Pastors and Principals:
Experts in Faith and Education,
Building Catholic Schools Together

CatholicEducationalResearch.com

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It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

   No statement says all that could be said.  
   No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
   No confession brings perfection.  
   No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the church’s mission.  
   No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

   We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

   We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

   Amen.

Archbishop Oscar Romero
Who is this Guy?

- Teacher in public & Catholic schools
- Catholic school principal in Florida & Ohio
- Experience in Pre-K through undergraduate education
- M.A. in Catholic Educational Leadership, Seton Hall
- Ph.D. Candidate in Catholic Educational Leadership, Catholic University of America
- Doctoral Intern with NCEA & USCCB
- Catholic Education Researcher
- Author - What Makes a “Distinguished Pastor”? *Momentum*, April 2013
- Married 21 yrs. & father of 3 adopted Russian boys

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*Focus of this presentation is on the relationships in a traditional K-8 parish school model
Overview

- Catholic School Leadership:
  - Canon Law
  - What Research Tells Us
    - What’s not working: “So How’s that Working for You?”
    - What’s working
  - Suggestions for the Relationship
  - “Must Haves” for the Relationship
    - Building Roles and Relationships, Goals, and Decision Makers
- Homework
Historical Overview

- From growth of Catholic immigration in the early 1800’s, newly formed parishes were strongly encouraged to build their own schools.
- Catholic school enrollment reached its zenith in 1960’s.
Religious orders were recruited to staff and run the schools

No clear research evidence exists to document the division of school authority
Historical Overview

In 1965, 95% of teachers in Catholic schools were vowed religious with only 5% from the laity. Now that statistic is reversed.

(Cimino, Haney, & O’Keefe, 2002)
The Success of Catholic Schools

- Students who attend Catholic schools ...
  - Attend Mass more
  - Receive sacraments more
  - Financially support their parishes more
  - Pray more
  - Are more active in their faith
  - Are more knowledgeable about their faith

(Convey, 1992; CARA, 2008; Convey, DeFiore, & Schuttloffel, 2009)
Catholic School Leadership

• Canon Law
Catholic School Leadership

- **Canon Law**
  - Under authority of their bishop, pastors are responsible for parishioners:
    - Education
    - Spiritual needs
    - Sacramental needs
  
- As well as administering all of the parish goods in accordance with the law.
- Plus, the pastor decides how this will be accomplished in his parish.
Catholic School Leadership

- Superintendents are advisors to bishops and pastors
- School principals are employees of the parish ... and therefore, the pastor
• Principal/Pastor relationship is critical to school success

(Wojcicki, 1982)
To take on a role of leadership means to endure suffering

(Chris Lowney)
Pastors are often in the impossible situation of trying to fulfill a multiplicity of conflicting roles

(Wojcicki, 1982)
Seminary training does not equip a pastor to run a school

(Rev. Thomas, 1996)

USCCB Handbook for Pastors and Parish School Committees
Pastors' lack of training and knowledge in education theory, policy, and practice was a significant source of conflict and had a negative affect on the school community.

(Wojcicki, 1982; Osuji, 1995; Brock & Fraser, 2001; Para, 2008; Rigg, 2009)
Research from pastors shows conflict as ...

• Some pastors believe schools are an unnecessary waste of resources

• Pastors hold a extraordinary tight reign on all aspects of the school

• Other pastors being simply indifferent and ignore the school

• Some pastors fail to provide the principal with support to do the job

(Geelan, 2000; Shafer, 2002)
Research on Catholic Schools

- **Roles**
- *Principals and pastors actually do not have good understanding of each other's role* (Schafer, 2002)
Research on Catholic Schools

- **Roles**

- The roles of the pastor and principal are often not clearly defined creating conflict

(Wojcicki, 1982; Osuji, 1995; Para, 2008)
Principals can fail to understand the Canon & authority of the pastor over the school

(Weiss, 2007)
Principals lack proper training as the spiritual leader

Pastors lack proper training in educational leadership

(Para, 2008)
• Principals lack proper training as the spiritual leader
Research on Catholic Schools

• So What Works?
Research on Catholic Schools

- Principal/Pastor relationship is critical to school success

(Wojcicki, 1982)
Research on Catholic Schools

Research shows successful principal/pastor relationships ... when each of these leaders brings a particular expertise to the relationship:

- the principal acting as the professional with knowledge and skill as educational leader
- the pastor acting with the faith and knowledge of the Church as spiritual leader

(Gilbert, 1983; Wojcicki, 1983; Geelan, 2000; Brock & Fraser, 2001; Anderson, Boyle, Bray, & Clark, 1990; Weiss, 2007)
Practice Moses Styled Leadership

**Visionary Leadership** (Minority) – Moses in Egypt
- Have a passion & clear vision for Catholic education
- Achieve the “impossible” and succeed where others fail
  - Tuition-free tithing schools; Opening thriving schools in diocese w/ closure; Rebuild hurricane ravaged schools; Opening themed schools

**Empowerment Leadership** (Majority) – Moses in Desert
- Defer authority to the principal and provide them support & autonomy to run the school

(King, 2012; King 2013)
Research on NCEA Distinguished Pastors

- Make high commitment of personal time and parish resources to their schools
- Have a passion & clear vision for Catholic education
- Respect, trust, and support their principal
- Defer authority to the principal and provide them autonomy to run the school
- Available with their time to the principal and willing to have honest discussions

(King, 2012; King 2013)
Pastors who have experience with full-time work in schools show a strong connection to successfully leading schools.

- 2/3 of NCEA Distinguished Pastor Award winners had fulltime school experience

(King, 2012)
Building Roles and Relationships

• Handbook for Pastors

Archdiocese of Chicago, 2012
http://ocs.archchicago.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=uTab_lZbETE%3d&tabid=13156
Suggestions for the Relationship

- Pastors need to adopt either ...
  - Visionary Leadership
  - Empowerment Leadership

- Be present! (In formal and informal ways)

- Pastors need to participate in educational professional development like ...
  - NCEA Convention
  - Pastor & education workshops
  - Education related literature (Momentum, Educational Leadership, etc.)
Suggestions for the Relationship

- Principals need to ...
  - Keep pastors well informed
  - Be professional
  - Develop spiritual leadership skills
  - Make pastors welcome and invite them
    - to drop by staff meetings
    - to speak with classes
    - to walk-through and visit classes
    - to fun school events
    - to greet kids with you in the morning
      (Don’t assume they know they are always invited!)

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Suggestions for the Relationship

- Pastors & Principals need to ...
  - Have a common meeting time
  - Be publicly seen together
  - Always agree in front of others
    - (Differences are for behind closed doors)
  - Pray together

- Diocesan offices should ...
  - Host a retreat for new pastor/principal teams (...old teams too)
  - Help establish roles & relationships
“Must Haves” for the Relationship

• What if ...
  • A CEO and board of trustees never discussed the organization’s goals?
  • A husband and wife never talked about their feelings and concerns?
  • Nuclear armed countries never discussed what aggravated them?
“Must Haves” for the Relationship

• What if ...

• A pastor and principal never discussed their vision for the school and their expectations of each other?
“Must Haves” for the Relationship

• New pastor/principal teams must spend at least one day in school planning
• Recommended for all teams at least once a year.
“Must Haves” for the Relationship

• One Time discussions (Guides on Website)
  • Building School Vision (T. Sergiovanni)
    • What’s your concept of school?
  • Philosophical Inventory
    • What’s your style of education?
  • *Building Roles and Responsibilities (critical)
    • Who will do what?
    • Expectations and authority
“Must Haves” for the Relationship

- Ongoing Discussions (Guides on Website)
- Pastor/Principal Meeting Agenda
- School Goals
  - SWOT analysis
  - Multiple guides online
  - Annually review 1, 3, & 10 year goals

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Homework

- Downloadable Packet on catholiceducationalresearch.com
Building Faith and Academic Excellence One Child at a Time

NCEA 2013 Convention
Downloads

Downloads from Jim King's presentation:
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Catholic Educational Research and Leadership is dedicated to improving the spiritual and academic development of Catholic school students by engaging their leadership with meaningful content. Over the last one hundred years the art and science of education has vastly progressed in the United States. Keeping priests, seminarians, board members, and other educators current will ensure that students in Catholic schools receive not only the best faith formation but the best academic development as well.

Archbishop Oscar Romero
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of God's work... we plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

A Google Account is required to download the files.
Homework

- Downloadable Packet on catholiceducationalresearch.com

- Who were my consultants on this presentation?
  - A marriage councilor
  - A business project manager
Resources

- NCEA’s Momentum
  http://www.ncea.org/news/momentum/Index.asp
- Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice (Free online viewing)
  www.ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/catholic/index
- Handbook for Pastors - Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools
  http://ocs.archchicago.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=uTab_lZbETE%3d&tabid=1315
- National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools
  www.catholicschoolstandards.org
- From Aspirations to Action: Solutions for America's Catholic Schools
  http://www.theleadershiproundtable.org/TLR/pubs-resources/books.html