

A child's hand, wearing a colorful striped sweater, is shown stacking wooden blocks on a grey carpet. In the background, there is a large stack of wooden blocks arranged in a grid pattern. The scene is set in a playroom with shelves of toys. The image is framed by a blue top border and orange side borders. A large white circle is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing the title text.

CARDUS

EDUCATION SURVEY

Do the Motivations for Private Religious
Catholic and Protestant Schooling in North
America Align with Graduate Outcomes?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY (CES) studies alignment between the motivations and outcomes of Christian education, to better understand the role of Christian schools in students' lives, in families, and in larger society.

Results

IN CONTRAST TO the popular stereotypes portraying Christian schools as promoting a socially fragmented, anti-intellectual, politically radical, and militantly right-winged lifestyle, this comprehensive study reveals a very different picture of the Christian school graduate. Compared to their public school, Catholic school, and non-religious private school peers, Protestant Christian school graduates are uniquely compliant, generous, outwardly-focused individuals who stabilize their communities by their uncommon commitment to their families, their churches, and larger society. Graduates of Christian schools donate money significantly more than graduates of other schools, despite having lower household income. Similarly, graduates of Protestant Christian schools are more generous with their time, participating far more than their peers both in service trips for relief and development and in mission trips for evangelization.

Administrators of Catholic and Protestant Christian schools both report emphasizing family as one of the most important values in their schools; Protestant Christian schools, however, are more likely to make family the top-ranked emphasis than any of the other options given. This emphasis seems to be taking hold in Protestant Christian school graduates, who are having more children and divorcing less frequently than their peers from public and Catholic schools.

This study shows that the stereotypical picture of the highly political right-wing Protestant Christian is false. We find no evidence that Christian schools are breeding grounds for the right-most wing of political conservatives, nor do we find that Christian school graduates are "culture warriors." Graduates of Christian schools are less engaged in politics than their peers, talking less about politics, participating less in campaigns, and donating less to political causes.

Instead of the picture of the Christian positioned on the offense in the “culture war,” these graduates harbor distinctive hope and optimism about their lives and their futures, and have the tools to engage in healthy relationships and address the problems in their lives. Protestant Christian school graduates are the only private school graduates more thankful for what they have in life than their public school peers. In addition, Protestant Christian school graduates are the only private school graduates to report greater direction in life than their public school peers, with non-religious private and Catholic school graduates feeling statistically the same as their public school peers. Unlike their peers in other schools, Protestant Christian school graduates do not report feeling helpless when dealing with problems in life. In many ways, the average Protestant Christian school graduate is a foundational, reliable, and indispensable member of society.

Yet, despite these positive findings, Protestant Christian schools are experiencing difficulty balancing the various demands of the market. This research finds that Catholic schools are providing higher quality intellectual development, at the expense of developing students’ faith and commitment to religious practices. Protestant Christian schools, conversely, are providing a place where students become distinct in their commitment to faith, but are not advancing to higher education any more than their public school peers. Graduates of Catholic schools and non-religious private schools show a significant advantage in years of education, while Protestant Christian school graduates have statistically identical attainment levels as their public school peers. Additionally, graduates of Protestant Christian schools attend less competitive colleges than both their Catholic and non-religious private school peers. These outcomes closely reflect the values reported by school administrators: while Catholic school administrators rank university as the top priority more than any other option, more Protestant Christian school administrators rank family as the top emphasis of the school.

In summary, we find the motivations and outcomes of Christian schools to be in large part accurately aligned, but we question whether the motivations of Christian schools ought to be re-evaluated to provide a more comprehensive institutional program for the families which they serve and the communities in which they operate.



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BACKGROUND *and* CONTEXT

History of Christian Schooling

THOUGH CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS have served a vital role in the educational landscape of North America for over 400 years, a comprehensive study of the contemporary outcomes of these schools is absent from the current research base. Faith-based education in the United States dates back to 1606, when the first Catholic school was established in what is now known as St. Augustine, Florida (White House Domestic Policy Council, 2008). From that time until late in the 18th century, the purpose of education in the U.S. was centered on religion; early religious schools in New England were created to ensure that the Puritan faith was passed on from generation to generation as required by the *Old Deluder Satan Act* of 1647. For three centuries, it was assumed public schooling was rooted in the Christian faith.

As early as the mid-1800s, Dutch immigrants began founding private Christian schools that would allow students to acknowledge the Holy while at the same time developing an understanding of the world around them. This attention to faith and knowledge as mutually reinforcing was a distinctive of these schools.

It was not until early in the 20th century that private Christian schooling began to flourish. The middle of the 19th century saw increasing interest in Catholic education as Catholic immigration increased. To serve their growing communities and maintain the ethnic and religious distinctives of their communities, American Catholics first tried to reform American public schools to rid them of blatantly fundamentalist Protestant overtones. Failing, they began opening their own schools.

As Catholics became a part of the American mainstream by the mid-20th century, many Catholic schools in the suburbs began to change their focus by offering the more competitive college-preparatory education that parents demanded, which allowed these schools to compete with the quality suburban public schools. Perhaps influenced by Vatican II, the election of John F. Kennedy to the White House, the push to become more closely tied to the world and other faiths, or other cultural factors, the

“Waves of cultural and political activity seemed to crystallize for Christian families the desire to have a distinct alternative to public school.”

identity of Catholic schools shifted during this time. The governance of these schools may have contributed to the divergence in focus, as independently governed and funded Catholic schools joined the traditional parochial schools in Catholic schooling. By the mid-1960s enrollment in Catholic schools had reached an all-time high of 4.5 million elementary school pupils, with about one million students in Catholic high schools (National Center for Educational Statistics).

Protestant Christian schools, with a much shorter history, became increasingly prevalent after World War II, while simultaneously the public square, including public schools, became increasingly secular. Waves of cultural and political activity seemed to crystallize for Christian families the desire to have a distinct alternative to the public school. The Supreme Court rulings on school prayer, the push for scientific progress after Sputnik, desegregation laws of the 1960s, and the cultural turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s all likely contributed to the rapid proliferation of Protestant Christian schools during this time. Like Catholics, some Protestant Christian churches founded schools to further their mission, while other groups with similar purpose founded independent schools. As Protestant Christians became a more substantial part of the middle class, a greater demand for distinctive education arose for those in the Protestant Christian community. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1993 found 90% of Protestant Christian schools in operation had been founded since the mid-1960s.

During the 2005-06 school year, Christian schools comprised 17% of all K-12 schools in the United States, educating more than 4.1 million students per year—2.7 million of them in Roman Catholic Schools (White House Domestic Policy Council, 2008). In the U.S., these private schools do not enjoy the financial support of the federal government—the United States of America is the only liberal democracy that does not support

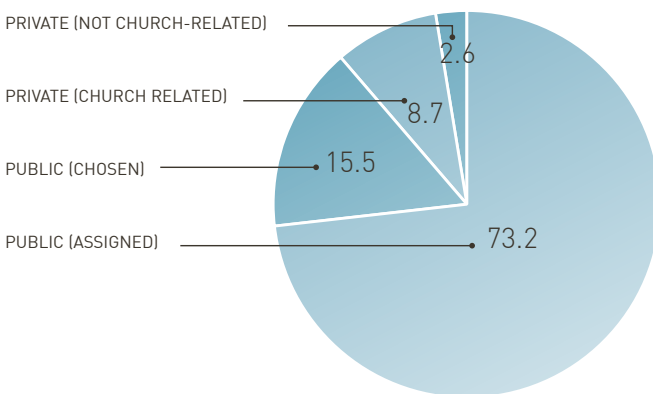


FIGURE A: Percent of students in U.S. schools by school type (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007).

educational pluralism. In 2007, 8.7% of students in the U.S. were attending church-related private schools (Figure A).

In Canada, the establishment and development of private religiously-defined schools unfolded somewhat differently than in the U.S. At the country’s founding in 1867, the Canadian constitution established that education would be the responsibility of each of its provincial (and territorial) jurisdictions. Today each of the ten provinces and three territories has its own equivalent of a department of education and is responsible to enact its own educational legislation. Also unique at confederation was the provision for separate schools for Roman Catholic and Protestant minorities in the founding provinces, a provision which today continues to be protected in Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and each of the three territories. Later, Newfoundland’s entire educational system was denominationally organized and, although this is no longer the case, was composed of schools from seven different denominations. Today about 15% of Canadian students are educated in publicly-funded denominational separate schools (Allison, Glenn, & Van Pelt, forthcoming). Partial funding for private schools, many of which are denominationally-based or religiously-defined, is currently offered in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Percentages of each province’s students attending private schools range from 1% in Prince Edward Island to 12% in Quebec. About 7% of Ontario’s elementary and secondary students attend private schools, about half of which are religiously-defined—the vast majority being Protestant.

While Canada can be characterized from afar as systematically providing a context for educational pluralism, this is not borne out in each jurisdiction. Funding is not provided for private schools in Ontario, for example, and thus is not available for parents who desire a

Protestant Christian school education for their children. As a result of the 1867 constitutional compromise to protect denominational education for the minorities which existed at that time, Ontario continues to fully fund the education of the more than one-third of the province's students who attend Roman Catholic separate schools.

As Ontario's non-Catholic, publicly-funded schools became increasingly secular especially in the 1960s and again in the 1980s through various court decisions, cultural trends, and legislation, religiously-defined private schools were increasingly founded and established. On balance, as private school numbers continue to grow across the country, such private schools are increasingly defined by pedagogy and philosophy rather than religion. The number of Ontarian students attending private schools quadrupled between 1960 and 2004 (Van Pelt, Allison and Allison, 2007, p. 7).

Throughout history, Christian schools have indeed played an important role in many contexts. Many urban schools, especially Catholic schools and particularly those in the U.S., have served the mission of providing a high quality education to the urban poor—who are subjected to failing public schools—as an extension of the Christian value of service to the poor. Alternatively, Christian schools have often been founded in distinctive response to the perception of increasing hostility to the Christian faith in public schools. These schools served the purpose of strengthening the faith of their students and therefore Christian families.

Purposes of Christian Schooling

AS JOHN DEWEY, Robert Booth, and other historic and contemporary educators have argued, all schools are religious in nature, and therefore parents desire schools in which congruence can exist for their children between home, religious institution, and school. As the history of Christian schools has intersected with the history of the United States and Canada, the purposes and arguably therefore the outcomes of Christian schools have too evolved. Today in the U.S., there is a growing tension between academic rigor and discipleship in Protestant Christian schools, while in Catholic schools many supporters lament the loss of religious tradition, especially in the most elite academic Catholic schools. In many circumstances, it seems that Christian parents must choose between the high academic standards in public, Catholic, or non-sectarian independent schools, and the nurture of faith but not intellect in the local Protestant Christian school.

Whatever the varying missions and outcomes of Christian schools, remember that the very presence of these schools provides options for parents. Where options are present, citizens and society at large benefit. As Charles Glenn (2004-05) wrote, in even the most limited sense school choice provides competitive forces that ultimately increase the effectiveness of all schools. The Canadian province of Alberta provides a case study in support of this argument. Alberta grants all schools, including those religious in nature, access to some amount of funding. And while Canada's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores rank among the highest in the world, when separated by province, PISA scores for Alberta students rank significantly higher than for the rest of the country (OECD, 2010). School choice is working in Alberta.

For parents who choose to homeschool their children, the opportunity to have the family serve as the most prominent influence on the education of their children has been an increasingly attractive choice in the U.S. and Canada. According to the National Home Education Research Institute, at the beginning of 2011 there were more than two million K-12 homeschool students in the United States (Ray, 2011, p. 3). Although recent numbers are not available for Canada, indications are that the growth trends are similar. Although parents range in their motivations for homeschooling, the majority of these parents, especially in the U.S., tend to be Christian. And although methods and perspectives also vary, most home educators are motivated by the desire to give their children a superior education or, at the very least, an education characteristically distinct from what is available in an institutional school setting.

Christian schools, then, provide choice for parents seeking to raise their children in the context of their own religious, philosophical, and pedagogical beliefs. Having Christian schools within the landscape of school choice should not be seen as a threat to society, but rather a way to increase competition and therefore increase quality for all schools.

If religious schools are to serve as catalysts for school improvement, however, they must offer quality academic programs and contribute to—not erode—the social fabric of their communities. It is this argument, that Christian schools are divisive rather than uniting, that continues to plague Christian schools in the U.S., where Protestant Christian schools in particular have often been seen by larger society as havens for social isolation and mindless, even dangerous indoctrination of students, resulting in the fragmentation of society. One of the goals of this study was

“Christian schools increase competition, and therefore increase quality, for all schools.”

to measure the truth in this claim, determining the public impact of Christian schools in Canada and the U.S.

In Canada, while policy in most educational jurisdictions provides for some denominational, linguistic, and pedagogical flexibility, in many ways the concerns about private schooling are similar to those in the U.S. Perceptions persist about the singular elitist orientations and benefits of all private schools, the wealth of the families that choose them, their contribution to societal fragmentation, and the isolation of various religious and ethnic groups.

Research Goals

THE COMPLEXITY OF the Christian school landscape demands thorough understanding of the relationship between the motivations and outcomes of Christian schooling. The impact and effects of Christian schools in the U.S. and Canada have never before been studied in a broad international examination. If the effects of Christian schooling can be better understood, more informed discussions can take place on the role of the Christian school sector in students' lives, families, and larger society. The Cardus Education Survey has just this purpose—to determine the alignment between the motivations and outcomes of Christian education, setting a benchmark for further study of Christian schooling.

We aim to make this research useful for parents looking at their school choices, for Christian school leaders and planners looking to improve their institutions, for donors wondering if the dollars channeled to Christian schools have been wise investments, for the public at large interested in the impact of this substantial part of the schooling market, and for policy-makers charged with improving education.

In embarking on this course of study, we operate on the foundational assumption that Christian education ought to have, as one of its goals, “engagement in social and cultural change, since culture is religion externalized,” and that that engagement is deeply dependent on the development of the intellect and the ability of Christian schools to “nurture leadership in some, but not necessarily all, students” (Van Pelt, Pennings, Seel and Sikkink, 2010).

Therefore, from the outset we committed to measuring three outcomes of Christian education:

- spiritual formation
- cultural engagement
- academic development

While prior studies have investigated portions of Christian school outcomes and inner workings, most have not accessed a representative sample of the population or have been weakened by a lack of information on differences within the religious school sector, thereby minimizing their conclusions about the schooling landscape as a whole. The Cardus Education Survey accessed the most reliable and representative sample of religious schoolers in the United States, age 24-39. And unlike other studies in the field, the statistical analysis—controlling for over 30 variables known to impact development, such as the closeness of one's relationship to parents, religious service attendance, race, and educational attainment—was better able to isolate the effect of school type on the spiritual, socio-cultural, and educational outcomes of students six to 21 years after high school graduation. (The limitations of this methodology and a detailed outline of the statistical analysis are presented in Appendix D.)

The results of these surveys are presented in bar graphs that allow the reader to see both the raw data—without controlling for variables like those stated above—and a bar that will allow the reader to assume like-group comparisons; these bars include the controls and therefore show the effect of the school on the factor presented. In all graduate data, public school graduates serve as the control group. Detailed reports on Canadian graduates will follow this publication.

Additionally, having sampled over 150 Christian school administrators in the U.S. and Canada, we are able to assess both the stated aspirations of Christian schools as well as many of the schools' organizational aspects. In this way, we are able to determine the impact of Christian schools on adults in today's society, and understand how Christian schools are attempting to define themselves in today's socio-cultural and economic landscape. We sampled Protestant Christian and Catholic school administrators for this

portion of the study. The data from the survey of administrators will be reported as descriptive statistics.

And, to further understand the intricacies of the Christian school landscape, four qualitative studies were conducted across the U.S. and Canada. The sum of these research studies provides the opportunity to catalyze a larger conversation on how Christian schools might improve and what Christian education contributes to the broader culture. With these findings, a benchmark is established that will provide the research community measures for understanding Christian schools and their outcomes for years to come. The research methods for each of the five components of this study are discussed in detail in Appendix D.

General Findings

THE CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY supports much of the current research body on Christian schools, but also contributes many new and in some cases distinctively different findings. These findings should catalyze conversation that could ultimately increase the impact and effectiveness of Christian schools.

In many cases, the difference in outcomes between Catholic and Protestant Christian schools is striking. Catholic schools provide superior academic outcomes, an experience that translates into graduates' enrollment in more prestigious colleges and universities, more advanced degrees, and higher household income. In Catholic schools, administrators put a higher value on university than their Protestant Christian peers, and Catholic schools' academic programs consist of more rigorous course offerings across the board. While some of these factors may be due to the longer history and larger size of the schools, these results are too important to "explain away." At the same time, however, our research finds that the moral, social, and religious dispositions of Catholic school graduates seem to run counter to the values and teachings of the Catholic church. For example, students graduating from Catholic schools divorce no less than their public school counterparts, and significantly more than their Protestant Christian and non-religious private school peers. Similarly, having attended Catholic school has no impact on the frequency with which those graduates will attend church services, and Catholic school graduates are less likely to serve as leaders in their churches.

Then, in contrast to the popular stereotype of Protestant Christian schools producing socially fragmented,

anti-intellectual, politically radical, and militantly right-wing graduates, our data reveal a very different picture of the Protestant Christian school graduate. Compared to their public school, Catholic school, and non-religious private school peers, Protestant Christian school graduates have been found to be uniquely compliant, generous individuals who stabilize their communities by their uncommon and distinctive commitment to their families, their churches, and their communities, and by their unique hope and optimism about their lives and the future. In contrast to the popular idea that Protestant Christians are engaged in a "culture war," on the offensive in their communities and against the government, Protestant Christian school graduates are committed to progress in their communities even while they feel outside the cultural mainstream. In many ways, the average Protestant Christian school graduate is a foundational member of society. Despite these positive findings regarding the behaviors and dispositions of their graduates, however, Protestant Christian schools show difficulty balancing the various demands of the market—that is, the development of faith, learning, and cultural engagement—and end up falling short in the academic development of their students.

This research finds Catholic schools are providing high quality intellectual development but at the expense of developing faith and commitment to religious practices in their graduates, while Protestant Christian schools are seemingly providing a place where students become distinct in their commitment to their faith, but are not developing academically at any better rate than their public school peers. Because the rigorous methodology of this research allows us to carefully determine the effect of a student's school apart from other factors known to affect development, we conclude that Protestant Christian schools play a vital role in the long-term faith of their students, while Catholic schools seem to be largely irrelevant, sometimes even counterproductive to the development of their students' faith. In these ways we question if Christian schools are maximizing their potential and thereby best serving the families and communities in which they operate.

This is the challenge for the Christian school community: we find the motivations and outcomes of Christian schools—both Catholic and Protestant Christian—to be closely aligned on most counts. Therefore, the central question Christian school advocates might ask is, "What is the purpose of Christian education?" Where the impact of Christian schools is not as significant as mission statements proclaim (in other words, where motivations and outcomes are misaligned), we wonder if it is because schools are not

both thinking deeply about how they might achieve these ends and committing to programming that would support such goals. This research also prompts questions such as, *“Are the noble aims found in Christian schools’ mission statements unfounded? If so, how can Christian schools respond? Do Christian schools really want to impact culture and society?”*

These findings should also provide relief for those in larger society who are concerned about the polarization of society on the lines of religious conservatives versus secular liberals, as it is clear that Christian schools are a public good in many ways. These findings should ferry us past this debate, and also make us ask, *“How can public policy better support educational pluralism as a means to improving society as a whole?”*



FINDINGS *and* PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

THIS SECTION INCLUDES detail of our findings on the three aspects of school outcomes studied: spiritual formation, cultural engagement, and academic development. The data from surveys of graduates, all of whom are residents of the United States, are presented after multiple regression analysis. Two models are presented side by side: first (the left bar in the charts) are the raw data from the school graduates, without any controls for family background differences; second (the right bar) are the results (regression coefficients) after controlling for a multitude of family background variables, in order to isolate the schooling effect. Variables controlled for in this second model include age, race, gender, and parental characteristics such as educational attainment, religious service attendance, academic push from parents, religious affiliation, and family structure.

In all charts the center line, marked zero, represents the control (or comparison) group, graduates of public schools. Therefore, as the charts are interpreted, the second bar, the model including controls, attempts to isolate the specific effect of the school on the independent variable presented. The bars represent the coefficients from the regression model for a particular schooling type. The scale for each chart varies depending on the values of the variable being predicted. For example, the variable on accepting the authority of church leadership is a 7-point scale running from “completely disagree” to “completely agree”. On average, then, evangelical Protestant schoolers are 1.3 points higher than public schoolers on this seven-point scale. Even after removing the effect of family background, attending an evangelical Protestant school increases one’s expected acceptance of church authority by nearly half a point on this 7-point scale. That is roughly equivalent to the increase in acceptance of church authority when one had a mother who attended religious services once a week rather than a mother who only attended once or twice a year.

The charts presented from the administrator survey of both Canadian and American heads of schools, use simple descriptive statistics. These charts are presented to serve as a comparison between the two types of Christian schools studied.

Spiritual Formation

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS HAVE been founded from a desire to provide opportunity for children to grow in the Christian faith. It is this desire that necessitates the integration of faith and learning, and sets Christian schools apart from their public and non-religious school counterparts. The development of faith, then, should be a primary outcome of Christian schools. This study aimed to determine a benchmark indicator for the long-term spiritual outcomes of Christian school graduates.

The data reveal a divergence between Catholic and Protestant Christian schools on this outcome. While both Catholic and Protestant Christian school graduates feel well prepared for a vibrant religious and spiritual life (Figure 1) it seems that Protestant Christian school graduates are more committed to their churches, practice spiritual disciplines more frequently, and are following church teachings at much greater rates than their Catholic, public, and non-religious private school peers.

Prepared for vibrant religious and spiritual life

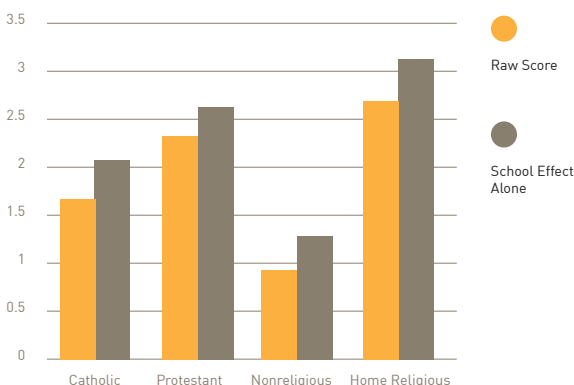


FIGURE 1: Graduates' reported feelings that their high school prepared them for a vibrant religious and spiritual life.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

FIRST, THE DATA reveal that reverence for the church and its authority is much greater among Protestant Christian school graduates than among any other school sector. Protestant Christian school and homeschool graduates are attending church with greater regularity than their public, Catholic, and non-religious school peers (Figure 2). While parent behaviors do contribute to some of this effect (bars on the left representing uncontrolled data), recall that these analyses provide the opportunity to assess students' behaviors *apart* (bars on the right representing controlled data) from factors such as parental church attendance. So the effect of Protestant Christian schools and homeschools is strong. We also find the attitudes of graduates toward the church to be substantially different for our various schooling types

Frequency of religious service attendance

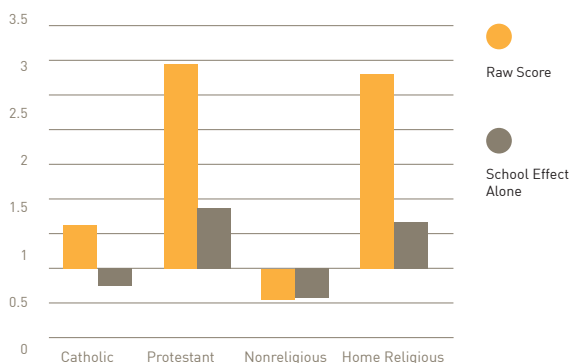


FIGURE 2: Graduates' reported attendance in religious services.

Religious obligation to accept the authority of the Church/your church leadership

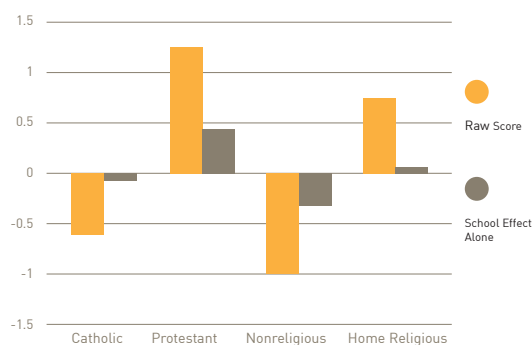


FIGURE 3: Response to the question "I accept the authority of church leadership."

(Figure 3). We observe that homeschool and Protestant schools have a strong ability to encourage this reverence for authority, but Catholic school graduates show a very different trend. Perhaps due to the recent history of turmoil in the Catholic church, encouraging respect for authority is a more difficult task for those in Catholic schools; we

Morality should be based on absolute standards

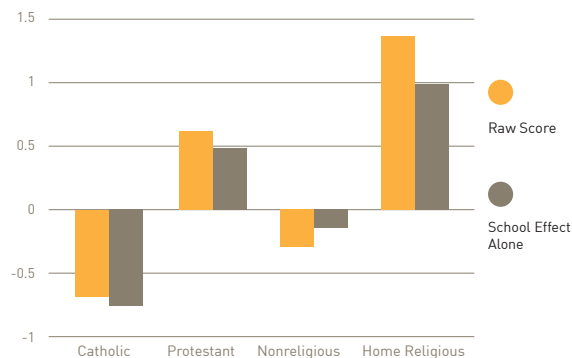


FIGURE 4: Morality should be based on an absolute, unchanging standard.

suppose there may be many corollary effects on the spiritual lives of Catholic school graduates due to mistrust of their church leaders.

We find Christian schools to have a very distinct impact on their graduates' beliefs in religious and moral absolutes. While Protestant Christian school and homeschool graduates hold more strongly to the belief that morality is unchanging and absolute (Figure 4), the Catholic school effect trends negative on this measure, but after controls is effectively the same as public school results. On other measures, such as belief that the Bible is infallible (Figure 5), Protestant Christian school and to a lesser degree homeschool graduates are once again distinct in their belief in the traditional teachings of the church, with Catholic and non-religious private schools' graduates no different than public-schoolers on this measure. Similarly, Protestant Christian school graduates are distinctively different from their peers in their belief that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. Protestant Christian school graduates are also far less likely to report having doubts about their faith. On every measure of traditional religious beliefs, Protestant Christian school graduates show significantly more adherence to the church teachings than their peers, findings that hold up after rigorous controls, indicating the impact of the Protestant Christian school on the long-term religious beliefs of their graduates.

While in one respect the unwavering and unquestioning belief in the Christian faith is admirable, we are also troubled by these findings. Our analysis leads us to question if an authoritarian culture at some Protestant Christians school is contributing to a faith that focuses on pietism rather than piety by way of a dictatorial approach to study of the Bible, which may result in a surface engagement and understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We wonder if this compliance has an impact on the development of the intellect, as well as a desire to be engaged in culture, a discussion we will enter into further later in this paper.

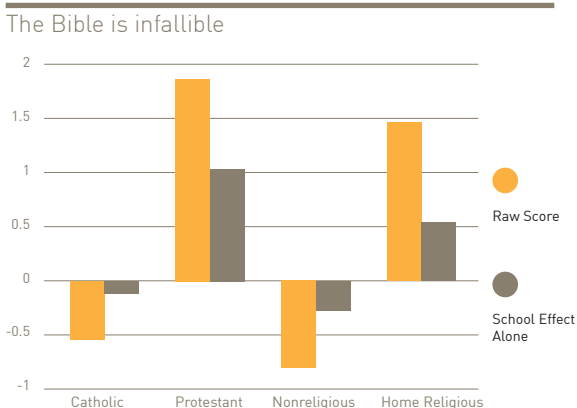
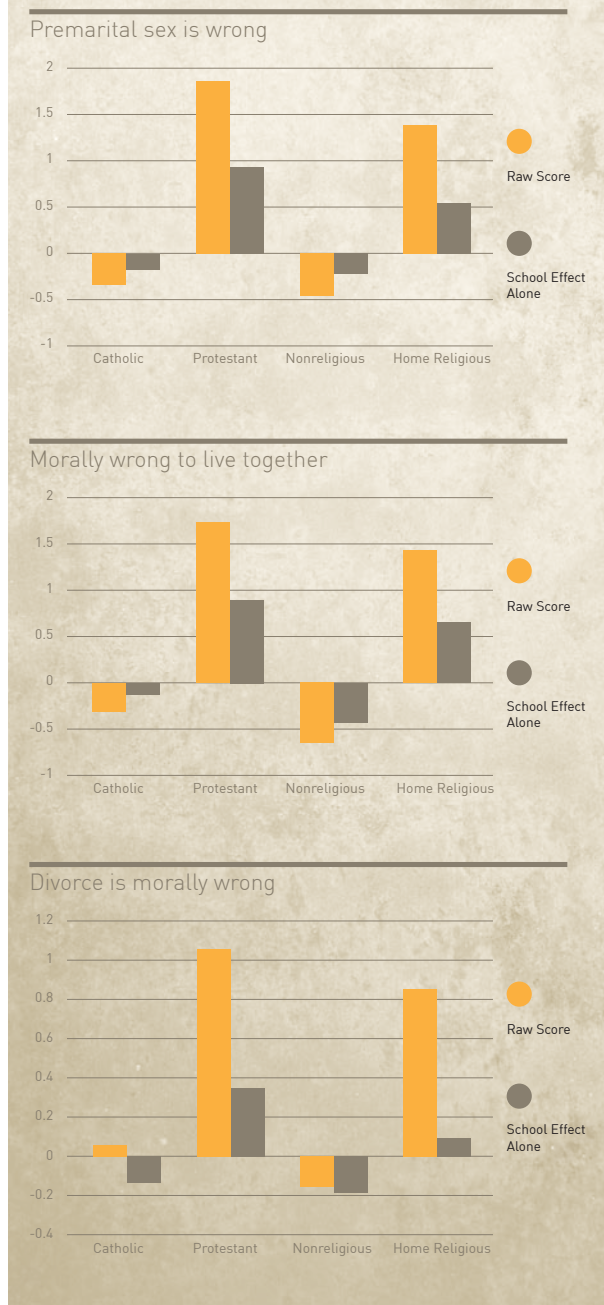


FIGURE 5: Graduates' reported belief that the Bible is an infallible guide for personal faith and behavior.

Belief in moral absolutes translates into cultural issues as well, with Protestant Christian school and homeschool graduates reporting a countercultural belief that premarital sex, living together before marriage, and divorce are morally wrong (Table 1). In light of the understanding that the Christian faith does promote adherence to these traditional concepts of relationships and marriage, we are struck by the difference in the beliefs of graduates of these different schooling types. With all of these graduates reporting belief in the Christian

TABLE 1: Graduates' responses to value questions.



faith, we believe that the Protestant Christian school must emphasize these values, perhaps through curriculum and teaching, but also potentially by means of modeling behaviors, informal conversation, or chapel presentations. These findings are net of parent church attendance and other religious habits; so, we conclude the Protestant Christian school is an integral part of the overall Christian education of the child.

CHARITY

NEXT, WE ACKNOWLEDGE that charity and financial support of the church are important values in both Catholic and Protestant churches; however, Protestant Christian school graduates are distinct in their giving habits, with Catholic school graduates practicing this discipline no more than their public school counterparts. Protestant Christian school graduates feel significantly more obliged to tithe (Figure 6), a behavior that translates into these graduates tithing three times more often than their public school counterparts. The graduates of Protestant Christian schools give significantly more money than all other school graduates (Figure 7). While some of these donations are congregational in nature (Figure 8), Protestant Christian school graduates are also giving significantly more to other religious causes (Figure 9) despite having a lower household income. Protestant Christian school graduates are also more likely to talk with their peers about giving and about the organizations to which they are giving. We observe that the philanthropic behavior of this representative sample of high school graduates matches their values, with Protestant

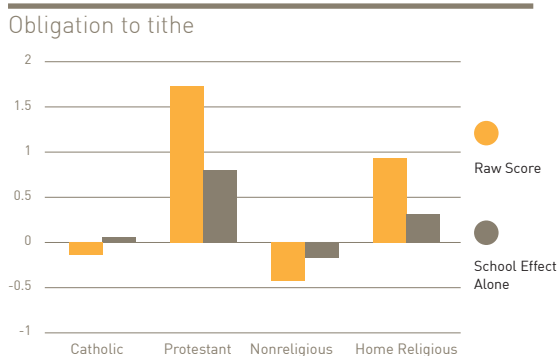


FIGURE 6: Graduates' reported feelings of moral obligation to give at least 10 percent of their income to religious organizations or charitable causes.

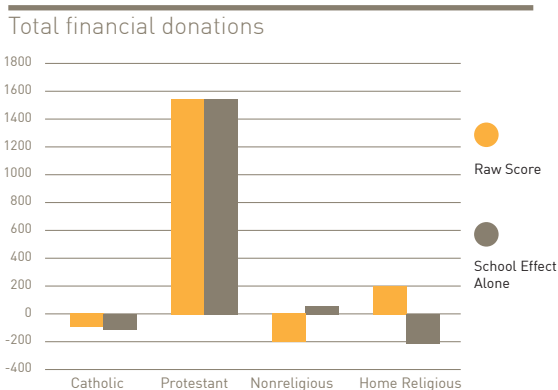


FIGURE 7: Graduates' reported annual charitable donations.

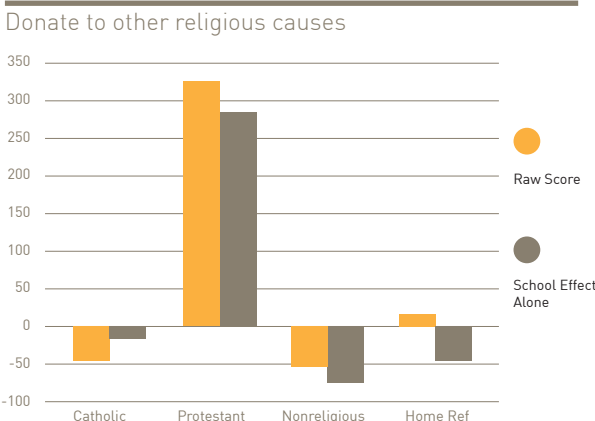


FIGURE 9: Graduates' reported annual charitable donations to religious causes outside their congregation.

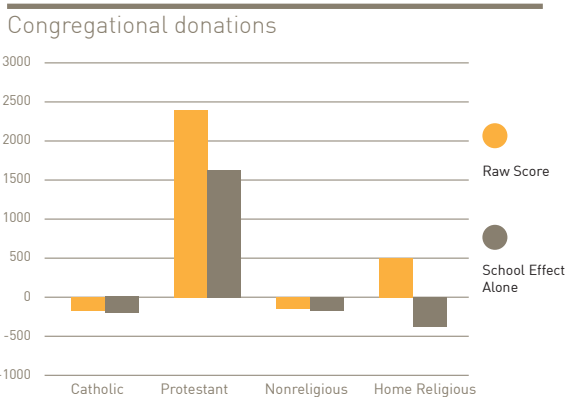


FIGURE 8: Graduates' reported annual charitable donations to church congregations.

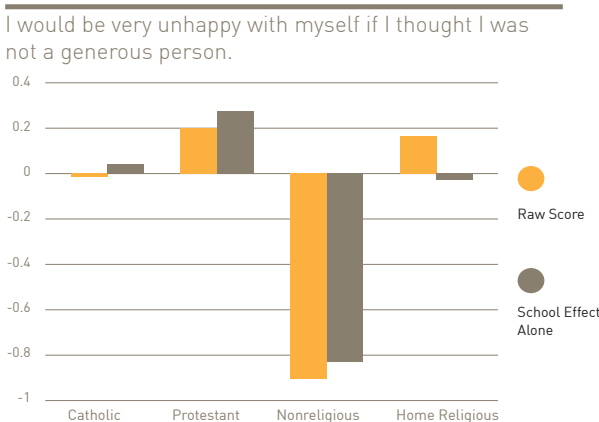


FIGURE 10: Graduates' reported sense of feeling unhappy with themselves if they thought themselves to not be generous.

Christian school graduates responding positively to the question “I would be unhappy with myself if I thought I was not a generous person,” while the non-religious private school group, those giving the least, are unique in their disagreement with the statement (Figure 10).

COMMITMENT TO CHURCH

ONE OF THE MOST significant findings in this study is the long-term commitment of Protestant Christian school graduates to stay within the Protestant faith. Attending a Protestant Christian school seems to impact graduates’ choice to stay into adulthood within the Christian faith. Other schooling types, including Catholic schools, have no impact on the religious affiliations their graduates choose as adults. Again, it is helpful to note that these findings are significant after controls for parent religion is added; this finding supports the notion that Protestant Christian schools should be considered an important part of the child-rearing equation. The graduates of Protestant Christian schools also seem to be more committed to their churches, volunteering more (Figure 11) and giving more money to their congregations. The graduates of Protestant Christian schools are also committing to mission trips in their adult lives significantly more than their peers in every other sector. These graduates are committing their time and their money to both evangelism and relief trips (Table 2). Such trips are not those taken while in Christian school, but are reported trips taken during adulthood.

While these commitments are significant, Christian schools do not appear to influence their graduates toward leadership roles in their congregations. Christian school graduates are very active in their congregations compared to public school and Catholic school graduates, but this appears to be entirely due to family background factors rather than Christian school attendance, with Catholic school graduates less likely to perform these roles.

Overall, we found these results important on several accounts. First, the Protestant Christian school graduate is

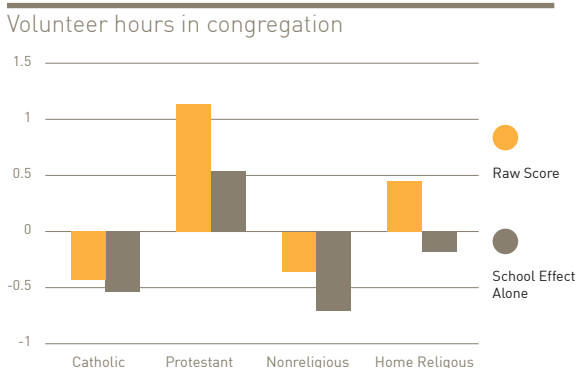
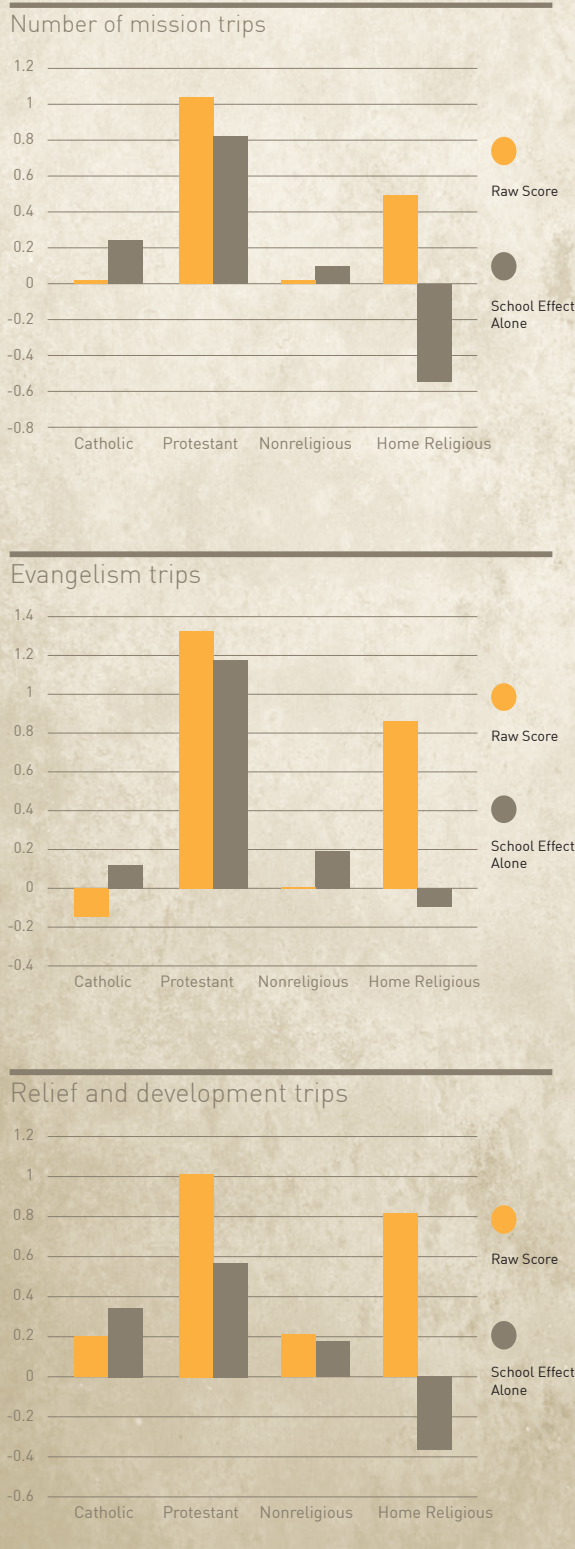


FIGURE 11: Graduates’ reported volunteer hours within church congregation.

TABLE 2: Graduates’ reported church-related trips in adulthood.



unique in her commitment to her church in many ways. We found the data revealing her unique desire to give, to be of particular importance to larger society, as we know the church’s outreach contributes to the public good on many levels. While Protestant Christians have often been criticized for channeling their efforts and resources specifically to the church and not the community, we believe this criticism reflects a misunderstanding of the financial practices of most Protestant Christian churches. When congregants in these churches give to the church, they are most certainly giving to both local and global communities in need. Mission and relief budgets, which of course go far beyond the scope of evangelism, are another substantial line item in Christian churches, and therefore it is not coherent to argue that giving to the church contributes to the insularity of the Christian community.

Second, these findings gave us reason to wonder why the Protestant Christian school effect is so much more substantial than the Catholic school effect. In most areas measuring commitment to the church and faith, Catholic school graduates responded no better, and sometimes with less fervor, than their public school peers. From volunteering to giving, the Catholic school is having little impact on the behavior of its graduates within their churches despite having a substantial positive impact on academic achievement—a discussion which will be presented later in this section. The value of charity commonly ascribed to the Catholic church does not appear to be translating into behaviors of graduates of Catholic schools. With Catholic school graduates earning more money net of their parents’ incomes, and the upward economic stability of these graduates, in combination with the church’s value on charity, we expected a more generous disposition than the data reveal. We wonder if the longer history of Catholic schools and the focus on academic excellence as a means of social and economic mobility has caused an apathy among Catholic school leaders as relates to developing the faith, whereas the more recent history of Protestant Christian schools, coupled with their graduates’ belief that U.S. culture is hostile towards their values, is promoting a greater emphasis on overtly strengthening the faith of their students. While other explanations certainly may play into this lack of Catholic school impact, the results unfortunately support the concern in the Catholic community that Catholic schools increasingly struggle to develop their students’ faith lives.

Lastly, it is clear that graduates of Protestant Christian schools are ideal church members in many ways. From church attendance to congregational volunteering, the Protestant Christian school is having an impact on how its graduates participate in church life. It is troubling, then, that while Protestant Christian schools are having a positive impact on the church, we note that Protestant Christian clergy rarely encourage their congregants to choose Christian

schooling for their children—quite a different paradigm than that which is present in Catholic churches. We believe the church and the Christian school have the potential to be mutually reinforcing entities if greater support is given to schools. While we understand the church’s need to support public schools, as well as the argument to place children in these schools as “salt and light,” we wonder if the church would be wise to better support Christian schools for the betterment of their families, children, and as we will show in discussion to come, their communities as a whole.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

WE ALSO FOUND divergence between schooling types on the spiritual practices and the role of religion in the lives of graduates in adulthood. The data suggest that Protestant Christian schools are having an impact on the ways in which religion contributes to graduates’ lives outside of church, with their graduates using God and Scripture significantly more often to make moral decisions than their counterparts from other school types. Further, Protestant Christian school graduates believe religion should be a part of the public debate on social and political issues. Protestant

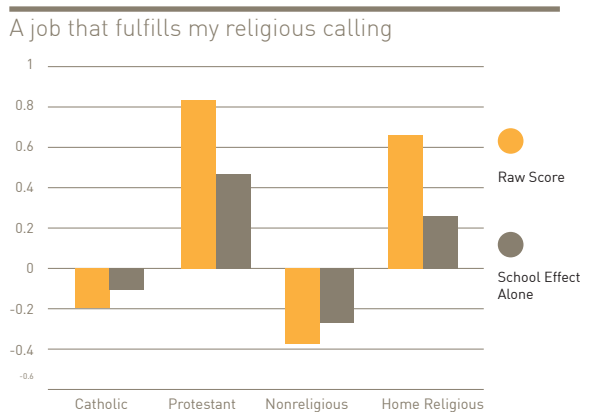


FIGURE 12: Graduates’ reported seeking a job that fulfills their religious calling.

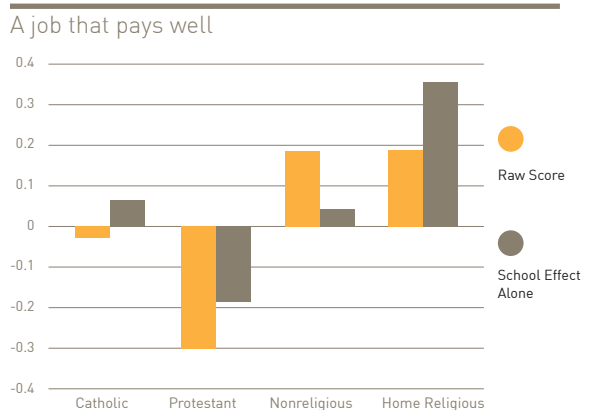


FIGURE 13: Graduates’ reported seeking a job with high compensation.

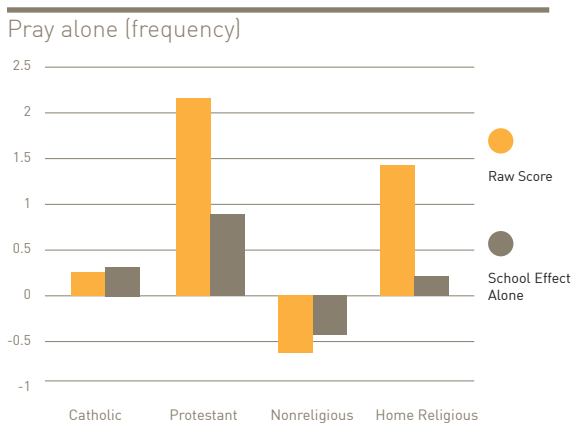


FIGURE 14: Graduates’ reported time spent alone in prayer.

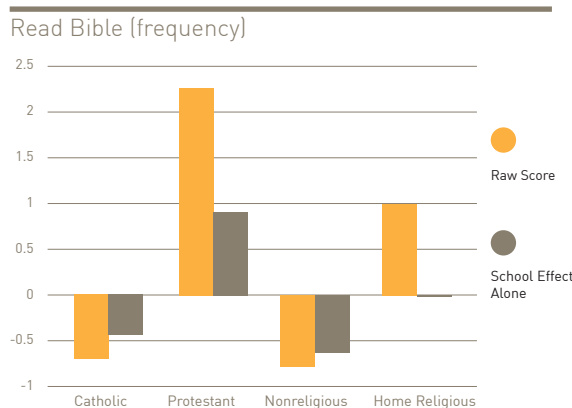


FIGURE 15: Graduates’ reported time spent reading the Bible by themselves.

Christian school graduates also have what we interpret as a distinctive theological sense of vocation, which they report is of central importance when considering their careers (Figure 12); and which could explain the low value they place on compensation (Figure 13).

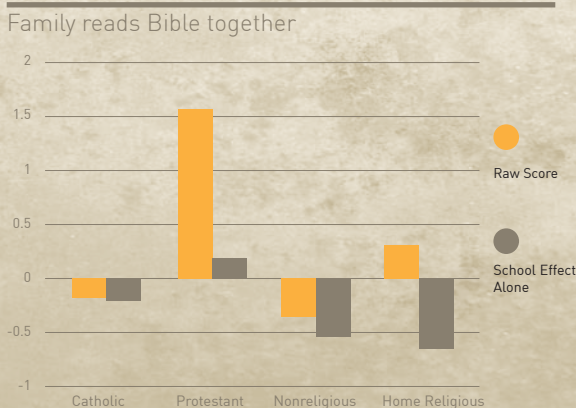
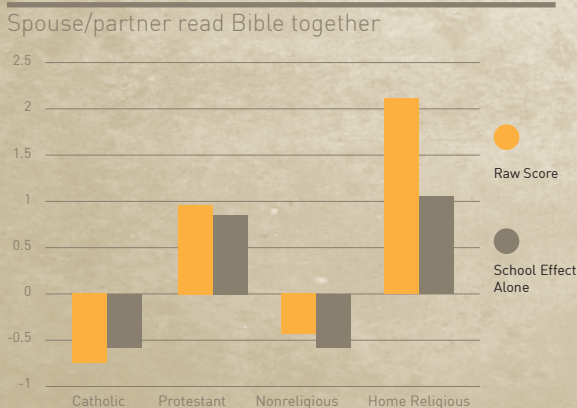
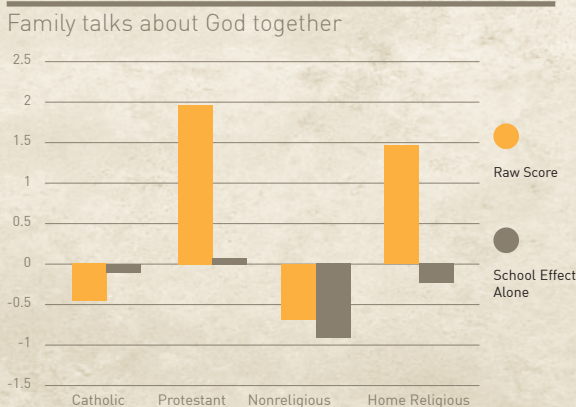
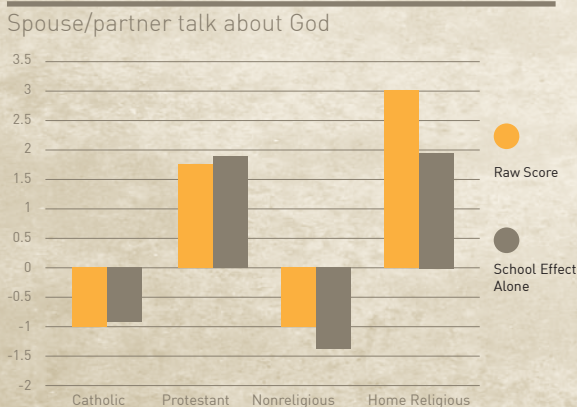
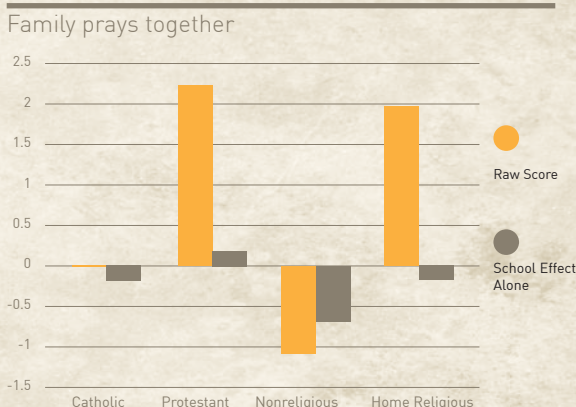
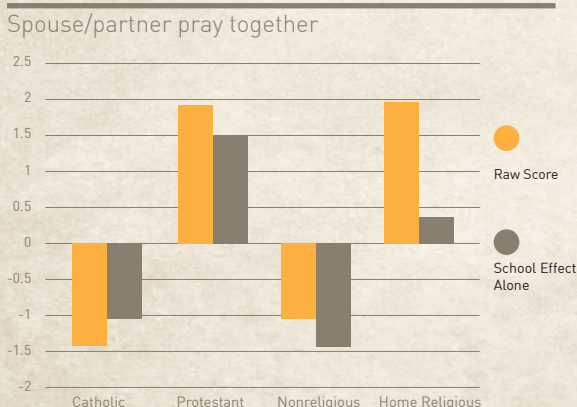
Christian school graduates also are varied on behaviors such as praying alone (Figure 14), reading the Bible (Figure 15), and evangelism to strangers. Catholic school and homeschool graduates are no different in these practices than their public school peers while non-religious private school graduates trend negative, indicating a significant school effect. While we would expect Protestant Christians to engage in more evangelism efforts, we believe the former findings are important indicators of graduates’ commitment to the development of their spiritual lives. We also find a distinctive Protestant Christian school effect in the spiritual practices within marriages without children. We find these couples to pray together, talk with one another about God, and read the Bible together far more frequently than their peers in other schooling types. These findings contrasted to those families with children (Table 3).

Graduates’ spiritual practices within relationships are of particular interest. First, we are struck by the significance of the Protestant school, and in some cases the homeschool effect on faith in relationships without children. It seems that faith is an important component of relationships for graduates of these types, perhaps because these students commonly marry within their own religious tradition. Secondly, it is somewhat unexpected that we find Catholic school and non-religious private school graduates trending negative on these measures. One explanation may be the choice of these graduates to be in a relationship with a partner outside their tradition, a hypothesis that would merit further exploration. Perhaps most striking, however, is the dampening of the effect of these religious practices once children are introduced into the family. In our analysis of these findings, we wonder if the apparent change is less about Protestant Christian and homeschool graduates reducing the frequency of these practices and more about the historical tendency of nominal Christians to begin these practices when children are introduced as a means of passing along religious tradition.

Our qualitative research sheds some light on this difference in spiritual development, particularly our study of race relations in a missional Protestant Christian and in a Catholic preparatory school. Both schools are urban in nature and provide a challenging academic program, far more difficult than many preparatory schools and most certainly than public schools. While the aim of this case study was not to assess the focus on development of students’ faith, the research revealed stark differences in the way the Protestant Christian school and the Catholic school integrate faith into their practices from the classroom to larger school policy.

The Catholic school in this qualitative study, which had the mission of providing a Catholic education to students of low socio-economic means, did not require teachers to sign a statement of faith. While the Catholic school’s teachers and students seemed to be clear on the outreach and academic rigor component of their mission, very few subjects spoke of the Catholic mission of the school. One student, when reminded of the Catholic mission, noted this school “is just like regular school, the only thing that sets it differently . . . is that we wear dress code, we attend mass, and we follow the holidays.” While faculty members were more aware of the Catholic mission, few faculty members were surprised to learn that students rarely mentioned the Catholic nature of the school. In fact, the teachers did not expect students to make faith of Catholicism a part of their lives, either within or beyond school; they did not see it as their role to promote a Catholic worldview, but they did believe their students would benefit from their understanding of the school’s worldview.

TABLE 3: Graduates' reported religious practices in relationships.



In contrast, in the Protestant Christian school in this study, students and faculty alike were able to articulate the mission, including the faith aspect, and were strikingly in accord about the school's ability to deliver on the mission. In this school, all members of the faculty and administration were required to sign a statement of faith based on that of the National Association of Evangelicals. Within the faculty, Orthodox and Catholic believers in addition to those from a variety of Protestant Christian faith denominations

were able to sign the statement of faith. Students reported faculty integrating faith discussions into classes of all types and teachers praying with one another and with students. The researcher observed this school seemed "rooted more in questions about faith than in answers, more in exploration than in explicit directions about what to believe." A Muslim student in this school reported choosing to come to this school because "it was really strong, like the faith in the curriculum." This was in contrast to the many other

choices this student had which were religiously ambiguous or hostile toward religion altogether. In this school the development of students' faith was clear, consistent, and overt. (See Appendix D for more on this qualitative study.)

Perhaps this case study is reflective of a wider group of Protestant Christian and Catholic schools in general. Perhaps Catholic schools choose to focus on Christian values such as outreach to the poor and the alleviation of poverty as a means of conveying the Catholic faith, while Protestant Christian schools choose to more directly infuse faith into all aspects of school life. If this is the case, it would seem that the Protestant Christian schools' focus on the faith is yielding the lifetime behaviors they are aiming for. Similarly, it would not be surprising that graduates of Catholic schools are not developing their faith and commitment to the church, if indeed the teachers are not aiming to do so.

REPORTED EMPHASIS ON FAITH IN SCHOOLS

COMPARED TO THE earlier data from *graduates* in the U.S., the data from Christian school *administrators* in both the U.S. and Canada further clarify this distinction in studying the aims of the respective Christian

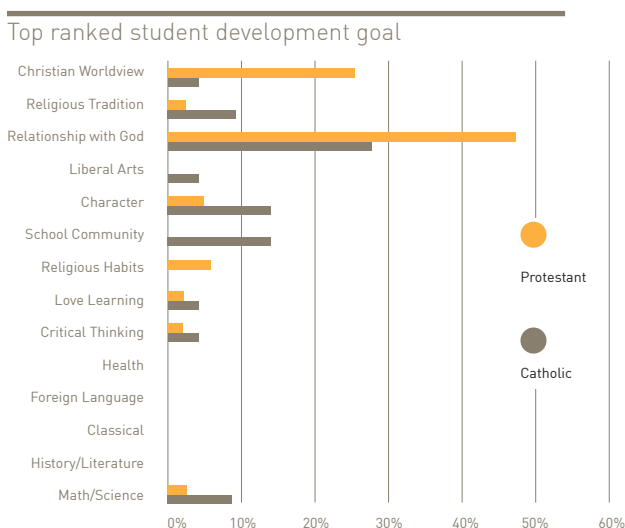


FIGURE 16: Administrators' top ranked goals of student development.

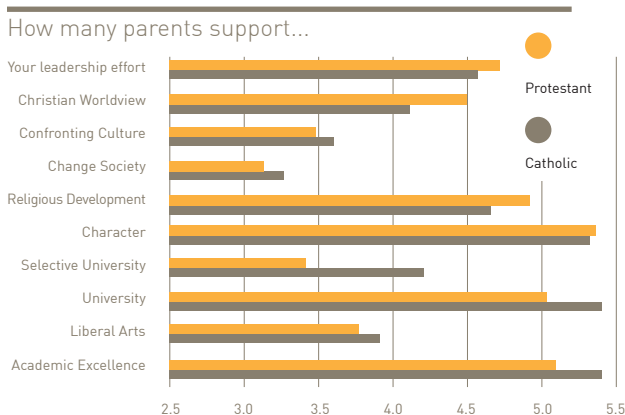


FIGURE 17: The number of parents of high school students who strongly support the above goals, as reported by administrators.

schools. While many Christian schools of both types report students' relationship with God as a top-ranked priority, far more Protestant Christian schools choose Christian worldview or relationship with God, while many Catholic schools choose character, school community, or math and science as primary student development goals (Figure 16). Perhaps the diversity in mission within Catholic schools is responsible for the weak outcomes on the development of faith in graduates of these schools. Similarly, it may be that the laicization of Catholic schools may be contributing to these outcomes. It may be that the shorter history of Protestant Christian schools has provided them the luxury of remaining closer to their original mission, and therefore more focused on the development of Christian faith as a primary outcome. While these results may seem most important for Catholic schools, we assert that Protestant Christian schools should also take note of this, as it seems the emphasis placed on various thrusts within schools does have a lasting impact on those outcomes.

We also might expect the weakening of Catholic schools' emphasis on faith to be a result of market demands; that is, when Catholic schools became a means of social and economic mobility, the emphasis shifted from faith and ethnic identity to academic rigor, while Protestant Christian schools are now in the period of their history primarily concerned with preservation of religious identity. If this were true, we would have expected to see parallel differences between what Catholic and Protestant Christian school parents value, as perceived by school administrators; we did not find this difference (Figure 17). Instead, administrators report that parents in both Catholic and Protestant schools are most supportive of academic endeavors, alongside generous support of the religious component of schooling in both school types. In one interpretation, we can conclude Catholic schools may not be delivering on the parents' desire to develop religiosity in their children. As we will see in forthcoming discussion, Protestant schools may also be shortchanging the parents in their schools on the academic component of their purpose as schools.

Cultural and Community Engagement

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS ARE commonly criticized for providing an insular Christian community in which students and families alike are failing to engage with the larger world. Taken further, some charge that Christian schools are “breeding grounds” for racism, eroding communities and serving as a danger to public solidarity. While the theology that drives Christian schools certainly varies, and therefore likely differentiates the ways in which schools promote cultural engagement, few denominations and few Christian schools would say they are purposefully segregating themselves from the larger community. We acknowledge that the history of Christian schools, both Catholic and Protestant Christian, may have contributed to differing views of and progress in cultural engagement. This research study aimed to determine if Christian schools were indeed dividing and weakening communities or if Christian schools are instead trending toward serving a public good by generating graduates who are committed to their communities and to larger cultural engagement. Informed by the work on cultural change by Andy Crouch and James Davison Hunter, we determined to examine the extent to which Christian school graduates are contributing to culture by “think[ing] and do[ing] something that has never been thought or done before” (Crouch, 2008, p. 97-98) or generating dense networks within the center, rather than the periphery of culture (Hunter, 2010, p. 37). To that end, we measured cultural engagement in several ways, asking graduates about their financial donations, time spent volunteering, engagement in various cultural activities from politics to the arts, and personal relationships.

PUBLIC GOOD

THIS RESEARCH FINDS Christian schools to be serving a public good in many ways, regularly countering the argument of social divisiveness and defying the stereotypes

Lack of clarity of goals and sense of direction

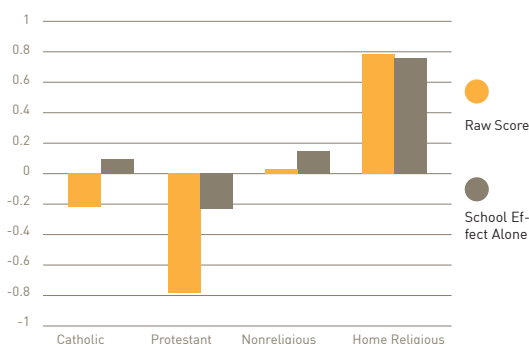


FIGURE 18: Graduates’ reported feelings of unclarity regarding life goals or sense of direction.

about graduates’ radical political beliefs and actions. It does not, however, find Christian school graduates to be culturally engaged in the more substantial ways that echo the rhetoric of “world-changing” (which we found to be present in many of today’s Christian schools in our qualitative studies), with graduates showing a surprising lack of engagement in areas traditionally thought to influence culture: through the political sphere, relationships with people in positions of power and status or people earning higher university degrees, and intellectual engagement in the arts.

To begin, we find unique dispositions of graduates of Protestant Christian schools, each of which can be argued serves a public good:

1. We find Protestant Christian school graduates to have a strong sense of direction in their lives (Figure 18). Perhaps this is influenced by the theological concept of *calling* taught in many Protestant Christian schools, especially those Reformed and Presbyterian in nature.
2. Similarly, graduates of Protestant Christian schools report unique confidence in their abilities to navigate challenges they encounter in life (Figure 19). Because these graduates also report praying and consulting Scripture

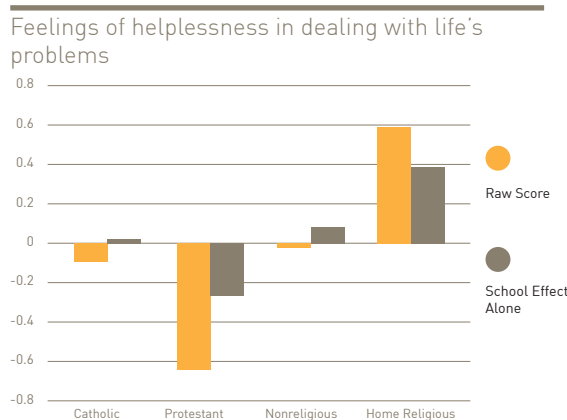


FIGURE 19: Graduates’ reported feelings of helplessness in dealing with life’s problems.

Grateful for income and possessions

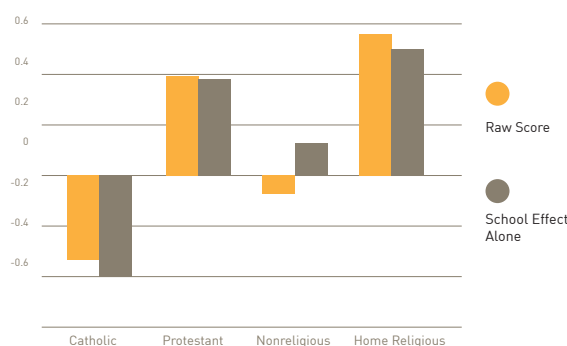


FIGURE 20: Graduates’ reported feelings of gratefulness for income and possessions, however limited they may be.

to make difficult decisions, it is understandable that they feel equipped in the realm of decision-making.

3. In another surprising finding, Protestant Christian school graduates are unique in their feelings of gratitude for their possessions (Figure 20), which is especially interesting in light of the data that show their household income trails behind their Catholic school and non-religious private school peers.

When these data are compared to administrators' reported goals for student development, we are able to determine the alignment between motivations and outcomes. Administrators in both Catholic and Protestant Christian schools rank "Character" as one of the top student development goals (Figure 21). We find the dispositions of graduates measured in this survey to align closely in the Protestant Christian schools, whereas Catholic schools seem to be less effective in relation to this goal. While it is possible that Catholic schools are emphasizing character traits other than those measured in this survey, we wonder if these results again support the notion that Catholic schools are having difficulty achieving the lifelong personal outcomes one would expect to be important in Catholic schools and that parents are perhaps expecting for their children enrolled in Catholic schools.

Because relationships in communities are central to stability and growth, we consider it important that graduates of all non-public schools report their schools prepared them well to engage in relationships (Figure 22). These findings challenge such suppositions, asserting the value of private education on the life-long relationship skills of their graduates and therefore the strength of their communities. These data are especially compelling in light of the charges of theorists who believe the public school is the only way to develop a cohesive community. These results might be explained by the strong relationships private schools students report having with their teachers (Figure 23). Alternatively, there could be a pedagogical, curricular, or theological explanations for this distinctive

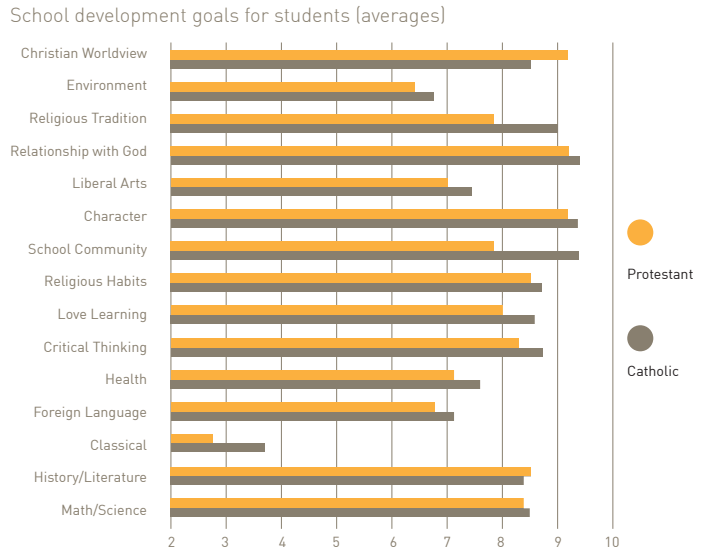


FIGURE 21: Administrators' reported goals for student development.

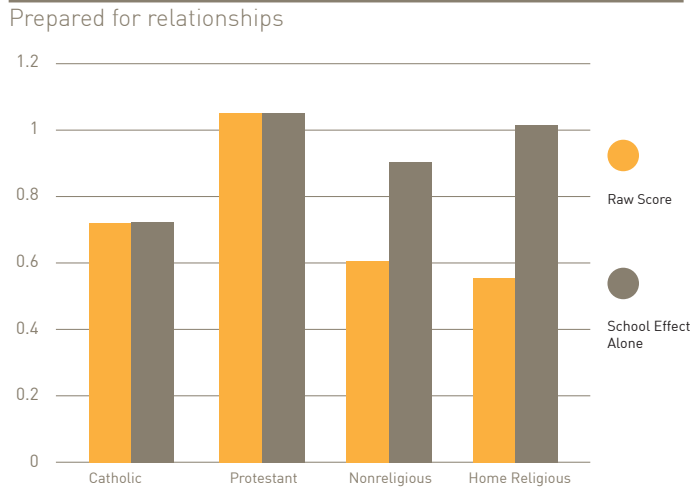


FIGURE 22: Graduates' reported feelings that their high school prepared them for personal relationships, friendships, and family relations, especially marriage.

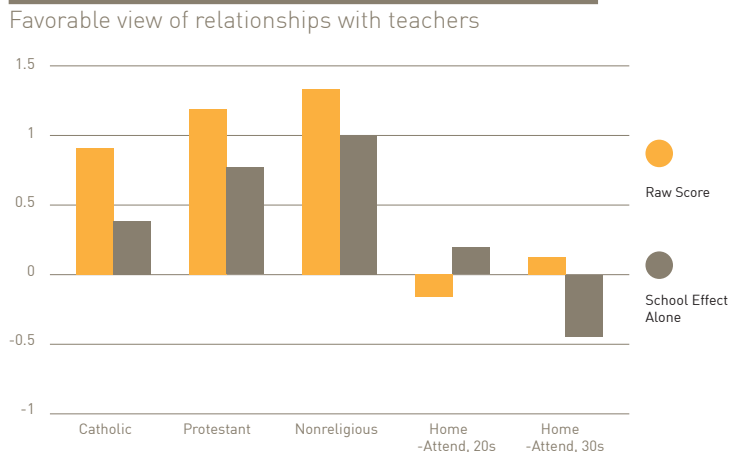
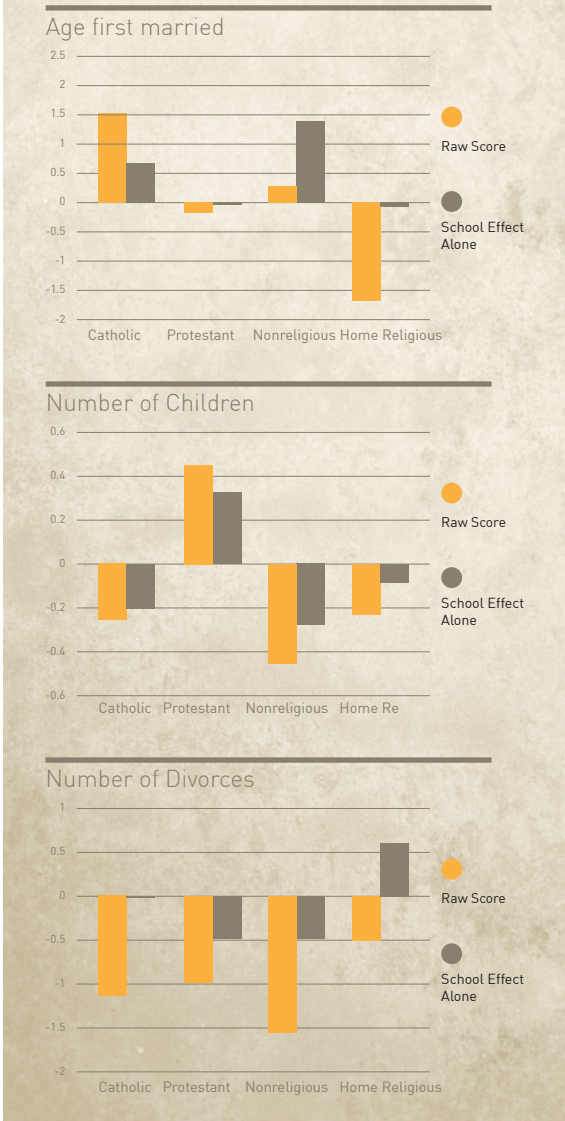


FIGURE 23: Graduates' reported feeling about the quality of relationships with teachers.

TABLE 4: Graduates' responses to questions on family structure.



outcome, in which case further research would be useful for all schools.

We also find distinctive differences in marriage characteristics for Protestant Christian school graduates, which follow the administrators' high value placed on the family. After controlling for family background characteristics, Protestant Christian school graduates on average marry .9 years younger than Catholic school graduates and 1.5 years younger than nonreligious private school graduates. The public school-Christian school difference is accounted for by family characteristics, but not so the differences with the other private school types. However, we found these graduates were also having more children than their peers net of parent characteristics, and divorcing less than their public school and Catholic school peers (Table 4). In this way, it seems there is a community stabilizing effect of Christian schools, as research has consistently found a correlation between academic achievement and intact families. Few would argue that stable families are not good for communities. The positive contributions of Christian school graduates in contributing to these should not be underestimated.

SERVICE

SIMILARLY, AS PREVIOUSLY noted, the unique commitment to church of Protestant Christian school graduates, through volunteering and financial donations, can also be argued to be a stabilizing force in communities. Protestant Christian school graduates volunteer through their congregation significantly more than their peers (Figure 11, p. 18). One might expect that this would negatively impact other forms of volunteering. However we found that not to be the case. Christian school graduates score similar to public school graduates and no worse than other private school graduates when it comes to volunteer hours.

We find varied alignment between administrators' values and the graduates' outcomes in the realm of volunteering. While both Protestant Christian and Catholic administrators rank

School emphases (averages)

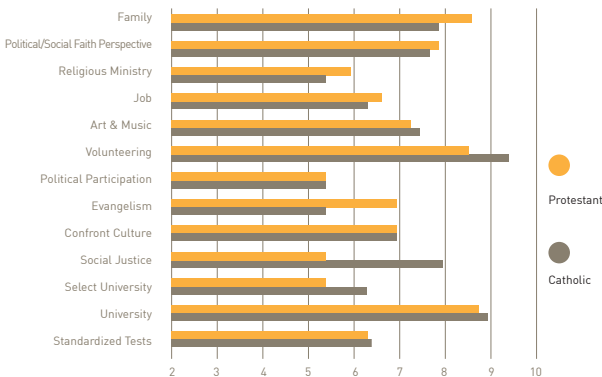


FIGURE 24: Administrators' reported school emphases placed on preparing students in the above areas.

Top ranked emphasis of school

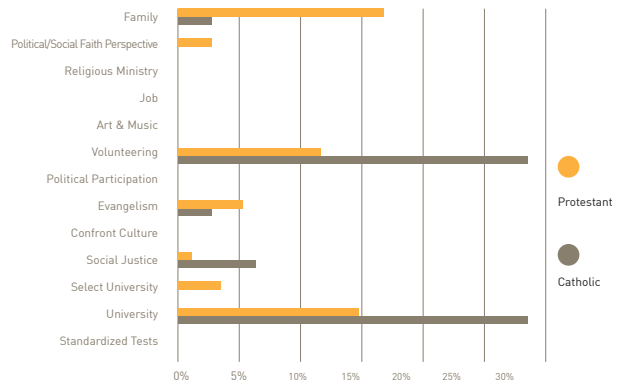


FIGURE 25: Administrators' reported top ranked school emphasis placed on preparing students in the above areas.

volunteering high (Figure 24), when forced to choose the strongest emphasis of the school (Figure 25), Catholic school administrators rank this as one of the top emphases of the school, equally important as eventual university attendance. In this way, it seems, Catholic schools' goals for cultivating a culture of service is not being realized to the extent desired.

AUTHORITY

IN ANOTHER IMPORTANT finding, this research revealed a consistent distaste in Protestant Christian school graduates for going against the established constructs of society (Figures 26 and 27), again showing respect for authority. While it might be argued that the apparent compliance of Protestant Christian school graduates can be a benefit to communities, we also question if such orientations unintentionally contribute to a reduction in the potential of these graduates to interface with culture in positive ways. Secular critics of conservative Christian schooling assert that this culture present in fundamentalist schools is the reason that higher education is not pursued among these schools' graduates.

If this unquestioning, non-confrontational way of life is a distinctive of Protestant Christian school graduates, we wonder how these schools can possibly achieve the goal of developing the next generation of leaders who will influence culture, as is the claim of many such schools.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

TO FURTHER UNDERSTAND the impact of Christian schools and their graduates on their communities and larger culture, we deemed it important to measure the activity of graduates in the political sphere. We expected to find Christian school graduates more involved in this way than their peers due to the stereotypical image of the Christian "right-wing" political radical. We are surprised to find just the opposite. Not only are Christian school graduates avoiding political action—donating less than their peers to political causes and reporting weak involvement in political campaigns and protests—Christian school graduates, and particularly Protestant Christian school graduates, report a surprisingly low interest in politics altogether (Table 5). They report avoiding conversations with colleagues, family, and friends while their peers from non-religious private schools reported engagement in political discussions in all spheres of their lives.

We find these data to align strongly with the responses from administrators, for whom, on average, political participation ranks as the lowest value in their schools, and who report low incidence of facilitating these types of activities for their students (Figure 28). For some, these data may be discouraging, while for others they may serve as a great

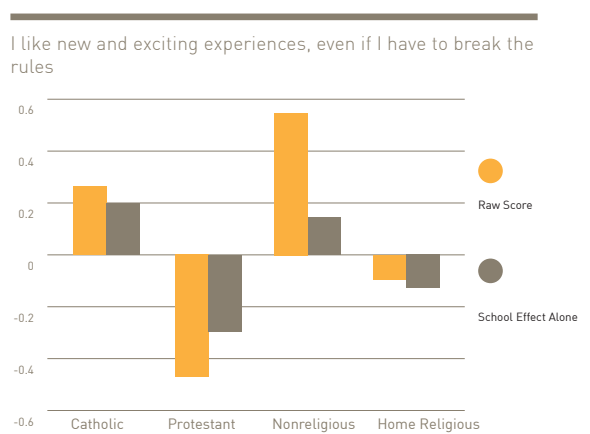


FIGURE 26: Graduates' responses regarding preferring new experiences over rule conformity.

One of the main problems in the U.S. today is a lack of respect for authority

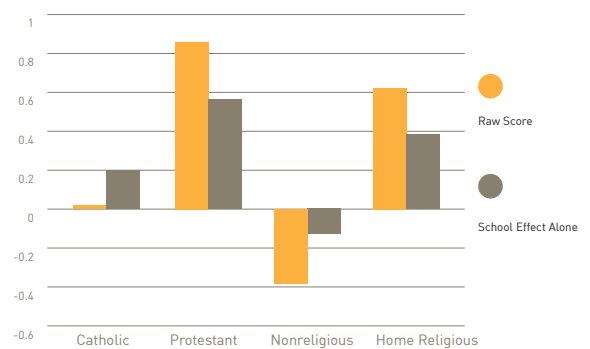


FIGURE 27: Graduates' reported belief that one of the main problems in the U.S. today is a lack of respect for authority.

School facilitates or organizes for students...

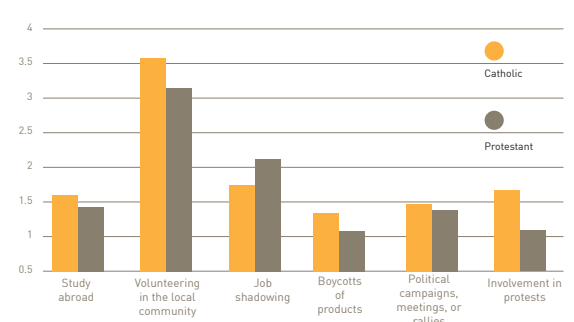
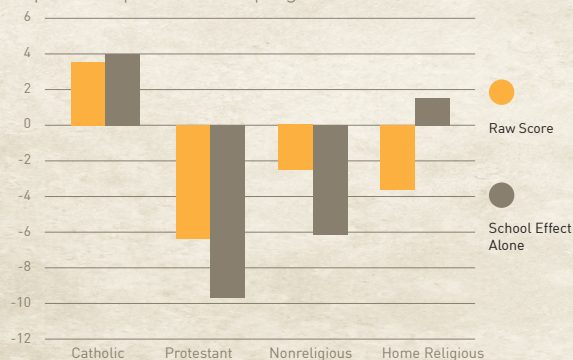


FIGURE 28: Administrators' responses about the extent that their school facilitates or organizes the above student programs and activities.

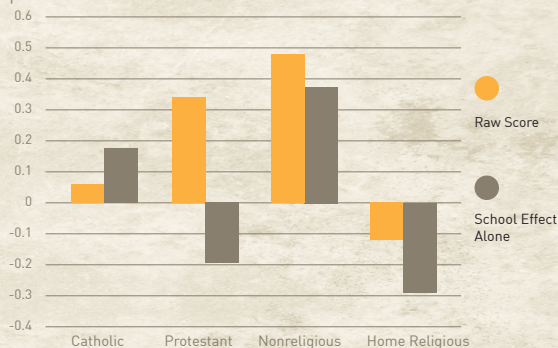
relief. While cultural engagement most certainly includes more than political action, culture is profoundly influenced in the political sphere. If Christian school graduates are not participating in politics, we might conclude the opinions and values of this population are being excluded from contemporary political dialogue and cultural influence. This is a troubling finding, as the success of a liberal

TABLE 5: Graduates' reported political involvement.

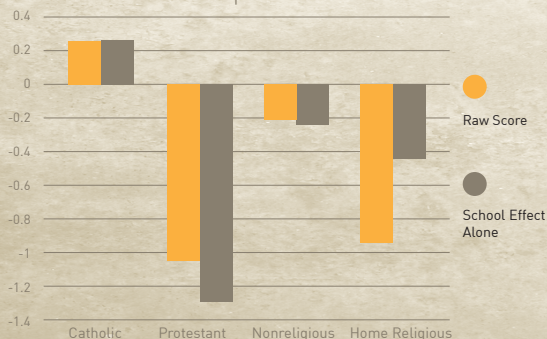
Political donations given in the past twelve months to political parties, campaigns, or issues



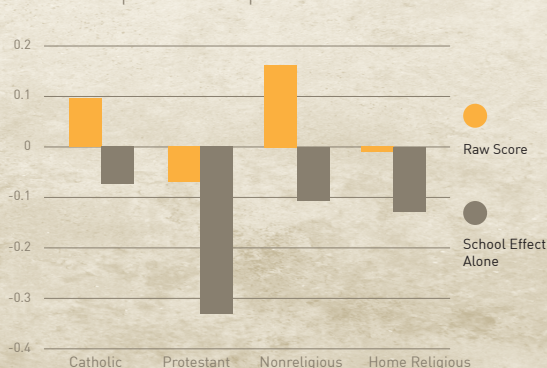
Actively campaigned for a political party in the past twelve months



Participation in a political protest, march, or demonstration in the past twelve months



Interest in politics and public affairs



democracy is at least partially dependent on participation of the masses. However, in light of the negative perceptions of the “moral majority” and the “religious right,” there may be some relief that more recent graduates of Christian schools are not following the same political paths as an earlier generation. In this way, the charge of indoctrination is challenged and, again, arguments asserting the danger of Christian schools are weakened.

RACE

SIMILARLY, OUR QUALITATIVE research helped erode the commonly-held belief that Christian schools are racially homogenous and are therefore racially divisive. A case study of two urban private Christian schools in a major east coast city, one Catholic and the other Protestant, found both to be places where students were forging interracial relationships. While the Protestant Christian school is very conscious of their students’ relationships, pushing students to understand racial issues through sometimes uncomfortable encounters with literature and history and

in chapel services, in the Catholic school, which is forced due to language limitations to segregate some courses on the basis of one’s racial identity, the students of mostly Latino and African-American heritage seem to make these connections as a result of shared purpose and experience. Despite the Protestant school’s overt attempts to promote diversity and the Catholic school’s structural limitations that, in some ways, promote segregation, in both schools students are found for both academic and social reasons to make relational choices outside their own racial category. Additionally, in our study of Christian college students who had graduated from public and Protestant Christian secondary schools, public school graduates report racial tension as a school problem significantly more often than their Christian school peers.

In our research, students in the Protestant Christian school commonly cite the importance of faculty modeling relationships and engagement with those outside their demographic in developing their own behaviors. One student reported about the adults in their school,

“They are not lying, they are not faking it; they are trying to be diverse. They are really practicing what they are preaching, so I think because they have proved to me that they are going to do what they say they will do I can trust them . . .”

We find this to be a common thread through the qualitative studies. Teachers, especially, are found to have a substantial impact on their students’ thinking about culture. However, as we will discuss later, we find some of these teachers are islands within their schools while other schools have systematically approached this goal with training and curriculum.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

OF COURSE, CULTURAL engagement involves far more than political activity and cross-cultural relationships. To this end we also measured graduates’ connectedness within their communities and the schools’ attempts to foster these relationships. While Catholic schools, perhaps due to their longer history, are well-connected to their communities (Figure 29), Protestant schools are substantially behind in this area. We assumed the community connections of the school would translate into more robust relationships of graduates, but found different results. Catholic school graduates are not significantly more likely to know people in powerful positions than their Protestant Christian school peers (Table 6). These results show that Christian schools are not universally preparing their graduates to navigate the traditional paths of power established in today’s culture and thus undermine their potential for robust cultural engagement and contribution through these means.

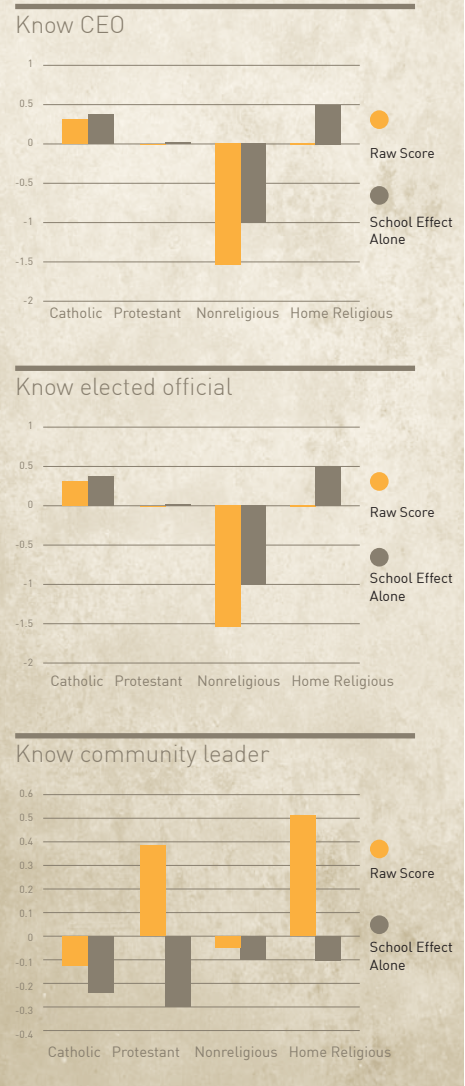
In this same way, we find involvement in the arts and other intellectual endeavors to be surprisingly low for Christian school graduates. Christian school graduates participate in cultural activities less and donate less of their time and money to the arts. These results may indicate a weak involvement in higher culture that prevents Protestant Christian school graduates from a full engagement in their communities and in their world. Whether these results are caused by weak arts programming in their schools, fear of rejection in what is perceived as a secular stronghold, or something less serious, the findings clearly place Protestant Christian school graduates outside of culture on this measure.

To be clear, these surveys measure the outcomes of Christian schools as they functioned six to 21 years ago. However, according to administrators, parent support of such goals as “students learning to confront culture or change society” continues to be among the lowest reported goals (Figure 17, p. 23) in current schools. While we would expect such goals as academic excellence and faith formation to be high, we wonder if weaker parental support for such development of students is borne out in the weak effect we saw almost across the board in Christian schools.

EXPERIENCE IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

TO BETTER UNDERSTAND the current culture in Christian schools, a qualitative research team studied Catholic and Protestant Christian schools in Western Canada and the Pacific Northwest of the U.S. by interviewing administrators, teachers, and faculty. This research finds

TABLE 6: Graduates’ reported relationships with people in places of traditional power.



Formal ties to civic organizations

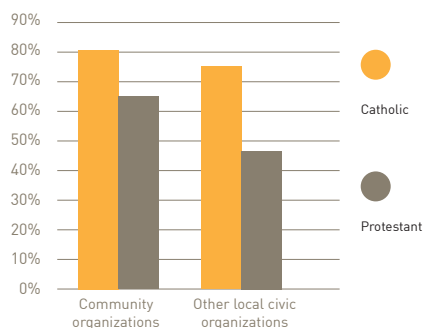


FIGURE 29: Administrators’ response regarding formal school ties to community or social service organizations, such as soup kitchens, homeless outreach, Red Cross, etc.

Christian schools to be varied in their philosophy of and commitment to the development of students' understanding of cultural engagement. While many principals and teachers report a shift in thinking in their schools—moving over the last decade from a perceived purpose of protection from culture to encountering and engaging culture—most of these schools noted they continue to exist in a mode of critiquing culture rather than engaging and creating culture in substantial ways.

We find no evidence in our qualitative studies of the commonly held stereotype of isolationist schools. Instead we find principals and teachers who desire that their students develop insight into current social and political issues, and a sensitivity that would translate into personal action, especially in service to society and in humanitarian issues. Students seem to be receiving this message, as 80% of students interviewed mentioned, without prompting, their desire to be involved in a vocation that focused on an explicit public-spirited or philanthropic concern, such as joining Doctors Without Borders, becoming an engineer to bring low-cost housing or technology to the developing world, or entering a specific religious ministry. In this way, the Christian schools we studied seem to be developing “faithful presence” (Hunter, 2009, p. 95) in their students. While we cannot say if this excitement about public service will persist into adulthood, we did witness the intentional development of these traits in Christian school students.

Most schools are found to be consciously pushing students to think outside the “Christian bubble.” However, the extent to which this is reflected in the overall program of the schools varies substantially. In most schools, we find the lens of cultural engagement to be narrow, promoting what students can do, like service and vocation, rather than a larger view of navigating the spheres, processes, and networks of government, the media, and the arts. Likewise, few schools are found to be systematically, through curriculum and pedagogy, integrating academic learning with engaging the world outside of school. Instead, schools seem to rely on teachers to spontaneously make connections when an opportunity arises. It seems schools' interactions with the world are largely tangential to the formal curriculum (for example, requiring community service hours or going on a field trip). This structure is noted by some students as a weakness, with one student reporting “*the school is too focused on us as people and how we are going to act out there*” so cultural engagement is not taking place to the degree which the students desire. In fact, students report encountering meaning in literature and history courses rather than in the activities often used by schools to generate an understanding of the outside world. One student compellingly described using Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* to develop an understanding of the

Indonesian government's decision to impose the death penalty for smuggling marijuana into the country. In this case, students were challenged to understand the culture and the inherent structures in this country that led the government to impose this seemingly disproportionate penalty. Similarly, another student reported the lasting impact of an assignment in a government course that required students to write their own bill for an issue they chose and researched. These examples demonstrate the value of deliberate integration of cultural engagement into curriculum, and the impact it will have on students' views of cultural engagement, compared to the “spontaneous” personal conversations on which too many schools are relying.

In one exception, another qualitative study in an East Coast city finds a Protestant Christian school that has taken a systemic approach to teaching cultural engagement. This school founded a co-curricular “Institute” in which students are trained in philosophy, economics, and academic research to prepare them to isolate areas of need and follow their critique with plans of action. From understanding the existing culture in which the local or global injustice is taking place to raising funds for and awareness about the issue, students in this school are exposed to these disciplines within the Institute itself and throughout the core curriculum. In contrast to many other schools observed, this school is conscious of the need to develop the intellect as a way to impact culture, knowing that engagement with and compassion for others is part of living a congruent Christian life. This school provides opportunity for students to engage with neighborhoods within the city itself and across the globe, by forging a relationship with, funding, and serving annually in an orphanage in Nepal. Similarly, this school implemented a senior research project that linked academic research on a current issue with a theological argument to respond to the issue. To use terms from a neocalvinist theology, this school places considerable stress on the *antithesis*, not as an excuse to retreat from the world but rather as a challenge to engage with it critically (Van Til, 1990).

While the Protestant Christian school described above is providing opportunity for students to engage locally and globally, this school is the exception. Most schools are found to have a global focus, sometimes neglecting the needs in their own areas. While it is often more attractive, and perhaps more compelling, to bring awareness of global injustices to students, the requirement persists for students to develop sensitivity to the needs in their own neighborhoods and cities. In this way, perhaps the Christian school graduate could engage in more meaningful ways with culture, even making that culture more Christian as a result.

While administrators in the Christian schools studied often define engagement as meaningful involvement in the

dominant culture, we do not frequently find the schools to be systematically providing the tools for students to do this. Perhaps this pedagogy is on the horizon, as schools continue to give cultural engagement serious thought and attention.

Academic Development

IN MANY WAYS, the academic outcomes portion of this study is centrally important; without attention paid to the academic program, of course, a Christian school is nothing more than a tuition-based youth group. This is a paramount concern in many circles of Protestant Christian schools. While Catholic schools typically enjoy a reputation of academic rigor, Protestant Christian schools in the U.S. have been long plagued by just the opposite: a reputation of anti-intellectualism at worst, or weak academic rigor at best.

This study aimed to capture a more comprehensive picture of the academic outcomes of Christian schools. To that end we studied standard indicators such as attainment of higher education and type of colleges attended by graduates, but we also were determined to assess the academic program of schools and the resulting behaviors, into adulthood, of continuous intellectual development by graduates.

We find that on almost every measure, Catholic schools are providing superior academic programs, resulting in admission to and attendance in more high-ranking colleges and eventual advantage in years of education and higher degrees.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' VALUES

TO BEGIN, CATHOLIC school administrators rank eventual university attendance as a top priority, equal to volunteering (Figure 25, p. 25), whereas Protestant Christian school administrators rank family priorities, family values, family coherence, and eventual university attendance as almost identical priorities in their school. More telling is the administrators' responses to the forced-choice question, on which almost twice as many Catholic school administrators ranked university as their top

priority as did Protestant Christian school administrators. One might argue that this choice is one of market demand; that is, Protestant Christian school families are choosing these schools primarily for spiritual development and formation while Catholic school families choose their schools primarily for academic preparation. Yet administrators report parents' support of both are virtually identical in these two Christian school types, with the exception of Catholic school parents supporting select university admission more strongly than Protestant Christian school parents (Figure 17, p. 23).

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

WE FIND A strong alignment between the heavy emphasis Catholic school administrators

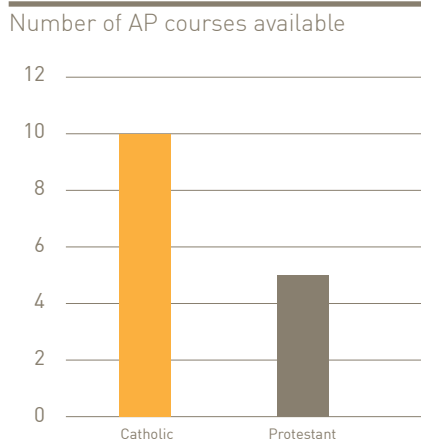


FIGURE 31: Administrators' responses regarding the number of Advanced Placement courses available.

Required Courses

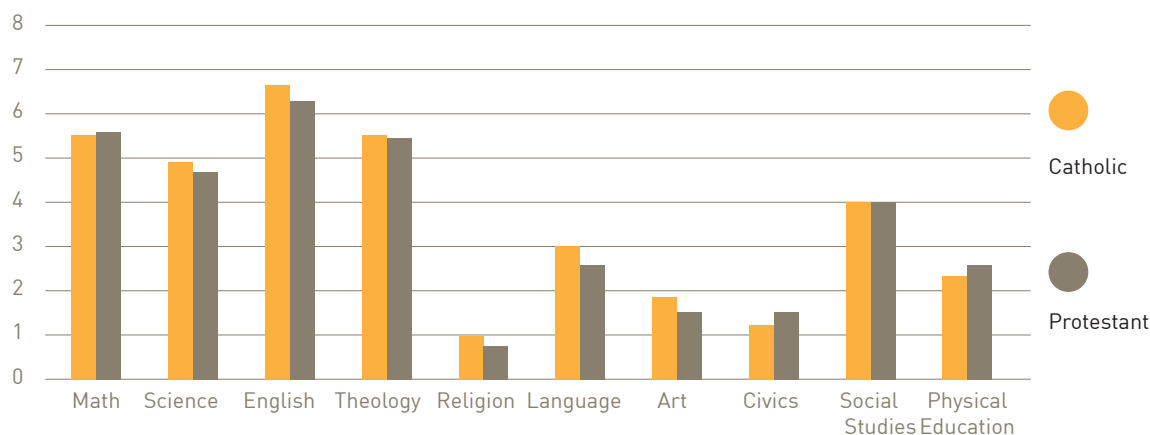


FIGURE 30: Administrators' reported number of semester-long courses required in each subject for students to graduate from high school.

report placing on university, and the more rigorous set of course offerings in Catholic schools. While the graduation requirements of Catholic and Protestant Christian schools are strikingly similar (Figure 30), the intensity of courses seems to be substantially greater in Catholic schools, who offer almost twice the Advanced Placement courses of their Protestant Christian school counterparts (Figure 31). Similarly, far more Catholic schools offer senior-level Physics and Calculus courses, which is also an indicator of academic rigor and emphasis. While some of this effect may be explained by the traditionally smaller size of Protestant Christian schools (NCES, 1994), we find the end result to be plain: Protestant Christian schools offer a less rigorous academic program than Catholic schools.

To better understand the post-secondary emphasis Christian schools are promoting, we asked administrators to describe the type and frequency of college recruiters visiting their schools' campuses. While virtually all Catholic and Protestant Christian schools report college recruiters visiting their campuses, the number and type of colleges visiting differs substantially, with Catholic schools reporting almost twice as many visits from colleges. Additionally, compared to Catholic schools, Protestant Christian schools report a third the number of visits from non-religious colleges (Figure 32).

While we will not suggest Christian schools should avoid promoting Christian colleges, we do acknowledge the link between identification of conservative Christian colleges with very high admission rates and therefore lower academic

standards for admission. And while we do not assert that attending highly selective colleges is the ultimate goal of a K-12 education, and we do acknowledge the strengths and difference in mission of less selective colleges and universities, we are also keenly aware of the research that suggests attending highly selective colleges puts students in relationships and learning situations that increase the probability those students will lead in society post-college. It is for this reason that we are interested in understanding the colleges and universities to which students matriculate from Christian schools.

UNIVERSITY

THERE IS A strong correlation between the types of colleges visiting Christian schools and the eventual college admissions and matriculations of Christian school graduates. Again, Catholic schools are placing students in far more selective colleges and universities than their Protestant Christian school counterparts. While almost 90% of Catholic schools report placing students in an elite (ranked in top 20) university, only 50% of Protestant Christian schools report such placement. Administrators also reported on college matriculation from the past five years, during which time Catholic schools sent far more students to top 20 colleges

Number of recruiters visiting by type of college or university (past 12 months)

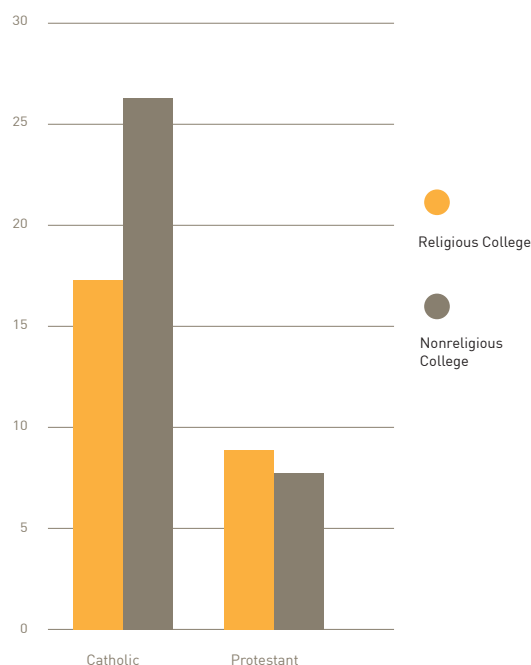


FIGURE 32: Administrators' responses regarding number of recruiter visits.

Percent placing a student in top 20 university in last five years

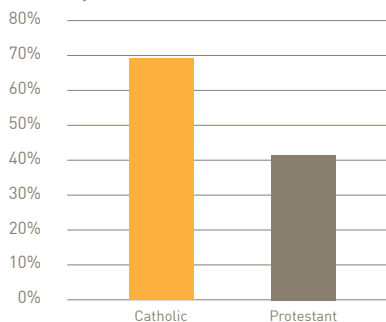


FIGURE 33: Administrators' reported number of graduates who attended top 20 universities.

Prepared for College

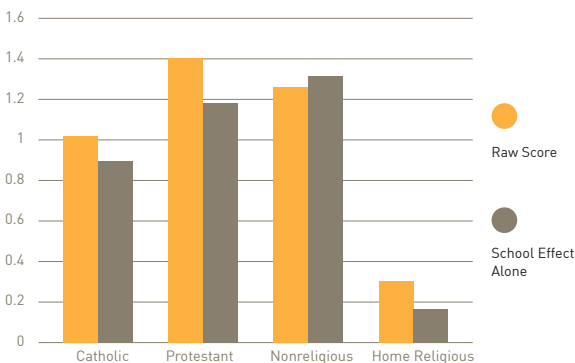


FIGURE 34: Graduates' reported feelings of preparedness for college.

(Figure 33). While it seems from the administrator data that Catholic schools are preparing their students intellectually, Protestant Christian school graduates claim they feel most prepared for college (Figure 34). It seems, however, after a greater analysis of matriculation, that these students are perhaps feeling better prepared because they are attending less selective, and therefore possibly less demanding colleges.

The reports from graduates show that graduates of Protestant Christian schools, and even more significantly from homeschools, are more likely to attend an open-admission college than their peers in Catholic and non-religious private schools (Figure 35). When removing students who did not attend a four-year program, some of this effect is dampened (Figure 36), but it appears attending a Catholic or non-religious private school does positively impact the selectivity of the post-secondary choice of graduates. We were also interested to know the mean SAT scores of the admitted students in the universities our graduates attended—since this is an important measure of the selectivity of the university—and found strong positive effects for students attending non-religious privates schools, but very little effect for graduates of Christian schools (Figure 37).

We also find significant differences in the choices of students to attend religious colleges and universities. Protestant Christian school graduates are almost four times more likely to attend a Protestant Christian university than a non-religious university (Figure 38), a significant effect that holds even after controlling for parent characteristics. We also find that the overall choice of graduates to attend a religious college or university, as opposed to a non-religious college or university, is strongly influenced by school type. While Protestant Christian school graduates are significantly more likely to attend a religious college or university, Catholic school graduates make that choice about the same rate as their public school and non-religious private school peers.

We also examine the types of post-secondary choices by the research activity of the school and types of programs offered, which of course are often, but not always, related to the difficulty of admission to the school. To compare the rigor of the post-secondary options of Christian school graduates we used matriculation to Carnegie Research I and II Universities; and find Protestant Christian school and homeschool graduates attend these prestigious universities significantly less often than their peers

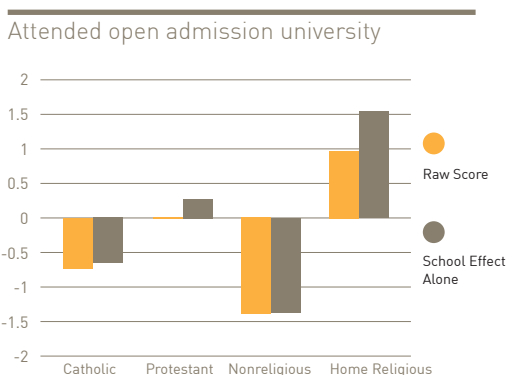


FIGURE 35: Graduates' reported attendance of open admission universities.

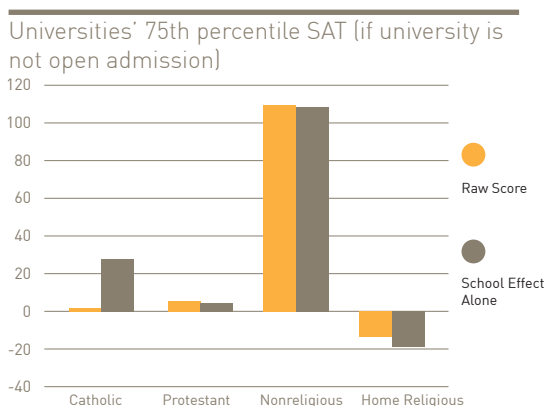


FIGURE 37: Mean SAT scores of admitted students in the universities graduates' reported attending.

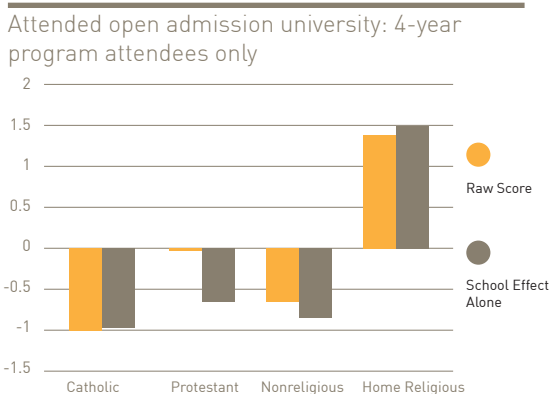


FIGURE 36: Reported attendance of open admission universities by only those graduates who attended a 4-year program.

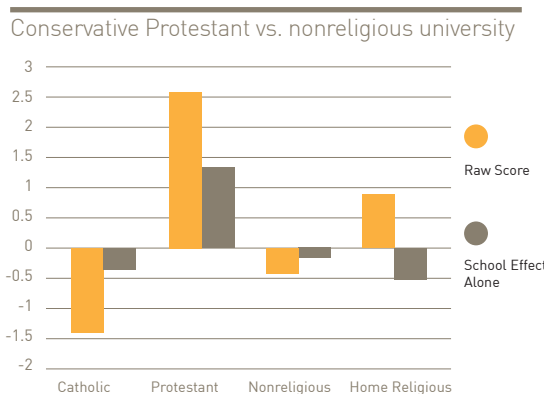


FIGURE 38: Graduates' reported choices to attend religious or nonreligious universities.

(Figure 39). Similarly, graduates of Protestant Christian schools are significantly more likely to attend universities and colleges that offer Baccalaureate degrees as their highest degree than universities in which a doctoral degree is offered (Figure 40).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

THE CHOICES GRADUATES are making for post-secondary education may be influencing

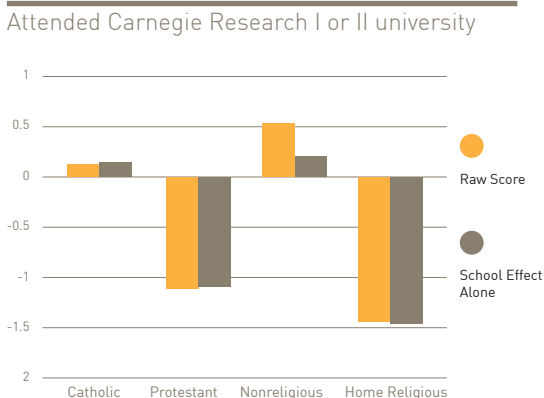


FIGURE 39: Graduates' reported attendance at Carnegie Research I and II universities.

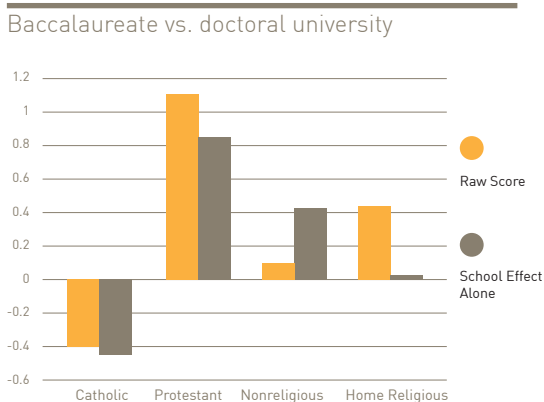


FIGURE 40: Graduates' reported attendance at schools that offer Baccalaureate or doctoral degrees as the highest degree offered.

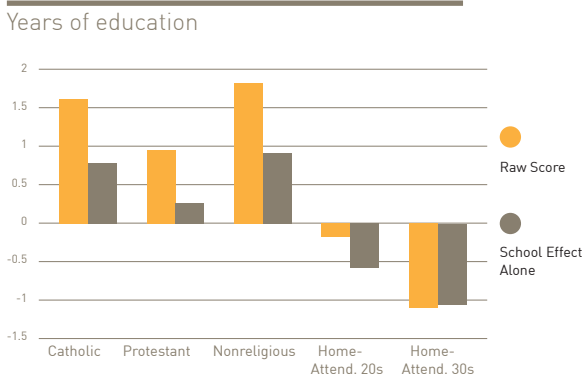


FIGURE 41: Graduates' reported years of education.

eventual educational attainment, as Catholic school and non-religious private school graduates show a distinct advantage in years of education, with Protestant Christian school graduates no different than their public school peers on this measure (Figure 41). While attending a private school does increase the likelihood that graduates will attain a college degree (Figure 42), Protestant Christian school graduates are less likely to attain higher degrees (Figure 43).

As we analyzed the data and compared them to the research and rhetoric surrounding Protestant Christian schools, we did not find the damaging anti-intellectual effect that many would say is a product of Protestant Christian schooling. However, we do assert that Protestant Christian schools can and should consider offering more rigorous college preparatory education, including the promotion of selective non-religious colleges. After all, if these schools are adequately preparing students to harbor the life-long religious commitments we found in this study, parents should not fear sending their children into secular colleges and universities.

We also acknowledge that many stakeholders in Protestant Christian schools hesitate to focus too much on academics, fearing that in the process schools will lose their distinctive commitment to faith development. However, as we found in

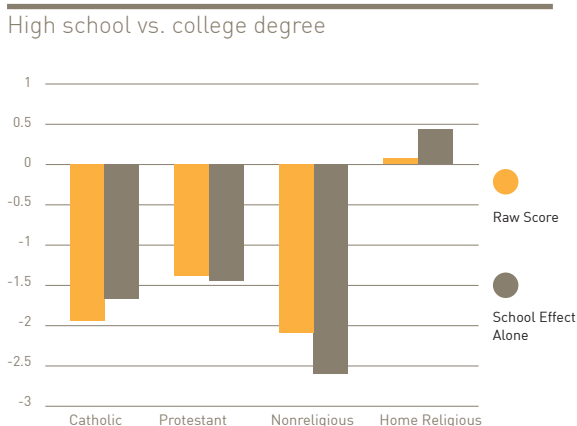


FIGURE 42: Graduates' reported high school or college degrees attained.

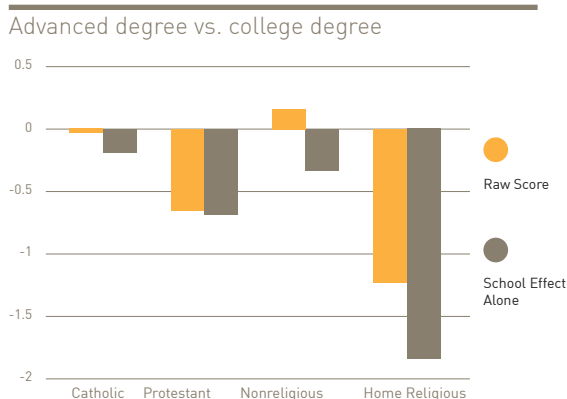


FIGURE 43: Graduates' reported college or advanced degrees attained.

our qualitative studies, academic rigor need not be sacrificed on account of either faith development or commitment to cultural engagement. In the study of two Christian schools on the East Coast (see Appendix D), the Protestant Christian school has found a way to create a culture in which students are pursuing both intellectual development and spiritual encounter with the Christian faith. These students report teachers who routinely make the connection between the development of the students' minds and their understanding of God and their own humanity created in His image. In this school, teachers and administrators understand and practice the assumption that development of a real faith, which translates into students' engagement with the world, depends on their intellectual development. Similarly, this school believes that in order for their students to lead in ways that could impact culture, they must be prepared to enter the most selective colleges; therefore, despite its small size, the school provides an intense academic program and extensive A.P. course offerings. The clarity of and commitment to the mission of this school by all of its stakeholders has allowed for a unique culture to be created in which congruence between the three outcomes measured by the Cardus Education Survey—spiritual formation, cultural engagement, and academic achievement—is apparent. It is likely that other such schools are operating throughout the U.S. and Canada, and these schools should be evidence that the academic program of a private school need not be watered down for the sake of developing Christian faith.



DISCUSSION

While this study has allowed for the establishment of quality benchmarks, it has also raised many questions that are centrally important for educational systems. Christian schools are succeeding in many areas, and falling short in others. As with other academic institutions, the research is clear that Christian schools have room to improve. For Christian education stakeholders both within and outside of school systems, the quest is to improve education and society as a whole; following are discussion points that will help.

A Bigger Vision

IT'S A POPULAR sentiment, often heard from pulpits: strengthening the family is the way to strengthen communities and, indeed, all of society. We know that the erosion of families has negatively affected many aspects of public life, and we know the importance of stable families for raising productive members of society. Because of this, we are encouraged to find that Protestant Christian school graduates are creating and sustaining solid families, even when the school's impact is considered apart from the characteristics of a graduate's parents. This is without doubt an added value for children attending Protestant Christian schools and therefore the communities in which these graduates live. We wonder if Protestant Christian schools might in fact be underestimating the cultural impact their graduates might have apart from their families. It is clear that the value Protestant Christian schools are placing on the family is being realized in their graduates.

As encouraging as those findings are, we wonder if Christian schools might yet be able to impact culture more directly without losing the effect of stable families.

1. What if Christian school leaders were more audacious in their goals, expecting students to be unwaveringly committed both to their families and to being a part of culture through politics, the arts, and the world of ideas?
2. If Christian schools want to promote those bold outcomes, will they be willing to make the structural changes necessary to do so?

3. What if Christian schools would inspire students to develop a “whole gospel” mindset—reverence for creation, acknowledgment of the fall, worship of the Redeemer, and a taste for restoration—rather than a more narrowly-focused understanding of Biblical roles as husbands, wives, fathers, mothers?
4. What if students were better equipped to navigate the varied paths of cultural change?
5. What if Christian school graduates were better connected to one another, across both large countries and small communities?
6. What if Christian school graduates could see themselves as part of an esteemed network, linked to individuals proud of their schools and their alliance with other Christian school graduates?

Refine the theology; establish the pedagogy; then teach students how to understand and lead culture. This, we believe, is how Christian schools can multiply the effectiveness of their graduates in circles as small as marriages, as large as countries.

Commitment to Change

IF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS would be so bold as to embark on this path, we also wonder:

7. What structures and pedagogy must be in place for schools to more thoroughly develop culture engagement in their graduates?
8. What other innovative programs can serve as replicable models?
9. With Protestant Christian school graduates exemplifying compliance in culture, do these schools and their leaders need to introduce more calculated risk-taking into a pedagogy heavy on diligence?

While our research has not directly examined pedagogy, we wonder if more effective means of cultivating critical thought could take place in Christian schools as a means to effecting culture more meaningfully. If this is the case, of course, new methods of training teachers and of preparing and selecting leaders for Christian schools would be needed.

Congruence of Purpose: Faith, Intellect, and Culture

AS WE ANALYZE the data it becomes clear that a dichotomy, possibly a false dichotomy, is present in Christian schools.

10. Have Protestant Christian schools set the bar too low with regard to academic program and developing students’ intellect, and have Catholic schools done the same in their students’ spiritual growth?

Where Catholic schools are sacrificing faith for intellect, the Protestant schools are seemingly deemphasizing academic program for the development of religiosity. While this study did not aim to determine the interconnectedness of these two thrusts in schools, we assert that a Christian school cannot most effectively deliver a quality academic program without students encountering the Christian faith in its entirety, understanding that education aims to develop an understanding of humanity that reveals God in His creation.

11. Without an understanding of the Gospel—creation through consummation—can education ever be more than utilitarian?

While Catholic schools are certainly providing more rigorous programs and sending their graduates to more prestigious colleges and universities, for which they should be commended, their lack of impact in religious teachings is clear. Similarly, while Protestant Christian schools report uncommon religious discipline, their graduates’ involvement in culture falls somewhere short of the advertised outcome of “world-changing.” We wonder how intellectually sound, culturally engaged Christians can be a product of Christian schools without greater attention to the interconnectedness of faith, intellect, and culture.

Christians’ Cultural Engagement

A WELL-DEVELOPED ARRAY of spiritual practices, even those that persist into adulthood, is not the same as a well-developed faith. While it is almost impossible to measure the development of faith without measuring behaviors, we wonder:

12. Are Protestant Christian schools focusing on pietistic behaviors rather than a systematic theology? Are they therefore unable to produce graduates who are truly engaged in culture?

“Could Protestant Christian schools be entering a phase of greater focus on academic outcomes?”

13. While our liturgical behaviors do eventually create our loves and shape our lives (Smith, 2010), should schools be emphasizing a more coherent, robust, intellectual encounter with theology in order to develop life-long faith in their graduates?

While we do not want to minimize the importance of prayer and Bible reading, we do want to consider a wider view of spiritual development—a distinctive ethos in which faith, intellect, and cultural engagement are deeply intertwined, so that Christian school graduates are able to engage culture in ways that are consistent with the Christian faith.

Discipleship

WE RECOGNIZE THE differing philosophies of Christian schools with regard to the faith professions of their student bodies. While many Christian schools are strictly covenantal—all students must sign a statement of faith before enrolling—other schools take a very different approach, a missional approach in which the school is clear about its religious foundations but reaches out to the larger community by deliberately avoiding statements of faith. On philosophical grounds, these approaches clearly have ramifications on how discipleship should be undertaken within the school program. We wonder, however, if the philosophical differences are taking root in the academic program, as one would assume, or if schools are underestimating this difference in the planning for and implementation of their program. Similarly, we wonder if these schools are producing graduates with distinctly different affinities and dispositions. While this study did not attempt to measure these differences, we find the impact of school philosophy on school program and outcomes to be a compelling topic.

A New Era?

IS CHANGE ON the horizon for Protestant Christian schools? The upward mobility of evangelical Christians in the past twenty years, similar to that of the Catholics a generation before, may be demanding greater attention to intellectual development. Could Protestant schools be entering a phase of greater focus on academic outcomes? School administrators perceive (Figure 17, p. 23) that parents seek academic excellence as the second-highest school priority, behind character development but ahead of religious development and Christian worldview. If faith development is the most important reason parents choose Christian schools, it seems they are now seeking academic development nearly as much, according to school leaders' reports. In light of this finding, we are careful to acknowledge the fear that many Protestant Christian schools have about losing their distinctive emphasis on faith for a new emphasis on the development of rigorous academic standards. To this end, this research suggests that schools are very capable of delivering what they emphasize.

So, on the simplest level, we do believe Protestant Christian schools can provide both an academically excellent program and the religious program that has produced distinctive graduates. Our qualitative research (see Appendix D) reveals examples of Christian schools that are taking this charge seriously, and are able to deliver on their promise of academic excellence and the development of faith. Our data show that appropriately planned and delivered programs enhance students' intellectual and spiritual acumen, and do so in a way that develops not only individualistic piety, but a sophisticated public theology that impacts communities more substantially than the average Christian school has been shown to do. Leaders of these schools pay close attention to how the development of the faith is central to the development of the intellect, believing schools cannot justly develop one without the other. It is schools such as these that may serve as examples for other Christian schools on the verge of having greater impact in the lives of their students and culture at large.

We acknowledge the opportunity that Christian schools, especially those in the U.S., have in their ability to initiate innovative programs. While public schools are necessarily entrenched in federal and state regulations, and therefore encounter greater challenge in developing unique programs and curricula, Christian schools are not constrained by those same regulations. It might be, then, that Christian schools are incubators for educational innovation in ways that we have not previously acknowledged. If Christian schools are indeed providing a quality product, which our research categorically supports, perhaps these schools can serve the public good in this way, too.



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APPENDIX A

Introduction to Cardus

CARDUS (root: *cardo*, the axis or main street of Roman cities) is a think tank dedicated to the renewal of North American social architecture. Drawing on more than 2,000 years of Christian social thought, Cardus works to enrich and challenge public debate through research, events, and publications, for the common good.



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Cardus staff and fellows regularly write for national newspapers and journals (www.cardus.ca/columns).



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APPENDIX B

Research Team

THE RESEARCH TEAM worked in a collaborative manner in overseeing the survey design, commissioning the qualitative research, and providing the analysis which undergirds this report. Ray Pennings served as the chair and coordinator of this committee; Dr. Deani Van Pelt as the liaison with the qualitative research teams; and Dr. Kathryn Wiens as “the pen” for this report. The Research Team wishes to acknowledge the significant contribution provided by various advisors who joined us for some of our meetings, the qualitative research teams, and those who attended the Washington consultations in May 2011 for their valuable feedback and input into this report. We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of Dan Postma who served as the copy editor and Kathryn de Ruijter for the layout and design work on this project.



RAY PENNINGGS (B.A., McMaster University; M.A., Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary) is Senior Fellow and Director of Research at Cardus, working out of the Calgary office. Pennings is one of Canada’s top authorities in industrial relations, as well as public policy, political activism, and political affairs generally. He is one of the world’s leading authorities on “applied Calvinism” and the theology of Puritan and Calvinist groups in politics and civil society. His publications include *Church and Caesar: A Legal Primer for Office-Bearers* (2008), several chapters in *Living for God’s Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism* (2008) and “Calvin the Revolutionary” in *Calvin: Theologian and Reformer* (2010). Pennings serves as a teaching elder in the Free Reformed Church in Calgary and Director of the founding board of the Paideia Center for Public Theology. He has served on many boards including as Chair of the Board of Governors of Redeemer University College (2007-2010) and as Founding President of Worldwide Christian Schools.



JOHN SEEL (B.A., Austin College; M.Div., Covenant Theological Seminary; Ph.D., University of Maryland College Park) is a Senior Fellow with Cardus and president of Vancouver and Los Angeles-based Transcend Entertainment, a division of nCore Media, a super computer company that provides high performance computing solutions to the entertainment industry for computer generated images and special effects. Seel is a cultural renewal entrepreneur—putting legs on visions that foster human flourishing and the common good. John’s career combines business, education, theology, and cultural sociology. He was actively involved in the founding of “The Williamsburg Charter”, The Trinity Forum, the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia, and The Cambridge School of Dallas. John is a founding board member of the Council on Educational Standards & Accountability. He serves on the Advisory Board of The Carpenter’s Fund, an investment fund to alleviate global poverty and is a Senior Advisor to the Wedgwood Circle, an angel investment firm investing in art and entertainment. Seel is a contributing editor to Critique magazine as well as *The Journal*, a publication of the Society for Classical Learning. He is the author of several books, including *Parenting Without Perfection: Being a Kingdom Influence in a Toxic World*.



DEANI A. NEVEN VAN PELT (B.Com, McMaster University; B.Ed., University of Toronto; M.Ed., University of Western Ontario; Ph.D., University of Western Ontario) is Associate Professor of Education at Redeemer University College where she serves as Director of Teacher Education. A former teacher in math and business departments of public and private secondary schools, she now instructs courses in social and legal foundations of education. As primary researcher and co-investigator in several international collaborations, her education policy research on private schooling, religious schooling, and home schooling has been featured by national media. She authored an award-winning thesis, *Charlotte Mason's Design for Education*, and through grants received from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, together with colleagues, has recently released the *Charlotte Mason Digital Collection*.



DAVID SIKKINK (B.A., Bethel College; M.A., University of North Carolina Chapel Hill; Ph.D., University of North Carolina Chapel Hill) has been at the University of Notre Dame since 1999. His main research interests are in education, religion, and politics. His dissertation explained how religious and community factors shape views of schooling for children, including parents' choice of private schooling and opposition to public schools. It also showed how differences in the organization of public, magnet, Catholic, and other religious schools affect parents' participation in school, which in turn affects participation in community and political life. An associate professor in the sociology department, he is also a Fellow in the Center for the Study of Religion at UND as well as the Institute for Educational Initiatives. Sikkink has co-authored a paper with Jennifer Glanville on the pathways from religious participation of teenagers to educational outcomes. This article, forthcoming in *The Sociological Quarterly*, argues that religious participation affects social capital and extracurricular participation of teenagers, which in turn lead to better educational outcomes. David's publications in religion and education include "The Social Sources of Alienation from Public Schools" (*Social Forces*).



KATHRYN L. WIENS (B.A., University of St. Thomas; M.A., University of St. Thomas; Ph.D., Boston University) has served in both suburban and urban public and independent schools as a classroom teacher and school system administrator. Currently, she works as the Associate Director of the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability and as an adjunct professor at Wheaton College in both the science and education departments. Wiens holds a doctorate in education policy, planning, and administration from Boston University. She is the author of numerous articles and of the book, *Boys Who Achieve: An Examination of Single-Sex Classes in a Coeducational College Preparatory School*.

APPENDIX C: Project Funding and Parameters

THE CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY originated with a symposium on the relationship between education and culture change, held on December 6-7, 2007. That symposium identified various research gaps regarding the state of K-12 Christian education in North America and the lack of reference benchmark data.

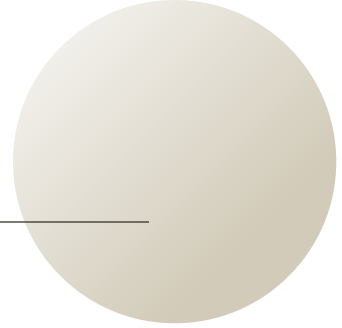
Cardus developed a research proposal and secured funding from the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation based in Grand Rapids, MI; the William Voortman Foundation based in Hamilton, ON; and the Van Lunen Foundation based in Chicago, IL. A research partnership was established with University of Notre Dame which included an in-kind contribution to the project. The combined value of the funded and in-kind contributions to the project was \$1,150,000. The primary deliverable promised to funders was the gathering and publication of quantitative and qualitative data answering the core research question. The publication of this report marks the completion of Phase I of this project.

The participation and endorsement of various school associations was also solicited in the course of data collection. In three cases, cost-recovery funding was received from the associations for the extra costs involved in providing association-specific reports of the data collected.

Initial funding has been secured and fundraising continues for Phase II of this project. The focus of this phase will be “continuing the conversation”—facilitating discussion and events which help local schools utilize these data, consider their own programs in the context of these benchmarks, and identify lessons which might be applied at the local level. Further research is also being contemplated and will be undertaken as funding allows.

As the development of Phase II remains a work in progress, readers are invited to visit our website for the current status of this project:

www.carduseducationsurvey.com



APPENDIX D: Research Methodology

THE CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY (CES) used a mixed-methods design to better understand the academic, spiritual, and cultural outcomes of Christian education in North America. Over a two-year period, five research teams concurrently implemented research projects to answer the question of this project: to what extent are the motivations and outcomes of Christians schools aligned in academic, spiritual, and cultural domains?

Quantitative Study

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER

Dr. David Sikkink, University of Notre Dame

RESEARCH GOALS

THE QUANTITATIVE PORTION of this research study had several goals. First, the study sought to provide evidence of the life directions of graduates of Catholic and Protestant Christian schools in the United States and Canada. The survey of graduates—which included participants from Catholic, Protestant, non-religious private, public, and homeschool graduates—focused on educational and occupational attainment, civic and political engagement, spiritual formation, marriage and family as well as social psychological outcomes in the young adult years. It also surveyed graduates about their experience of high school and asked graduates to provide family background characteristics, including parent’s education, family structure while in high school, relationship with parents, etc. A second data collection effort surveyed a random sample of Catholic and Protestant Christian school administrators. This included both a random sample of Christian schools and separate oversamples of schools associated with the Association of Christian School International, Christian Schools International, and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Schools. By interviewing principals and headmasters of Catholic and Protestant schools, the researchers aimed to more deeply understand the goals, plans, and challenges facing Christian schools today.

METHODOLOGY

REGARDING GRADUATES, THE study used two distinct web-based surveys. First, schooling history questions were included in the Science of Generosity Survey, conducted in 2010. This survey was based on a random sample of Americans provided by one of the most respected internet survey firms, Knowledge Networks (KN). KN panel respondents participate in internet surveys for three to five years. The Science of Generosity Survey included nearly 2,000 randomly sampled Americans from the internet panel who completed a 60-minute survey. The survey included measures of prosocial attitudes and practices, organizational involvement, and civic and political engagement and beliefs. Near the end of the survey participants were asked what type of high school they attended. Schooling options included public, Catholic, conservative Protestant or “Christian school,” other Christian, non-Christian religious, nonreligious private, or homeschool. Respondents that completed the hour-long survey received a payment of twenty dollars. For this study, we limited the sample to respondents aged 23-49 who indicated that they had graduated from high school. With appropriate weights the sample should closely represent high school graduates between 23-49 years of age residing in the United States, especially on important demographic variables.

The second survey of a random sample of U.S. graduates was also provided by Knowledge Networks. The difference is that a large oversample of private school graduates was selected from the Knowledge Networks internet panel. In addition, the random sample was limited to respondents between 23 and 40 years of age who had graduated from high school. Again, schooling history information included whether the respondent had primarily attended a Catholic, conservative Protestant or “Christian school,” another type of Christian school, a non-Christian religious school, a nonreligious school, or a home school. About 1,000 of the respondents had primarily attended a private elementary or high school,

and about 500 had primarily attended public school. Respondents completed a half-hour survey that included questions on schooling history and experiences, evaluation of their high school, family background, occupational goals, current education and occupation, marriage and family, religious and spiritual involvement, and civic and political engagement. KN profile and public affairs information previously collected about panel respondents was also merged into the survey dataset. In addition, since the survey asked the college or university attended by the respondent, government data on colleges and universities available in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Survey was merged into the final dataset.

The resulting datasets were analyzed using nested regression analyses to predict outcomes related to socio-economic status, personality and mental health, prosocial attitudes and behavior, including volunteer, civic engagement, and political participation. For each dependent variable, the first model included binary variables related to type of schooling—private elementary and public high school, Catholic high school, conservative Protestant or “Christian school,” other Christian school, nonreligious school, and home school. Those who primarily attended public elementary and high school served as the comparison group. The home school category is split into home schoolers whose mother attended religious services regularly and those whose mother did not attend religious services regularly. A binary variable is then entered into the models for “religious” homeschoolers and “nonreligious” homeschoolers.

The second model added demographic variables, including gender, race, and age, as well as numerous family background characteristics. Specifically, the education, religious tradition, religious service attendance, and volunteering habits of respondent’s mother and father are included as controls. How close the respondent was to their mother and father and whether their father or mother pushed the respondent academically is also included in the models. The marital status and living arrangement when the respondent was in high school is also controlled. In particular, a variable is included for respondents who were raised by both biological parents and variables for the number of years that respondents lived with each biological parent.

Missing values were imputed using multiple imputation techniques. Appropriate regression models (linear, logistic, and multinomial) were used depending on the type of dependent variable. The first regression model for each dependent variable, which included only the binary variables for high school type, included weights appropriate for comparing school sectors. Coefficients from the regression models are presented in the graphs in this report. Smaller coefficients or those with higher standard errors should be considered essentially identical to zero (this is reflected in the discussion of findings in this report). Given the small sample sizes of all but the Catholic sector, coefficients in the tables are considered significant if the p-value is less than .1.

Besides the graduate data, this report uses data from the Cardus Education Survey of Catholic and Protestant school principals or headmasters. Schools were randomly selected to participate in the administrator study. In the U.S., the Private School Survey data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics was used as a sampling frame for Catholic and Protestant schools. A total of 80 counties were randomly selected proportionate to the number of schools in the county. However, the eight counties with the largest number of Catholic and Protestant schools were selected with certainty. In counties with more than ten targeted schools, ten schools were randomly selected. In counties with less than ten schools, all schools in the county were selected. A total of 424 schools were randomly selected.

In Canada, a list of private Catholic or Protestant (mostly Protestant) schools was constructed using lists available from each province. Sixty municipal areas were randomly selected proportionate to the number of private religious schools in the area. However, the two municipal areas with the highest number of private religious schools were selected with certainty. A total of 85 schools were randomly selected in Canada.

Administrators were asked to complete a 45-minute survey available online. The survey covered topics such as the goals and mission of the school, family background of students and parent goals and involvement in school, teaching philosophy, school climate, enrollment, curriculum and school requirements, personnel, governance and administrative structure, budget, and connections to other organizations.

Qualitative Study 1: Cultural Awareness and Engagement of Christian High School Students

RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Harro Van Brummelen, Professor and Acting Dean, School of Education, Trinity Western University

Mr. Robert Koole, Instructor of Education, Trinity Western University

RESEARCH GOALS

THIS STUDY AIMED to document the ways in which Catholic and Protestant Christian schools involve their students in society and culture, whether and to what extent Christian school students are educated in such a way that they isolated from the larger society, whether they are taught to think critically and systematically about social issues, and whether the range of religious views among schools studied reflected the ways in which the schools went about the aforementioned subjects.

METHODOLOGY

THE STUDY INVOLVED 18 secondary schools in Alberta, British Columbia, and Washington State. The participant schools were chosen from representative private religious schools. The schools participating ranged in size: five schools had small grade 12 enrollments (10-25), five were medium-sized (26-75 seniors), and eight were classified as large (more than 75 seniors). The schools also were diverse in geographic setting: Three schools were in rural communities, three in small cities, six in suburban settings, and six in urban locations. The schools also varied in the ways in which revenue was generated. The schools in Washington State received no government funding, while the schools in British Columbia received 50% of operating costs from the public school district in which they are located. Three of the schools in Alberta received similar partial funding to those in British Columbia. The Catholic High School in Alberta was fully funded by the government within a Catholic Separate School Board.

In each of the 18 schools a series of interviews was conducted by one of the co-investigators. The principal of the school was interviewed along with two teachers and groups of four to six students. In each school, the principal was asked to select two teachers who were active in seeking and implementing cultural awareness and engagement for students in the school. The principal was also asked to identify a cross-section of four to six grade 12 students who would represent a range of abilities. The interview questions related to the school's efforts to provide and promote learning experiences that related to cultural awareness and involvement. Additionally, principals and teachers were asked about the response and support they received with respect to their endeavors. Students were also asked to describe what they considered to be the most important issues facing society and to reveal their own personal hopes and goals for the future. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded. Principals and teachers were sent transcripts of their interviews and given the opportunity to make revisions.

Qualitative Study 2: Growing Thinking Christians: Outcomes of Christian Education

RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Patty LeBlanc, Associate Professor of Education, Southeastern University

Dr. Patty Slaughter, Associate Professor of Psychology, Southeastern University

RESEARCH GOALS

THIS RESEARCH STUDY had the goal of measuring the outcomes of public and Christian schooling in students attending a university in the Southeastern United States. This University is affiliated with the Pentecostal religious tradition. Approximately half of this college's undergraduate students ($n=2950$ in fall 2009) graduated from Christian secondary schools or were home educated. With a large sample of students, this study aimed to more deeply understand students' beliefs and attitudes about the impact of their education on their worldview, cultural understanding, spiritual formation, and academic achievement. While this study did have a limited scope due to the sample of students having chosen to attend a private Pentecostal Christian college, the large sample of students provided a reliable contrast between the experiences and outcomes of students educated in Christian schools versus their peers educated in a public school setting.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS study were recruited via email requesting participation in a survey developed by the researchers. In all, 253 students participated in the online survey. From that sample, 183 surveys were analyzed. Small sample groups, such as those students who were homeschooled or attended a non-religious private school, were filtered out of the sample. Additionally, 127 face-to-face interviews were conducted by graduate and undergraduate students who were trained by the researchers and given contact information to solicit participation in interviews from those who had taken the online survey. Interviews were recorded and summarized, then emergent themes were coded and analyzed.

Qualitative Study 3: Race Relations in an Evangelical and a Catholic High School

RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Cara Stillings Candal, Assistant Research Professor, Boston University

Dr. Charles L. Glenn, Professor and Chair of Educational Administration & Policy Department and Fellow of the University Professors Program, Boston University

RESEARCH GOALS

THIS STUDY SOUGHT to understand whether faith-based schools bridged or exacerbated racial divides common in school settings and larger society. Using two urban secondary schools which represented different traditions of Christian education, one Roman Catholic and the other non-denominational Evangelical, the researchers aimed to understand the ways in which faith traditions might influence how youth perceived and related to one another and to the diverse society outside their schools. In addition to determining the extent to which students in each school integrated with one another, this study sought to identify the distinctives of each school that catalyzed (or impeded) integration, especially as they related to the unique Christian worldview of the school.

METHODOLOGY

THE PRIMARY RESEARCH implemented a mixed-methods, case study approach. First, using sociograms/open response surveys, the initial integration information was collected. Following this portion of the research, focus groups and one-on-one interviews were conducted with over 40 students and 6-10 faculty members in each high school, for a total of 94 total participants in the focus group/interview process. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded.

Two schools in an urban area, one non-denominational Evangelical and the other Roman Catholic, were chosen as research sites, as both were racially and culturally diverse. The Evangelical school had 155 high school students and 27 faculty members; 48% of students in this school participated in the survey. The Catholic school had 254 students and 30 faculty members; 42% of students in this school participated in the survey.

Qualitative Study 4: Faithful Presence: The Christian School Head, Tenure, and Outcomes

RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Jack Beckman, Associate Professor, Covenant College

Dr. James Drexler, Chair of the Teacher Education Program, Covenant College

Dr. Kevin J. Eames, Director of Institutional Research, Covenant College

RESEARCH GOALS

THIS STUDY ENDEAVORED to understand the tenure of Christian school heads and possible causes for the changes in leadership found in many Christian schools, related board and governance structures, and a variety of other factors that would establish a deeper understanding of how educational leadership tenure impacts the roles, professional growth, and pedagogy of faculty as well as the perceived educational outcomes for students.

METHODOLOGY

THIS EXPLORATORY STUDY employed a mixed-methods approach. First, a web-based survey was broadly dispersed to a list of 4,257 addressees, 647 of which fully completed the survey. If bounced email addresses are removed, the participation rate was 18%. The 45-question survey sought to address the dependent variable of time in leadership and number of headship positions held. Items from the *Differentiation of Self Inventory* (Skowron & Freidlander, 1998) related to two scales, the *emotional reactivity* scale and the *I position* scale. Additionally, items from the *Cross-Cultural Role Conflict, Ambiguity, and Overload Scale* (Peterson, et al, 1995) were added to the survey. Thirdly, ten items from the *Northose* (2009) leadership style survey were used. The items were subjected to a principal axis factor analysis using SPSS. The Kaiser Meyer-Okin value was .864, indicating the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor analysis. Four factors were rotated using Promax with Kaiser Normalization. The four factors were 1) Equanimity, 2) Role Strain, 3) Leadership Maturity, and 4) Group-Goal Directedness. Multiple regression was performed to determine the ability of the four leadership factors to predict the two dependent variables.

A purposeful sample of heads was extracted from the group of 647 participants based on the number of positions held and the number of years in leadership positions. Nine heads were selected who had 2-5 years of experience and had 4 or more leadership positions. The second group of nine heads had 25 or more years experience and only one leadership position. These heads were asked to participate in telephone interviews. Of those with short tenure, seven heads participated; six heads with long tenure participated in the interview. The semi-structured interview was modeled after Kvale's (1996) process typology. Each interview was recorded, transcribed by an outside source, and then analyzed.



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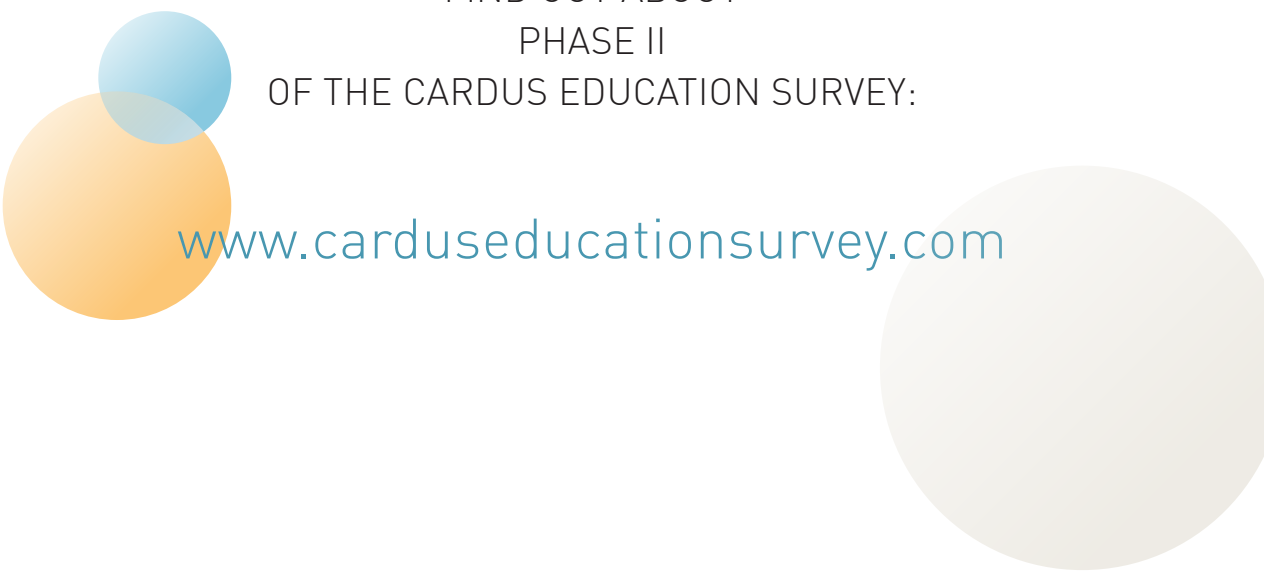
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