steps were taken to ensure the reliability and the validity of the survey. First to examine reliability, the language used in the survey was examined to ensure all participants could interpret questions similarly. This was done by eliminating jargon and remaining true to universally understood language terms. The instrument was also examined to ensure questions delivered complete understanding of what was being asked, while remaining concise. Initial efforts to check for validity of the instrument included efforts to ensure questions would have the same meaning for all participants by eliminating technical knowledge as a prerequisite for proper understanding of questions, as well as ensuring introductions and directions were in no way

promoting any bias. Finally, proper notice was given to all participants regarding the confidentiality of their responses.

After the initial review of language elements in the instrument, a critical systematic review using the QUAID (Question Understanding Aid) was applied to each question. The QUAID, developed by Graesser, Cai, Louwerse, and Daniel (2006) is a web-based computer program which searches for “unfamiliar technical terms, vague or imprecise predicate or relative terms, vague or ambiguous noun phrases, complex syntax, and working memory overload” (pp. 9-10). See Appendix B for QUAID results and adjustments made to questions based on these results.

The next step in the evaluation of the survey instrument was cognitive testing. These tests were performed with the help of two fellow doctoral candidates and one Archdiocese of Los Angeles pastor who all volunteered to participate in the testing. The volunteer pastor did not participate in the final survey. The volunteers walked through the survey instrument verbalizing what each question meant to them and explained why they chose the responses to the questions they had chosen. The researcher conducted the interviews, as it is important for the interviewer to have a complete working knowledge of the research behind the survey instrument (Fowler, 2009). These three interviews were evaluated to ensure similar understanding of what was being asked by each survey item.

Lastly, the final survey instrument was shared with experts in the areas of Catholic school governance and quantitative research methods to elicit additional critical feedback.

## **Research Procedures**

The survey was conducted during the third to fourth months of the school year, depending upon each site's start, which ranged from the middle of August through the beginning of September. The goal behind the timing of the survey distribution was to conduct the data collection during a time of relative calm in the working life of school and parish administrators. The new school year was under way, and many of the stressors associated with the beginning the new school year had passed.

In order to access the desired sample of participants to complete the survey, two unique methods were followed, one for the principals and Department of Catholic Schools (DCS) personnel, and one for the pastors. First, permission from the superintendent of the Catholic schools to distribute the survey to 224 principals of Catholic elementary schools within the archdiocese was requested by the researcher. With permission granted, the survey was distributed to each principal via email. The email contained a hyperlink to an online version of the survey on Qualtrics, a web-based survey distribution and analysis software. The original email was followed up with one reminder email two weeks after the initial.

In order to distribute the survey to the second group of participants, the pastors of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the researcher reached out to 10 of the 20 deanery chairs. The deaneries were selected as a convenience sample, and they consisted of the three pastoral regions with the largest number of parishes within the closest range. The sample reflected the socioeconomic and cultural diversity found in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Contact was made via phone call, identifying the researcher as a principal of a Catholic elementary school within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. During the phone call, the researcher gave a brief 30-

second description of the study and then solicited the deanery chair's help in distributing a paper-and-pen version of the survey to the pastors at the following deanery meeting. Upon approval from the chair, the researcher delivered the appropriate amount of surveys. Each survey was bound separately and each survey had a writing utensil attached. The researcher delivered the package of surveys in a self-addressed, postage-paid legal envelope so the completed surveys could be mailed to the researcher.

The decision to distribute the surveys in two unique methods for each group of participants came from personal discussion with an assistant superintendent from the Department of Catholic Schools (DCS). The assistant superintendent recommended the paper-and-pen version of the survey for pastors based on past experience. The assistant superintendent stated that many of the pastors still used email communication sparingly.

The researcher manually entered the data from the paper-and-pen survey responses into the Qualtrics database.

### **Data Analysis**

Data from the survey were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Using descriptive statistics, the mean, variance, and standard deviation were calculated for each of the 20 non-demographic questions.

Inferential statistics were used to find the correlations of the responses for the 20 questions regarding the identified governance models. Pearson's  $r$  was used to find the correlations in responses for each of the three primary categories. Inferential statistics were also used to explore the commonalities and differences in the responses from the three unique groups of participants: pastors, principals, and DCS staff. A Chi-square test was used to compare

responses from pastors, principals, and DCS staff for each of the three identified governance structures. The Chi-square tests were analyzed in an attempt to find meaningful differences among the three identified participant groups.

### **Participant Risk and Confidentiality**

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is an extremely large and complex organization. With any organization, there is a political frame (Bolman & Deal, 2003). This being said, there is a distinct possibility that certain views of governance and decision-making processes may seem unpopular or even scandalous among certain individuals. To ensure that these possible preconceived notions of what is acceptable within the current political frame did not lead participants to withhold their true opinions, complete confidentiality was assured and maintained throughout the research process. The measures to maintain confidentiality were clearly explained to participants in the brief introduction to the survey instrument.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of leaders (pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel) regarding three identified governance structures of Catholic schools. The three identified governance models include a consultative board model, a board of limited jurisdiction model, and a model using an appointed canonical administrator, such as a superintendent. The study identified qualities of each model of governance in the areas of decision-making and authority, and leaders were asked to share their opinions of these qualities using a Likert scale.

This chapter presents a quantitative data analysis to interpret the perceptions of Catholic school leadership regarding the three identified governance models. The survey responses were gathered using a Likert scale of one through five (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree). A factor analysis of the survey items was conducted to explore the strength of the three categories of the governance models represented by the three groups of questions. Next, the descriptive statistics of the specific questions relating to each of the three governance models and community voice were compiled. A Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each group of questions to measure internal consistency.

In order to explore relationships between perceptions among the three independent variable groups (pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel), a Chi-square analysis was run for each of the questions on an ordinal scale.

Finally, the open-ended question responses were coded and analyzed.

## Data Analysis

### Response Rates

The survey was distributed twice via email link to all pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel. In an effort to increase the response rate for the pastor population, 10 of the 20 deanery chairs were called, and a request was made to visit a deanery meeting or deliver the surveys to the pastors so they could distribute them at a deanery meeting. This effort yielded two personal visits by the researcher to deanery meetings and packages given to three pastors to distribute at deanery meetings. Of these three packages of surveys, one was returned to the researcher. The culminating response rates for the three groups of participants was 20% for pastors ( $n = 57$ ), 63% for principals ( $n = 137$ ), and 71% for Department of Catholic Schools personnel ( $n = 10$ ).

Although the response rate for the pastors in the study was less than desirable, the data shows diversity in the socioeconomic settings the responsive pastors represent. Table 2 shows the distribution of parishes represented by a pastor's response on the economic scale of 1-10 as defined by the Department of Catholic Schools (1 = most affluent, 10 = least affluent). It is important to note the economic levels of 1-10 are assigned to Catholic elementary schools; therefore, the pastors responding who currently serve at a parish with no school do not have an economic level assigned.

Table 2

*Economic Level of Pastors' Parishes*

Parish School Financial Level	<i>n</i>	%
Level 1 – Level 2	6	9.5
Level 3 – Level 4	13	20.6
Level 5 – Level 6	18	28.6
Level 7 – Level 8	4	6.3
Level 9 – Level 10	4	6.3
No Parish School	18	28.6

**Demographics**

Introductory demographic questions included age, education, and number of years serving in the current role. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the demographic data collected. The survey item regarding the years served in the current position, titled longevity in Table 3, shows an interesting and significant difference between the three groups. The question was on a scale of one to six, with each increment representing a span of five years. The pastors were in their current positions longer than the principals or Department of Catholic Schools personnel. This signifies more experience working with the current governance model; this fact must be taken into account when investigating opinions regarding newly emerging governance models, namely boards of limited jurisdiction and canonical administration, in comparison with the traditional model of consultative boards.



Table 3

*Demographics*

	Entire Sample		Pastors		Principals		DCS Staff	
	<i>N</i>	M (SD)	<i>N</i>	M (SD)	<i>N</i>	M (SD)	<i>N</i>	M (SD)
Age	225	4.26 (1.29)	63	4.86 (1.12)	148	4.07 (1.29)	14	3.57 (1.08)
Education	225	2.04 (0.49)	63	2.08 (0.52)	148	1.99 (0.45)	14	2.36 (0.43)
Longevity	225	2.41 (1.58)	63	2.89 (1.65)	148	2.31 (1.54)	14	1.29 (0.73)

**Factor Analysis**

A factor analysis of the survey items was conducted using orthogonal rotation. Orthogonal rotation was selected because in theory, the questions should be measuring perceptions of three independent governance models. Table 4 shows the results of the factor analysis of questions 7 through 20 which asked participants about specific characteristics of the three identified governance models. A total of 61% of the variance in the cumulative data set is accounted for by the three identified factors.

Table 4

*Factor Loadings for Governance Models Examined in Questions 7-20*

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
In Catholic schools, the pastor should have sole authority to determine which areas of policy making...	0.86		
In Catholic schools, the pastor should remain the sole authority with regards to establishing policy...	0.80		
In Catholic schools, the pastor should decide which policy areas should include community input	0.80		
In Catholic schools, the pastor should have the authority to establish a school board.	0.80		
In Catholic schools, the pastor should be the ultimate authority for establishing policies	0.71		
In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to the pastor.	0.56	-0.32	
In Catholic schools, an authority who is an educational professional such as a superintendent should...		0.84	
The Archbishop/Bishop should grant authority over a Catholic school to an educational professional		0.83	
In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to an educational professional such as a...		0.82	
In Catholic schools, an educational professional such as a superintendent should make all staffing decisions...		0.82	
In Catholic schools, the school board should have the authority to establish policies in specified a...			0.76
In Catholic schools, the principal should answer directly to the school board			0.73
In Catholic schools, a school board should be able to recommend policies, but not establish them.			-0.56
In Catholic schools, the pastor should delegate authority regarding the daily operations of the school...	0.32		-0.44

*Note:* Factor loadings < 0.3 are suppressed.

In examining the three factors, two types of alignment can be identified. First, there is a definite pattern of alignment between the types of governance models being addressed by the survey questions. There are six questions addressing the consultative board model, four of these questions align with Factor 1, two align with Factor 3. There are four questions addressing the board of limited jurisdiction model of governance, three of these questions align with Factor 3, one aligns with Factor 1. Last, all four of the questions addressing the canonical administrator model of governance align with Factor 2. The second type of alignment the factor analysis indicates relates not with the model of governance being presented, but rather with the leadership positions being addressed in each question. Table 5 displays how the positions of the school leaders relate to the factor identified, along with the type of governance model addressed.

Table 5

*Factor (Loads) in Relation to Leadership Position and Governance Model Addressed*

Question	Governance Model	Factor (Load)	Leadership Position
Q7	Consultative Board	3 (-0.57)	Board
Q8	Consultative Board	1 (0.72)	Pastor
Q9	Consultative Board	3 (-0.44)	Board & Pastor
Q10	Consultative Board	1 (0.80)	Board & Pastor
Q11	Consultative Board	1 (0.80)	Pastor
Q12	Consultative Board	1 (0.56)	Pastor & Principal
Q13	Limited Jurisdiction	3 (0.76)	Board
Q14	Limited Jurisdiction	1 (0.80)	Board & Pastor
Q15	Limited Jurisdiction	1 (0.86)	Board & Pastor
Q16	Limited Jurisdiction	3 (0.73)	Board & Principal
Q17	Canonical Administrator	2 (0.84)	Superintendent
Q18	Canonical Administrator	2 (0.82)	Superintendent
Q19	Canonical Administrator	2 (0.83)	Superintendent & Bishop
Q20	Canonical Administrator	2 (0.82)	Superintendent & Principal

*Note:* Superintendent represents an example of a Canonical Administrator.

The data reported in Table 5 indicates factors are influenced by the leadership role addressed in the questions, as well as the governance model. This has significant implications for future studies and is addressed in Chapter Five.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The first layer of data analysis for questions addressing the identified characteristics of the governance models is to examine the means of responses for the entire sample as a whole, as well as the three categories of respondents individually. Reliability of the question grouping was also examined using a Cronbach's alpha analysis for each of the three categories of questions.

**Consultative boards.** The characteristics of the consultative board model of Catholic school governance were examined in questions 7 through 12 in the survey instrument. This section of the survey instrument was found to have solid internal reliability (6 items;  $\alpha = .74$ ). Table 6 shows descriptive statistics for the items measuring perceptions of the elements of the consultative board model of governance.

Examining the means for the six questions addressing characteristics of consultative boards highlights two qualities of consultative boards in which there was an overall positive response among all groups of participants. First, question seven examines the element of consultative boards and their role in policy formation. By definition, consultative boards offer input and recommendations in the formation of policy but do not have an authoritative voice. All three groups surveyed, pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel displayed a strong agreement with this aspect of consultative boards with means of 1.88, 1.82, and 1.80 respectively. This indicates school leadership within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles

values the voice of community members. It also indicates a strong feeling among these leaders that the authority in establishing policy needs to remain with the school leadership.

Table 6

*Consultative Board Survey Items*

Question	Entire Sample		Pastors		Principals		DCS Staff	
	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)
Q7	204	1.83 (0.86)	57	1.88 (0.80)	137	1.82 (0.90)	10	1.80 (0.63)
Q8	204	2.79 (1.22)	57	2.16 (1.16)	137	3.01 (1.15)	10	3.40 (1.08)
Q9	204	1.71 (1.16)	57	1.56 (0.86)	137	1.79 (1.29)	10	1.40 (0.52)
Q10	204	3.56 (1.09)	57	3.07 (1.18)	137	3.73 (1.02)	10	4.10 (0.57)
Q11	204	3.11 (1.08)	57	2.61 (1.11)	137	3.27 (1.03)	10	3.70 (0.68)
Q12	204	2.00 (1.00)	57	1.67 (0.81)	137	2.11 (1.05)	10	2.40 (0.97)

Second, question nine examines the perception of school leadership regarding the traditional Catholic school quality that pastor, while remaining the ultimate authority, delegate the daily operations of the school to the school principal. All groups of leaders, pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel show strong agreement with this quality with means of 1.56, 1.79, and 1.40 respectively.

The other four questions in this data set show differences between the responses of the three groups of leaders. Specifically, the data shows a trend of movement from the agree range to the disagree range moving from pastors, to principals, to Department of Catholic Schools personnel. In the traditional model of Catholic school governance, the ultimate authority for policy formation and decision making lies with the pastor as the ecclesiastical authority. The

data in the above set of questions suggests there remains agreement with this traditional model with the pastor population, but there is less enthusiasm regarding this traditional model among principals and Department of Catholic Schools personnel.

**Boards of limited jurisdiction.** Questions 13 through 16 examined identified elements of the board of limited jurisdiction model of governance. This section of the survey instrument was found to have moderate internal reliability (4 items;  $\alpha = .56$ ). Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics for these questions.

Table 7

*Board of Limited Jurisdiction Survey Items*

Question	Entire Sample		Pastors		Principals		DCS Staff	
	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)
Q13	201	3.70 (0.97)	57	3.30 (1.12)	137	3.88 (0.87)	10	3.70 (0.68)
Q14	201	3.14 (1.17)	55	2.62 (1.18)	136	3.32 (1.13)	10	3.60 (0.84)
Q15	202	3.19 (1.19)	55	2.55 (1.18)	136	3.42 (1.13)	10	4.10 (0.57)
Q16	203	3.90 (1.06)	55	3.45 (1.21)	137	4.06 (0.97)	10	3.10 (1.20)

The mean data presented in Table 7 displays a clear discrepancy in opinions regarding the governance elements presented in questions 14 and 15. These questions address the pastor's role in determining policy areas to be under the authority of a board of limited jurisdiction, and the pastor maintaining ultimate authority with regards to policy decisions in all areas not falling under the board of limited jurisdiction. The trend in the mean data is a movement from the agreement of these qualities among the pastors, to a more neutral opinion among principals, to a disagreement within the Department of Catholic Schools personnel.

Of all three categories of questions regarding the different types of governance models, the questions focused on the board of limited jurisdiction model showed means closer to the neither agree nor disagree value of 3 than either of the other two models. This fact, along with the lower Cronbach's alpha score, shows the difficulty in addressing the characteristics of this governance model. Boards of limited jurisdiction vary in the policy areas in which they have authority based on the needs of the communities they serve. This quality creates a challenge when constructing concise questions based on a Likert scale to measure perceptions of survey participants.

**Canonical administration.** The questions regarding the canonical administrator model of governance showed strong internal reliability (4 items;  $\alpha = .87$ ). In contrast to the board of limited jurisdiction model of governance, perceptions regarding the canonical administrator model were much easier to assess. This model places authority and policy making power in the hands of a central governing authority, such as a superintendent. There is little ambiguity regarding its characteristics. Table 8 displays the descriptive data for the four questions addressing the canonical administrator model of Catholic school governance.

Table 8

*Canonical Administrator Survey Items*

Question	Entire Sample		Pastors		Principals		DCS Staff	
	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)	<i>n</i>	M (SD)
Q17	203	2.97 (1.15)	56	3.29 (1.07)	137	2.82 (1.16)	10	3.40 (0.97)
Q18	202	3.61 (1.08)	56	3.80 (1.14)	137	3.55 (1.06)	10	2.40 (0.97)
Q19	203	2.82 (1.21)	55	3.09 (1.34)	137	2.74 (1.15)	10	2.40 (0.97)
Q20	203	2.94 (1.12)	56	3.34 (1.06)	137	2.82 (1.11)	10	2.10 (0.88)

With the exception of question 17, this group of questions shows an obvious pattern of moving from disagree to agree as the participants' answers move from the pastor, to principal, to Department of Catholic School personnel.

Question 17 puts forth a strong statement of central office power in stating “an educational professional, such as a superintendent, should be the ultimate authority for establishing policies.” Interestingly, the mean score for Department of Catholic Schools personnel was a 3.40. These data demonstrate a value held by the central office of the site based management qualities of the Catholic system of schools. Questions 18 through 20 examine the canonical administrator model of governance through a lens of increased involvement by the central office, or superintendent in the areas of staffing, principal supervision, and authority granted by the Archbishop to govern Catholic schools, which are all viewed as favorable in the eyes of the Department of Catholic Schools staff. However, questions 18 through 20 do not place the sole authority in the hands of the central office.



**Parent, parishioner, and community voice.** The final six Likert-scale questions on the survey inquired about perceptions regarding the voice of three groups in Catholic school governance: parents, parishioners, and outside of parish community members. For each group, the survey inquired whether the group should have a consultative voice, and whether the group should have direct involvement in policy formation. This section of the survey showed strong internal consistency (6 items;  $\alpha = .74$ ). Table 9 displays the descriptive data for these questions.

Table 9

*Consultative Versus Authoritative Voice*

Question	Entire Sample		N	Pastors		Principals		DCS Staff	
	n	M (SD)		M (SD)	n	M (SD)	n	M (SD)	
Q21	203	2.34 (0.93)	56	2.04 (0.63)	137	2.49 (1.01)	10	2.10 (0.88)	
Q22	203	3.64 (0.93)	56	3.34 (1.08)	137	3.75 (0.86)	10	3.80 (0.63)	
Q23	203	3.21 (1.15)	56	2.61 (1.02)	137	3.47 (1.09)	10	2.90 (1.29)	
Q24	203	4.03 (0.81)	56	3.79 (0.95)	137	4.14 (0.74)	10	3.90 (0.57)	
Q25	203	2.79 (1.09)	56	2.52 (1.06)	137	2.93 (1.08)	10	2.50 (1.08)	
Q26	203	3.88 (0.95)	56	3.71 (1.07)	137	3.96 (0.91)	10	3.70 (0.68)	

Questions 21, 23, and 25 focused on a consultative voice for the three groups of community members while questions 22, 24, and 26 posed an authoritative voice directly involved in policy formation for the three groups of community members. The mean data for participant responses show an obvious pattern of valuing community voice in a consultative form, but disagreeing with providing these community members with an actual voice in policy formation. The one exception to this pattern is seen in the principals' response to question 23, which inquires about

providing parishioners with a consultative voice in policy formation. Both pastors and Department of Catholic Schools personnel viewed providing parishioners with a consultative voice in a positive light, with means of 2.61 and 2.90 respectively.

**Inferential Statistics**

By examining the means of the data collected in the survey, noticeable patterns and differences were apparent between the three groups as noted above. In order to validate these patterns and show statistically significant differences between the means of the three groups, a Chi-square test was run. The null hypothesis states there will be no noticeable difference between the expected mean outcomes for each survey item and the observed. The null hypothesis was rejected given a statistical significance with  $p < .05$ .

**Consultative boards.** Table 10 shows the results of the Chi-square analysis for the six questions addressing the consultative board model.

Table 10

*Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Consultative Boards*

Question	<i>N</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Q7	204	4.68	8	0.791
Q8	204	29.04	8	0.000
Q9	204	15.99	8	0.043
Q10	204	22.03	8	0.005
Q11	204	30.15	8	0.000
Q12	204	16.31	8	0.038

In examining the data in Table 10, the null hypothesis is rejected for all questions except question seven. This failure to reject the null hypothesis for question seven agrees with the descriptive data analysis above that there are no significant differences among the three groups in terms of valuing community voice and input. The remaining items show a statistically significant difference between the expected outcome and the observed as discussed above. There are clear differences of opinion as the participants' responses move from pastors, to principals, to Department of Catholic Schools personnel.

**Boards of limited jurisdiction.** Table 11 shows the results of the Chi-square analysis for the four questions addressing the board of limited jurisdiction model of governance.

Table 11

*Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Boards of Limited Jurisdiction*

Question	<i>N</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Q13	204	19.57	8	0.012
Q14	201	22.43	8	0.004
Q15	201	30.32	8	0.000
Q16	202	19.41	8	0.013

The Chi-square test rejected the null hypothesis for all four of the question items in this section of the survey. It must be taken into account, as mentioned above, that the internal reliability measure for these items was less than ideal. However, the differences in the means discussed in the descriptive data above align with the significance found in the Chi-square analysis.

**Canonical administrator.** Table 12 shows the results of the Chi-square analysis for the four questions addressing the consultative board model.

Table 12

*Chi-square Test of Independence for Questions Addressing Canonical Administration*

Question	<i>N</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Q17	203	7.15	8	0.520
Q18	203	10.24	8	0.249
Q19	202	14.20	8	0.077
Q20	203	15.75	8	0.046

The Chi-square analysis for the questions regarding the canonical administrator model for governance failed to reject the null hypothesis in three of the four question items. The only question for which the null hypothesis was rejected was question 20, which asks whether participants agree with the quality of the canonical administrator model of governance where the principal reports directly to the canonical administrator. In this question, the role of superintendent was used as an example.

**Narrative Responses**

The narrative response question in the survey instrument gathered data to specifically to help address the second question of the study, to what extent is there openness among these leaders to consider identified alternative Catholic school governance models? Participants were asked to articulate their vision of the scope and nature of community involvement in Catholic school governance.

The data were categorized into three parts according to the leadership role of the participant. The data were then analyzed for patterns of responses. There was an overwhelming

response from all groups of participants that the involvement of the community members should be consultative in nature. One pastor wrote:

They [community members] should be able to have input as this would be helpful, and their input should be carefully considered, but this would not translate into their having governing power. (E-mail Survey)

One principal wrote:

I believe a Catholic school board should be consultative in nature and should not have any power over personnel decisions or curriculum decisions. The board should be structured around development and long-term strategic goals, not day-to-day governance. (E-mail Survey)

Further analysis uncovered four patterns in the narrative data: a leadership role for pastors in Catholic school governance, a strong collaborative working relationship between pastors and principals, a value in the principle of subsidiarity and site based governance, and a strong role to be played by the central office (i.e., the Department of Catholic Schools).

There were 131 total narrative responses from participants:  $n = 31$  from pastors,  $n = 93$  from principals, and  $n = 7$  from Department of Catholic Schools personnel. These numbers represent 48%, 63%, and 50% of the participants in each group that began taking the survey, respectively. The coded data for narrative responses can be found in Appendix C.

**The role of the pastor.** The role of the pastor in Catholic school governance was noted in responses from both pastors and principals. In the pastors' responses, there were statements made regarding the importance of the pastor playing a role in the governance of Catholic schools. One response stated, "the pastor must have an integral role in our Catholic schools if

they are under parish jurisdiction.” (E-mail Survey) This statement identifies an important factor in determining the pastor’s role: the distinction between parochial Catholic schools tied to an individual parish, and other models of Catholic schools such as private. Another pastor wrote: “There should be broad consultation and use of experts in their fields; however, ultimate decision making rests with the pastor” (E-mail Survey). This statement reiterates the pattern seen of wanting consultation; however, the comment also clearly shows a feeling that the ultimate authority should remain with the pastor.

The principal responses also placed value in an active role for the pastor in Catholic schools. One principal wrote, “Pastor involvement is crucial to the school community, his presence in and around school and at school activities [*sic*]” (E-mail Survey). Another principal expressed the importance of the pastor playing an active role in the governance of the school through involvement with the school board stating, “A board that is faithful to the mission of Catholic education will work to make wise recommendations to the pastor” (E-mail Survey).

Among the responses from the Department of Catholic Schools personnel were frequent references to the role of the pastor in school governance with a tone of collaboration and consultation. One individual wrote:

Collaboration among shareholders is critical to the success of the school.

Authoritarian decision making, by either the pastor or the principal or school board, does not support the mission of Catholic schools that is communitarian.

Maximizing people’s talents, sharing expertise, working towards consensus and creating teams of people working together for an excellent school program are primary values for me. The wider the circle of participants in the life of the

school, with strong administrative leadership, creates wonderful possibilities for faith, excellence, stewardship, leadership, growth, and innovation. (E-mail Survey)

The above statement shows powerful reasoning behind the creation of a collaborative governance model without unilateral authority.

**A cooperative relationship between pastor and principal.** A theme present in responses from each of the three groups of participants was the need for and benefits of pastors and principals working collaboratively in the school governance. One pastor wrote:

Ultimate authority over the school, however, should be left in the collaborative hands of the pastor, the principal, the school board, and the archdiocese, each contributing its talents and wisdom according to the principle of subsidiarity. (E-mail Survey)

Principal placed great importance on the communication and collaboration between the pastor and principal. One principal wrote:

The school leadership should always be the involvement of the principal and pastor. Weekly meetings should be encouraged for the pastor and principal to meet on a regular basis. (E-mail Survey)

Another principal wrote, “I believe ultimate authority on policy and governance should fall with the principal and the pastor as a team” (E-mail Survey). There is a desire among principals to work collaboratively with the pastors.

**The principle of subsidiarity.** Through examining the narrative responses from all three groups of participants, it was clear that there is great value placed on the site-specific nature of

traditional Catholic school governance. The principle of subsidiarity states that items of governance and policy making should be made at the smallest level possible (Haney et al., 2009). In the traditional Catholic school model, these decisions are made at the parish level and explain the nature of our system of schools rather than a school system. Each location has unique qualities and this uniqueness stems from the ability of our parishes to adapt to the specific desires and needs of the local community. One participant from Department of Catholic Schools wrote, “Many of the answers I submitted were ‘neither agree nor disagree’ because all of our schools are so different with respect to leadership” (E-mail Survey). This statement is a testament to the fact the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese Los Angeles make up a system of schools, and not a school system.

**A strong central office.** Throughout the narrative responses of the principals and Department of Catholic Schools personnel, opinions were expressed that a strong Department of Catholic Schools is of great importance. One principal wrote, “I don’t feel that the community in which a Catholic school is located should be given any authority to govern a Catholic school or determine its policies. This should be the sole responsibility of the Archdiocese” (E-mail Survey).

Principals also commented on the importance of the role of the superintendent. One principal stated, “Principals should also have a superintendent who is well educated and experienced in education.” Another principal wrote, “Principals need guidance and with a superintendent that knows the ropes, it makes it much easier” (E-mail Survey). The principals expressed an appreciation of strong leadership at the Archdiocesan level, specifically from the superintendent.



The Department of Catholic Schools personnel also expressed the importance of a strong central office in Catholic school governance. One participant wrote:

Principals are recruited and selected at the Department of Catholic Schools; principals are hired in consultation with the Department of Catholic Schools, pastor, and local committee of parish, school, and community members. Policies should be set at the Archdiocesan level. (E-mail Survey)

The above statement also recognizes the importance of community input. Another stated, “There should be an appropriate balance of power/authority [Department of Catholic Schools and school site] to make decisions” (E-mail Survey). While expressing the need for a strong Department of Catholic School and central office leadership, there was also recognition of the importance of site-based input.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings presented above show the survey instrument proved to be reliable (20 items;  $\alpha = .73$ ). The factor analysis of the survey also supported the reliability of the questions as they related to the three models of governance being investigated. The factor analysis also showed an interesting pattern in that there was significance not only regarding the type of governance model being investigated, but also regarding the leadership position being investigated.

There was difficulty in reaching a high participation rate from the pastors surveyed; however, there was a higher response rate from principals and Department of Catholic Schools personnel.

The findings also showed significant differences in the means of responses from the three leadership roles participating in the survey. The patterns showed a gradient from pastors to

principals and Department of Catholic Schools personnel, respectively. The gradient follows a pattern of movement from traditional pastoral authority to alternative authority and governance structures.

There was a general consensus among all three groups of participants that the community voice should be listened to and valued in the governance of Catholic schools. There was also a consensus that this voice should be consultative in nature and not be a decision-making voice. Participants also agreed that the cooperation and relationship between the pastor and principal is of utmost importance for successful Catholic school governance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of Catholic school leadership in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles about characteristics of emerging governance models, and to gauge leaders' openness to consider the implementation of some of these characteristics. This chapter discusses how the findings from this study give insight to the problem and research questions being addressed about Catholic school governance. The chapter concludes with research-based recommendations for future studies.

#### **Exploration of Findings**

The exploration of data is driven by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Catholic school leaders (pastors, principals, and Diocesan personnel) regarding the current authority structures governing Catholic parish elementary schools within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles?
2. To what extent is there openness among these leaders to consider identified alternative Catholic school governance models?

The quantitative data gathered through the survey instrument as well as the narrative from the open-ended question provided insight into both of these questions.

There is a lack of clearly defined levels of authority and decision-making structures in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The research revealed two important facts related to the problem of governance. First, the leaders of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles expressed a desire for a strong central office led by an educational professional such as a

superintendent. Second, the leaders placed great value on the principle of subsidiarity in the governance and operation of Catholic schools.

### **Lack of Clearly Defined Levels of Authority**

An examination of Canon Law reveals a clear authority structure for Catholic elementary schools: the school is to be governed by the pastor of the parish in which they reside (Brown, 2010; Weiss, 2007). This implies the ecclesiastical authority for all governance elements of the schools lies under the authority of the pastor. The data collected in this study demonstrate support for this fundamental authority structure. Question 12 of the survey instrument stated, “In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to the pastor.” The response to this question shows agreement among all groups surveyed ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ). The cooperative relationship between the pastor and principal is a crucial element of Catholic schools for the sake of the students’ faith, academic success, and development (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009; Weiss, 2007). Catholic school leaders also voiced the importance of this cooperative relationship in the open-ended question, as discussed in Chapter Four.

The importance of a strong Department of Catholic Schools was expressed in both the quantitative survey items and in responses to the open-ended question. Questions 17 through 20 explored the canonical administrator model of Catholic school governance. These questions examined this model through the lens of the superintendent as the canonical administrator. Question 20 of the survey instrument stated, “In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to an educational professional, such as a superintendent.” The overall response to this question revealed agreement with this statement from the sample as a whole ( $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD =$

.93). The open-ended question also revealed a desire for a strong presence of the Department of Catholic Schools as discussed in Chapter Four.

In juxtaposing the results from Questions 12 and 20, a contradiction was uncovered. Both questions explored opinions related to the hierarchy of authority between the principal and superiors, identifying two different superiors, the pastor and the superintendent. Both responses fell within the range of agreement with means of 2.00 and 2.34, respectively. These results showed that leaders in Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles respect the authority of both pastors and superintendent.

These two facts place a fine focus on the problem stated in Chapter One. The focus must shift to the lack of definition with regards to specific areas of decision-making and where the authority should lie. The data showed both an appreciation for the traditional model of parish based schools with a cooperative working relationship between pastor and principal, as well as the desire for the strong presence of an educational professional such as the superintendent. It is common for the Archbishop/Bishop to delegate some decision-making authority over the larger body of Catholic elementary schools to an educational professional such as a superintendent (Weiss, 2007.) However, there are no defined or clear guidelines regarding how these decision-making authorities are to be shared between the local pastors and the superintendent. A balance must be sought between the site-based management qualities Catholic schools utilize to best serve their communities, and having a strong, authority-bearing presence at the Department of Catholic Schools. Clearly defined guidelines that provide for shared decision-making authority between pastors and superintendent are a significant step towards addressing the ambiguity outlined in the research problem.

## Perceptions Regarding Emerging Governance Models

The quantitative survey instrument was designed to explore the perceptions of Los Angeles Archdiocesan Catholic school leaders about the elements of emerging governance models including consultative boards, boards of limited jurisdiction, and canonical administrators such as a superintendent. The data successfully revealed these perceptions; in addition, the data revealed patterns within participant responses indicating that the position of the Catholic elementary school leadership is a determining factor in the role leaders should play within the school governance.

Catholic elementary school leaders agreed on the value of incorporating consultative community voice in the governing process. Question 7 in the survey instrument stated, “In Catholic schools, a school board should be able to recommend policies, but not establish them.” There was strong agreement between pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel ( $M = 1.88, SD = .86$ ;  $M = 1.82, SD = .80$ ;  $M = 1.80, SD = .63$ , respectively). This trend among leaders substantiated the principle of servant leadership, which states leadership is the responsibility of all community members as they work in tandem with equal obligation (Sergiovanni, 1994).

On the other hand, the data also revealed the opinion among Catholic elementary school leaders that, while community members should have a voice in policy formation and governance, this voice should be strictly consultative. Survey Questions 13 through 16 asked for opinions regarding the elements of a board of limited jurisdiction that enable the board to have an influence on policy formation and decision making. Means for all groups in this question category were above  $M = 3.00$ , meaning agreement was demonstrated. Question 16 stated, “In

Catholic schools, the principal should answer directly to the school board.” A powerful message in the data from this question emerged from the responses of the principals ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .97$ ). The principals currently function in a governance model in which they report directly to the pastor. The principals were presented an alternative model through this question in which they would report to a school board, and they strongly opposed this governance change. This feeling of importance of the pastoral role was also evident in the open-ended responses as discussed in Chapter Four. In contrast, when principals were faced with the alternative of answering to the superintendent in lieu of the pastor, the responses fell slightly in the agree range ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = .88$ ), corroborating the previous discussion of the principals’ desire for a strong central presence by the Department of Catholic Schools.

Within the results of the quantitative survey items, there was a definitive gradient in the responses from pastors, to principals, to the Department of Catholic Schools personnel, respectively. The gradient represented a consistent difference in opinions, with more openness to the elements of governance models entailing a shift from the traditional models expressed by the principals and Department of Catholic Schools personnel. The pastors, while having expressed the importance of a strong Department of Catholic Schools presence in governance, showed little agreement in the shift of authority and decision making to the central office. These differences in responses among the groups of participants were validated through the results of the Chi-square analysis, which showed statistical significance.

### **The Roles of Leaders in Governance**

The factor analysis performed on survey items 7 through 20 revealed an unexpected but significant result. The factor analysis discussed in Chapter Four revealed a trend in participants

to answer questions not only according to the governance model being examined, but also according to the leadership position being addressed within the question. The survey respondents followed similar patterns to questions about the role of the pastor, the role of the board, and the role of the superintendent. This fact illuminates the perception among Catholic school leaders that the role each leadership level plays in governance is as much of a concern as the governance model itself. While all participants agreed with and saw the value of community voice, the gradient mentioned above between the three groups of participants can also be explained by the fact their responses were also swayed by the role of the leader in question.

### **Recommendations**

The data gathered from the survey of Catholic school leadership showed both a value placed on the principle of subsidiarity and site-based management. However, it also showed the desire for a strong central office at the Department of Catholic Schools and highlighted the importance of the role of the superintendent. Given these perceptions, along with the strong participant comments voiced regarding the role of parents, parishioners, and community members to have strictly consultative voice in governance, there should be a shift in the idea of a school board having limited jurisdiction authorities, and the Department of Catholic Schools should be given limited jurisdiction over specific areas of governance. With carefully planned authority distribution between the school site and the central office, Catholic schools would maintain the ability to make site-based decisions to best serve the local community while having the benefit of the educational expertise offered at the Department of Catholic Schools.

The research also uncovered the importance of the relationship between the pastor and principal in successful Catholic school governance. The pastor plays a crucial role in helping the



school develop and maintain its Catholic identity. Principals expressed the importance of this role and the desire to have pastors who are strongly involved with Catholic school life. However, data showed a disconnect among the pastors, principals, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel with regards to perceptions of governance model elements. There was a consistent gradient among the three groups, with a polarization between the Department of Catholic Schools personnel and the pastors. The continued efforts put forth by the Department of Catholic Schools to provide formal training to the pastors of the Archdiocese in matters of education and Catholic school governance will greatly benefit both pastors and principals as they work together to strengthen and ensure the viability of Catholic schools. Formal educational programs developed by the Department of Catholic Schools to educate the pastors of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles about the educational programs being promoted and the basics on successful Catholic school governance can help strengthen the working relationship between pastors and principals. Along with these continued efforts, formal settings such as deanery meetings should include both pastor and principal as a team working together to promote effective education in Catholic schools.

Lastly, regardless of which governance models are explored by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, it is of great importance that the principle of subsidiarity is respected and upheld. This is a unique quality of Catholic schools and must continue so the schools can best serve the specific parish communities in which they are located.

### **Future Studies**

The survey instrument revealed an unexpected research outcome based on the factor analysis of the question items. The factor analysis revealed that participants responded similarly

not only to the type of governance model being addressed, but also to the leadership role being addressed in the question. There were noticeable patterns between questions asking about the roles of each of the four leadership entities discussed: pastors, principals, boards, and the central office leadership. It would be valuable to investigate in a more detailed manner the vision each group of leaders in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has regarding how the different leadership positions can and should best serve the Catholic schools. Specifically, what are the perceptions of school leadership regarding what roles the pastors, principals, boards, and Archdiocesan leadership should play to best serve Catholic schools?

Another valuable investigation would be to perform case studies of different ways Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are already implementing governance structures. This would hold the possibility of providing a collection of best practices to be considered when governance models are being created and or implemented.

The open-ended question revealed perceptions from several participants that there were Catholic elementary schools competing for the same students when located within a close geographical area. One solution to this problem being utilized across the nation is the concept of twinning, or combining the Catholic elementary schools from multiple parishes. It would be beneficial for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to explore this option for the cases of parishes located within a close geographical radius that are struggling to maintain a viable enrollment.

Lastly, it would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies that explore the relation between student spiritual and academic growth in schools implementing alternative governance models. This would help ensure efforts to provide stability for Catholic schools through

effective governance never lose sight of our reason for existence, the education of the whole child.

### **Final Thoughts**

The Holy See's recent statement to newly elected cardinals during a speech at St. Peter's Square is a reminder to all in the church. Pope Francis pleaded to the newly ordained cardinals on February 23, 2014, "Be good servants, not good bosses of God's people" (D'Emilio, 2014). This is a powerful testament to the power of servant leadership, so simply stated by the most powerful man in the Catholic Church. It is not the power of a boss that will pull Catholic schools through to best prepare the students spiritually and academically, but the efforts of many servants.

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have been a blessing for countless students, families, teachers, and administrators throughout their existence (Higareda et al., 2011; Litton et al., 2010). The resolve and renewed energy pushing these schools forward is evident in the teacher and leadership development programs, curriculum and instruction efforts and advancements, and drive to build the spiritual foundation in the students.

Effective and successful governance will be a key component to keeping this momentum alive. However, there is no recipe or linear procedure to find a single or desired model. It will be an effort involving the collaboration of pastors, principals, community members, and Department of Catholic Schools personnel. Together, these capable leaders will define the future of Catholic school governance in an effort to build community, educate the whole child, and build leadership.

## APPENDIX A

### Catholic School Governance Survey Instrument

#### Catholic School Governance

Intro: Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The purpose of this survey is to explore perceptions of Catholic school leadership regarding elements of a variety of governance models being implemented in Catholic schools. There are three sections in the survey; the survey will take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. You may stop taking this survey at any time, and all information collected is completely anonymous.

D1 What is your age?

- Under 25 (1)
- 25 - 35 (2)
- 35 - 45 (3)
- 45 - 55 (4)
- 55 - 65 (5)
- 65 + (6)

D2 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

D3 What is your highest level of education completed?

- BA/BS (1)
- MA/MS (2)
- Doctorate (3)

D4 What is your position in the Catholic school system?

- Pastor (1)
- Principal (2)
- Department of Catholic Schools personnel (3)

D5 How many years have you served in this position?

- 0 - 5 years (1)
- 5 - 10 years (2)
- 10 - 15 years (3)
- 15 - 20 years (4)
- 20 - 25 years (5)
- Over 25 years (6)

D6 What is the economic level (1-10) of the parish school where you work?

- 1-2 (1)
- 3-4 (2)
- 5-6 (3)
- 7-8 (4)
- 9-10 (5)
- I do not work at a parish school (6)

Intro2: The following questions identify various elements related to Catholic school

governance. Please answer the questions identifying the elements that, in your opinion as a

Catholic leader, best serve Catholic schools.

Q1 In Catholic schools, a school board should be able to recommend policies, but not establish them.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q2 In Catholic schools, the pastor should be the ultimate authority for establishing policies.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q3 In Catholic schools, the pastor should delegate authority regarding the daily operations of the school to the school principal.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q4 In Catholic schools, the pastor should have the sole authority to establish a school board.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q5 In Catholic schools, the pastor should decide which policy areas should include community input.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q6 In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to the pastor.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q7 In Catholic schools, the school board should have the authority to establish policies in specified areas of governance.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q8 In Catholic schools, the pastor should remain the sole authority with regards to establishing policy in areas of governance not delegated to the school board.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q9 In Catholic schools, the pastor should have sole authority to determine which areas of policy-making fall under the authority of the school board.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q10 In Catholic schools, the principal should answer directly to the school board.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q11 In Catholic schools, an authority who is an educational professional, such as a superintendent, should be the ultimate authority for establishing policies.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q12 In Catholic schools, an educational professional such as a superintendent should make all staffing decisions, including principal.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q13 The Archbishop/Bishop should grant authority over a Catholic school to an educational professional, such as a superintendent.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q14 In Catholic schools, the principal should report directly to an educational professional, such as a superintendent.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q15 In Catholic schools, parents should have a consultative voice regarding policy decisions.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q16 In Catholic schools, parents should be directly involved in policy formation and have an actual vote regarding policy decisions.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)



Q17 In Catholic schools, parishioners should have a consultative voice regarding policy decisions.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q18 In Catholic schools, parishioners should be directly involved in policy formation and have an actual vote regarding policy decisions.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q19 In Catholic schools, local community members, outside the parish, with expertise in specific fields should have consultative input regarding school operations and policy decisions.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q20 In Catholic schools, local community members, outside the parish, with expertise in specific fields should play an administrative role in the decision-making processes of the school.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

Q21 As a Catholic school leader, what is your vision for the type and scope of community involvement in school governance?

## REFERENCES

- Baker, D. P., & Riordan, C. (1998). The “eliting” of the common American Catholic school and the national education crisis. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(1), 16-23.
- Belmonte, A., & Cranston, N. (2009). Religious dimensions of lay leadership in Catholic schools: Preserving Catholic culture in an era of change. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 12(3), 249-319.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2003). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Brinig, M. F., & Garnett, N. (2010). Catholic schools, urban neighborhoods, and education reform. *Notre Dame Law Review*, 85(3), 887-954. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1395676>
- Brown, P. J. (2010). Structuring Catholic schools: Creative imagination meets canon law. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 13(4), 467-508.
- Buetow, H. A. (1970). *Of singular benefit*. New York, NY: The Macmillan Company.
- Buetow, H. A. (1985). *A history of United States Catholic schooling*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Education Association.
- Buetow, H. A. (1988). *The Catholic school: Its roots, identity and future*. New York, NY: Crossroad.
- Buetow, H. A. (1989). The United States Catholic school phenomenon. In V. Geiger, & S. J. Vicchio (Eds.), *Perspectives on the American Catholic Church, 1789-1989* (pp. 197-222). Westminster, MD: Christian Classics.
- Caruso, M. P. (2012). *When the sisters said farewell: The transition of leadership in Catholic elementary schools*. Ipswich, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Catholic Church & Canon Law Society of America. (1983). *Code of canon law, Latin-English edition: Translation*. Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America.
- Convey, J. J. (1992). *Catholic schools make a difference: Twenty-five years of research*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.
- Culver, M. K. (2009). *Applying servant leadership in today's schools*. New York, NY: Eye on Education.

- Curtin, D. F., Haney, R. M., & O'Keefe, J. M. (Eds.). (2010). *Design for success II: Configuring new governance models*. Arlington, VA: National Catholic Education Association.
- D'Emilio, F. (2014, February 24). Pope Francis warns new cardinals to be servants not bosses, as crowd cheers. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/24/pope-francis-cardinals\\_n\\_4846034.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/24/pope-francis-cardinals_n_4846034.html)
- DeForrest, M. E. (2003). Overview and evaluation of state Blaine Amendments: Origin, scope, and First Amendment concerns. *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, (26)2, 551-626.
- Dwyer, T. (2010). What happened as a result of the board having full financial responsibility for the school? : A panel discussion. In D. F. Curtin, R. M. Haney, & J. M. O'Keefe (Eds.), *Design for success II: Configuring new governance models* (pp. 143-147). Arlington, VA: National Catholic Education Association.
- Fogarty, G. P., Sanchez, R. F., Hubbard, H. J., & Larkin, W. T. (1985). The parish community in American Catholic history. *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 4(3/4), 233-269.
- Fowler, F. J. (2009). *Survey research methods*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Freire, P. (1974). *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Geruson, G. J., Healey, C. L., Sabatino, A., Ryan, D., Haney, R., & Faber, D. A. (2013). School Boards and Effective Catholic School Governance: Selected Presentations from the 2012 Catholic Higher Education Collaborative Conference. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 17(1). Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ce/vol17/iss1/7>
- Gleason, P., Borders, W. D., Pilarczyk, D. E., & McManus, W. E. (1985). Baltimore III and education. *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 4(3/4), 273-313.
- Goldschmidt, E. P., & Walsh, M. E. (2011). *Sustaining urban Catholic elementary schools: An examination of governance models and funding strategies*. Chestnut Hills, MA: Boston College.
- Goldschmidt, E. P., & Walsh, M. E. (2013). Urban Catholic elementary schools: What are the governance models? *Journal of Catholic Education*, 17(1). Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ce/vol17/iss1/7>
- Greeley, A. M., McCready, W. C., & McCourt, K. (1976). *Catholic schools in a declining church*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, Inc.

- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.
- Grochowski, Z. (2008). The Catholic school according to the code of canon law. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 12(2), 148-159.
- Haney, R., O'Brien, S., & Sheehan, L. (2009). *A primer on the education governance in the Catholic church*. Washington, DC: NCEA.
- Haney, R., & O'Keefe, J. M. (2009). *Design for success: New configurations for Catholic schools*. Washington, DC: NCEA.
- Haney, R. M. (2011). Design for success: New configurations and governance models for Catholic schools. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 14(2), 195-211.
- Harris, J. C. (2000). The fundamental dilemma facing Catholic elementary and secondary schools. In J. Younis & J. J. Convey (Eds.), *Catholic schools at the crossroads: Survival and transformation* (pp. 55-71). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Higareda, I., Martin, S., Chavez, J., & Holyk-Casey, K. (2011). *Los Angeles Catholic schools: Impact and opportunity for economically disadvantaged students*. Los Angeles, CA: Loyola Marymount University.
- Kealey, C. M., & Kealey, R. J. (2003). *On their shoulders: A short biographical history of American Catholic schools*. Washington, DC: NCEA.
- Kool, M., & Van Dierendonck, D. (2012). Servant leadership and commitment to change: The mediating role of justice and optimism. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 25(3), 422-433. doi: 10.1108/09534811211228139
- Litton, E. F., Martin, S. P., Higareda, I., & Mendoza, J. A. (2010). The promise of Catholic schools for educating the future of Los Angeles. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 13(3), 350-367.
- McDonald, D. (2001) Pluralism and public policy: Catholic schools in the United States. In C. T. Hunt, E. A. Joseph, & R. J. Nuzzi (Eds.), *Handbook of research on Catholic education* (pp. 205-229). Greenwich, CT: IAP.
- McLaughlin, T. H., O'Keefe, J., & O'Keefe, B. (1996). Setting the scene: Current realities and historical perspectives. In T. H. McLaughlin, J. O'Keefe, & B. O'Keefe (Eds.), *The contemporary Catholic school* (pp. 1-21). Bristol, PA: The Falmer Press.

- McLellan, J. A. (2000). Rise, fall, and reasons why: U.S. Catholic elementary education, 1940-1995. In Youniss, J., & Convey, J. J. (Eds.), *Catholic schools at the crossroads: Survival and transformation* (pp. 17-32). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Moreau, J. (1997). Rise of the (Catholic) American nation: United States history and parochial schools, 1878-1925. *American Studies*, 38(3), 67-90.
- Rivera, C. (2011, February 2). Archdiocese may be backing off plans to extend school year. *Los Angeles Times*.
- Russo, C. J. (2009). Canon law, American law, and governance of Catholic schools: A healthy partnership. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 13(2), 185-204.
- Sabatino, A., Huchting, K., & Dell'Olio, F. (2013). The 200-day calendar initiative in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles: Three schools' decision to break the mold. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 16(2), 388-416.
- Schafer, D. F. (2004). Leadership role expectations and relationships of principals and pastors in Catholic parochial schools: Part 1. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 8(2), 234-249.
- Sendjaya, S., & Sarros, J. C. (2002). Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organizations. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 9(2), 57-64. doi: 10.1177/107179190200900205
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). *Building community in schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Weiss, S. (2007). Pastor-principal relationship in the parish school. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 11(1), 7-22.
- Wuerl, D. W. (2008). How to save Catholic schools. *America*, 199(21), 16-17.