



# Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models



Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities



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# Letter from FADICA

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Dear Friends,

As a philanthropic network committed to supporting a vibrant church, FADICA occasionally commissions or conducts research that serves the mission of the Church and furthers dynamic Catholic philanthropic initiatives. FADICA members have supported and initiated a variety of creative responses to the myriad challenges facing Catholic schools. While FADICA was aware of many individual schools and school systems that were trying new things to ensure the sustainability of our cherished schools, we were interested in the big picture. There were many approaches and even more questions. How do these models work? Are some more successful than others? Who is ultimately responsible? How did they ensure the schools remain Catholic?

Determined to find answers, our Catholic Schools member affinity group requested that FADICA survey the evolving governance models and share our findings with FADICA members. This paper is the result of that effort. As we began to circulate it among our members, we were pleasantly surprised by the number of requests we received from others with a passionate interest in Catholic education. I am honored to respond with this expanded version of the original paper.

*Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models* is not a scholarly or academic work, but rather a practical tool to advance the understanding of the growing array of governance models. It is a broad look at the current landscape, but it is not by any means exhaustive. New models are being developed and longstanding models are being adapted as I write!

The report does not favor one model over another. There is clearly no single model that meets the diverse needs of all Catholic schools. In laying out options designed by creative and dedicated people all over the country, we hope to demystify governance and illuminate the opportunities and challenges of its many manifestations. Our hope is that this paper contributes towards the goal of ensuring the highest quality Catholic education for as many young students as possible.

Research for this paper was completed in August 2014. We recognize that Catholic education and the new models described herein are dynamic and responsive. Therefore, FADICA will continue to follow these and other models and share periodic updates.

We welcome your input and questions. Please contact us at (202) 223-3550 or [info@fadica.org](mailto:info@fadica.org) if you would like more information about FADICA and its programs.

Sincerely,



Alexia K. Kelley  
President

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# Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models

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For years, Catholic schools have adhered to a fairly standard style of governance. Elementary schools were attached to local parishes and governed entirely by a pastor, who occasionally received advice from a board, council or commission. High schools for the most part were either established by the diocese and governed by the bishop, or established and governed by a religious order. However, as Catholic schools across the country have struggled to survive or sustain themselves, new and innovative forms of governance have emerged to breathe life into parish and diocesan schools. These governance models are evolving rapidly, and no two allocate governing authority in quite the same way.

*Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models* is a direct response to requests from philanthropic leaders interested in the sustainability of Catholic schools. Its purpose is to clearly outline a range of Catholic school governance models and related issues, and to illuminate the current landscape. The report does not advocate for one specific type of governance, but calls attention to the diversity of the field, offers options and encourages creativity. It is a practical tool and not a scholarly work. Nevertheless, the appendix includes an annotated bibliography, a glossary of terms and contact information for the educators responsible for the models described throughout the document.

*Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models* focuses on the **governance** of a high-level policy-making authority rather than the day-to-day **administration** by a local entity. In doing so, the paper describes only new models for how high level policy and decisions are developed, not how they are functionally implemented. And to facilitate comparison, it includes parish and diocesan schools, but not those established by a religious order.

In the context of Catholic schools, governance roles encompass five general categories. They are planning, policy, finance, public relations, and evaluation. The governing body may also guide issues related to spirituality and Catholic identity.

Actual governing authority generally falls to one of three entities: a local pastor or canonical administrator; a bishop or his designee (e.g., staff in the diocesan office); or a board. Because canon law allows ecclesial officials to delegate responsibilities at their discretion, infinite configurations of authority are possible. Therefore, in many cases no one entity controls governing functions.

Depending on the extent to which a canonical authority delegates power to a board, four general categories are possible. They are advisory, consultative, limited jurisdiction and full authority.

New governance models require the careful application of canon law to ensure schools maintain their critical Catholic qualities. Nonetheless, they may exercise broad flexibility within the bounds of canon law. Canonically, a school is considered “Catholic” if it is directed by a competent ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person, or it is recognized in writing as Catholic by a competent ecclesiastical authority. Despite many interpretations and variations, the local bishop has the ultimate authority over any given Catholic school. The models described in the paper operate with some explicit agreement between the diocese, parish and, at times, a non-ecclesial third party.

There is a great range of Catholic parish and diocesan school governance models and related issues that illuminate the current landscape. They are represented by fifteen unique models of Catholic schools and

systems across the country, described in thumbnail sketches throughout the paper.

A **matrix** is used to organize research findings and recognize the many complex configurations of governance and the multiple actors involved. It depicts the models examined along two axes: **executive vs collegial governance** on the x-axis, and **local vs central governance** on the y-axis.

The matrix is merely a tool to help visualize and understand the comparable components of the many models. It is not an effort to prioritize, rank or advocate one section over another. Clearly, different models emerge in response to different problems and contexts, and each succeeds or fails in unique ways. The matrix is, above all, a menu of options that underscores diversity and invites creativity.

Placement on the sliding scales of the axes was based on conversations with school leaders, an online survey, and publically available information, including websites and strategic plans. In general, the researchers assessed who the governing actors were, which specific duties they oversaw, and the chain of command between them. That data was supplemented with information about the environment or context within which each model emerged, and from self-reported successes and challenges. Placing the models on a matrix clarifies both their similarities and nuanced differences.

In Catholic schools, **executive governance** vests authority in an individual, traditionally the pastor. **Collegial governance** entails a group, such as a board of directors or a religious congregation. Complete executive or collegial governance is rare and most models fall within the broad spectrum between the two extremes.

A strong, competent executive can lead a school system to great success, and potentially turn around a floundering school quickly. Conversely, an unskilled executive with extensive and diverse responsibilities may have limited time and expertise to devote to governance and administration.

Collegial governance marshals the talents of diverse individuals with varied expertise to work collaboratively on creative, effective solutions. Participants can

give the community a sense of ownership over the school that may be lacking in the executive system. Nonetheless, board members may lack training and expertise and a collegial body may be stymied by conflicting priorities and opinions.

**Local governance** takes place on a school-to-school basis, detached from a larger system, such as a diocese. **Central governance** vests authority in a single office that oversees multiple schools. As with executive and collegial indicators, complete local or central control is rare. Models on the broad spectrum include parish, diocesan and private, independent schools operating independently or in collaboration, consortium or network with others.

Local control is an example of the principle of subsidiarity. It allows school leaders to be responsive to specific needs and the unique environment of their school. It also allows the community and parish to feel invested in the success of the school. The limitations of local control include strained financial and personnel resources, limited opportunity to share best practices, and potential lax accountability for financial and academic success.

Centralized governance affords a school system all the benefits of shared resources, including the exchange of best practices and implementation of a cohesive vision. Pooled resources can lower administrative costs and enable all schools in the model to benefit from services they could not otherwise afford on their own. A centralized system can also provide stability and reassurance to individually struggling schools. But it can also run the risk of ignoring the particular needs of each unique school in the system, which may lower the standards for the entire group.

Local communities and particularly local pastors may feel disconnected from centralized schools. While a central system benefits from pooled resources and distributed costs, it also must sustain significant upfront capital costs to create a well-trained central office.

Striking a balance between executive/collegial or local/central governance allows many models to capitalize on the strengths of each aspect while avoiding the pitfalls of extremes. The right combination is entirely dependent on the particular context, but in

most cases it requires flexibility and a mixture of options. In addition, there is a strong balance between models that allows multiple governance models to operate successfully side-by-side in a single diocese.

No one model is ever a permanent, perfect solution to each school's problems! None of the models described in this paper is a panacea; no section on the matrix is more ideal than any other. Successful implementation of any of the models requires collaboration among all the stakeholders in a school, a strong commitment to accountability, and persistence to recruit and develop talented leaders.

*Breathing New Life into Catholic Schools: An Exploration of Governance Models* is intended as a tool for philanthropists and school leaders to better decipher the evolving marketplace. Deciding on the right governing structure is a process of identifying the unique context and problems, devising an effective strategy, building support from the ecclesiastical and lay community, and adapting to challenges all along the way. These models described are works in progress whose successes, challenges, and even mistakes can inform the field, and serve as helpful examples for new models and for each other.

## Definitions

### **Governance and Administration**

Prior to any examination of school governance models, it is important to clarify the parameters of "governance" in this context. **Governance** refers to "the more remote kinds of authority" that an official wields in order to "exercise oversight over the proper running of an institution."<sup>1</sup> This category of authority is distinct from **administration**, which is oversight of day-to-day operations. Broadly speaking, a governing entity formulates high-level policy or strategy, while an administrative entity implements them. The distinction is critical because this paper will address only governance models, that is, only new models for how high level policy and decisions are developed, not how they are functionally implemented.

With regard to Catholic schools, what responsibilities fall within the realm of governance? There are five general categories of governance roles: planning, policy, finance, public relations, and evaluation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Planning, Policy, Finance, Public Relations and Evaluation**

**Planning** includes such responsibilities as establishing and ensuring adherence to the school's mission, setting strategic goals, and clarifying organizational vision or future direction. **Policy** guides administrative operations; for example, a governing body may enact a policy that 5% of the operating budget must be used for financial aid, which is then left to the administrator to carry out. **Finance** includes both fundraising efforts (such as setting tuition, or annual fund) and allocating resources by writing and approving a budget. **Public Relations** encompass communication with the public regarding high-level issues, student recruitment, and general outreach to the local community. **Evaluation** refers to assessment of the other areas of governance (e.g., determining whether strategic goals are being met). In a Catholic school, issues related to spirituality may also be guided by a governing entity if there are policies that guide Catholicity or spiritual formation.

### **Governing Authority**

Governing authority generally falls to one of three entities: a local pastor or canonical administrator; a bishop or his designee (e.g., staff in the diocesan office); or a board. Because canon law allows ecclesial officials to delegate responsibilities at their discretion, infinite configurations of authority are possible. Therefore, in many cases no one entity controls governing functions. Depending on the extent to which a canonical authority delegates power to a board, four general categories are possible:

- 1. Advisory:** This board only recommends policy to another entity who makes final decisions (such as a pastor), who can seek the board's advice at their discretion.
- 2. Consultative:** Just like an advisory board, this board can only make recommendations and give advice. However, the entity with final authority is required to consult with this type of board before making decisions.
- 3. Limited jurisdiction:** This type of board has the authority to make final decisions relating to a limited set of issues.
- 4. Full authority:** This type of board has complete governing authority and does not share that authority with any other entity.

<sup>1</sup> Brown, 26.

<sup>2</sup> See Primer 25-6.

### ***The Role of Canon Law: Competent Ecclesiastical Authority and Public Ecclesiastical Juridic Person***

New governance models which move away from the traditional pastor-run parish school require new applications of canon law. None of the models under discussion in this report operate outside the bounds of canon law, even though some may exercise broad flexibility within the limits. This section outlines the key terms and concepts in canon law which guide school governance. It will not, however, offer a thorough, nuanced explanation of all legal language and structures. Further clarification can be found in Appendix A (page 20).

A school qualifies as “Catholic” in one of three ways. According to Canon 803, either it is directed by a competent ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person, or it is recognized in writing as Catholic by a competent ecclesiastical authority.<sup>3</sup> Two terms are critical in that definition: competent ecclesiastical authority and public ecclesiastical juridic person. A **competent ecclesiastical authority** is one who is authorized to act on behalf of the Church. In a diocese it is the diocesan bishop and his delegate(s). A **local ordinary** includes those who exercise ordinary executive power in a diocese, for example, the diocesan bishop, vicar general or episcopal vicar. A local ordinary can delegate authority in certain circumstances according to norms of canon law.

A **juridic person**<sup>4</sup> is essentially a corporate entity that has been “ordered for a purpose in keeping with the mission of the Church which transcends the purpose of the individuals involved.”<sup>5</sup> When a Catholic school falls under the authority of a larger juridic person, it is governed by the individual canonically responsible for that larger juridic person. Thus, in a typical parish school, the school is part of the juridic person of the parish, which is canonically governed by the pastor, who then has governing control of the school. In this case, the bishop retains

a supervisory role, but all the day-to-day governance falls to the specifically designated entity: the pastor.

It is possible for a “competent authority” to designate a school as a juridic person in its own right. When a juridic person is established, the governing entity is specified in its statutes. It is thereby possible for a school, if it is a juridic person in its own right, to specify its own governing body. The competent authority (bishop) would still have the right of oversight, but most actual decisions would be made by the governing body designated by the statutes. The intricacies and advantages of this approach (which is uncommon) would require an in-depth explanation that is not relevant to the task at hand. However, this example serves to illustrate a crucial point: that there is canonical room for ecclesiastical officials to establish or alter schools so that they are governed by an independent body authorized by the ecclesiastical authority.

In sum, the ultimate authority over any given Catholic school is the local bishop, who may have a varying degree of active involvement or formal role, depending on how the school is established. In every case, Canon 806 gives the bishop the right to approve schools and exercise vigilance over them.<sup>6</sup> To a certain degree, such “oversight responsibility can be, and often is, delegated to others to work on behalf of the appropriate church authority.”<sup>7</sup> The one area of responsibility that an ecclesiastical authority cannot delegate is the area of faith and morals. In schools owned and operated by the diocese, a bishop can delegate powers or governance responsibilities as stated in a legal agreement with the diocese.

To be Catholic, a school must be under the direction of church authority or a public juridic person, or it must be recognized as a Catholic school by church authority by means of a written document (c. 803). Catholic schools can be established only with the consent of the diocesan bishop (c. 801) and are subject to his oversight (c. 806.1). The diocesan

<sup>3</sup> Brown, 5. Canon 803 Section 1.

<sup>4</sup> A juridic person can be either public or private, a distinction explained in the Appendix.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, 15. Canon 114.

<sup>6</sup> See Canon 806 Section 1.

<sup>7</sup> Cerullo, 11.

bishop has the authority to revoke the designation of “Catholic” for a school. Whatever the legal possibilities, strong relationships are always critical. As canon law scholar Rev. Philip Brown puts it, “in the end, structures and norms will mean little if there is not a smoothly operating and comfortable relationship between the bishop and each of the schools and school community as a whole.”<sup>8</sup> The models examined in this paper generally operate with some explicit agreement between the diocese, parish, and (sometimes) a non-ecclesial third party.

## Methodology

Given the many complex configurations of governance and the multiple actors involved, this paper organizes the models along two sliding scales. The first scale measures the lateral (x-axis) distribution of governing power between two types of governing entities. The two types are labeled as Executive and Collegial. The second scale measures the vertical (y-axis) distribution of power between Local and Central authorities. Placement on these scales was determined based on conversations with school leaders, an online survey, and publically available information (e.g., websites, strategic plans). In general, the researchers assessed who the governing actors were, which specific duties they oversaw, and the chain of command between them. That data was supplemented with information about the environment or context within which each model emerged, and from self-reported successes and challenges. To offer a glimpse into the specifics of each model, brief summaries are included throughout this paper at relevant points and in Appendix B (page 22).

<sup>8</sup> Brown, 35.

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# Measurements of Governance: Executive v. Collegial

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**Executive** governance is a system where authority is placed in the hands of an individual, who “is responsible to take the initiative, come to the final decision, order the implementation, and hold people accountable for carrying out the decision.”<sup>9</sup> Traditional parish schools are governed entirely by an executive: the pastor. In the case of traditional parish schools, the pastor may be advised in governing matters by a board or council, but he ultimately determines the school’s policies and initiatives. A bishop, superintendent, or (potentially) the leader of a nonprofit could also function as an executive authority.

**Collegial** governance involves the vesting of governing authority with a group, such as a board or religious congregation. That group leads both the development and implementation of policy and makes all final decisions. A typical nonprofit, governed by a board of directors, is a good example of collegial governance.

Complete executive or collegial governance is rare. Even the most traditional parish schools generally have some form of advisory board or council, which makes the governing model slightly more collegial and collaborative. According to 2013-2014 data collected by the National Catholic Educational Association, 84.8% of Catholic elementary schools reported having some form of a board.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, complete collegial governance of a parish school is uncommon given the restrictions in canon law that require oversight capacity by the local ordinary.

In between those two extremes is a spectrum that encompasses most existing models. An executive, for example, may collaborate at his discretion with a board that only offers advice, or he may be legally required to consult with that board before making any decisions. In some cases a board of limited jurisdiction may

have authority over marketing strategies only, while in others it may be responsible for creating the budget, setting tuition, enrollment management, fundraising, principal evaluation and selection process, strategic planning and mission effectiveness. (See “Healey Education Foundation Schools,” page 10)

The matrix below delineates a set of unique models along this spectrum to illustrate the range of possibilities from executive to collegial forms of governance. Each side of the spectrum comes with its own advantages and disadvantages, and each model seeks to strike the right balance to capitalize on one or another of these advantages. The following section offers insight into potential advantages and disadvantages of both types.

## Executive

Catholic schools in the U. S. have been governed by an executive for decades. A strong, competent executive authority can lead a school or school system to great success. Vesting authority in a single person provides clarity of vision and purpose and the ability to easily enact that vision. The school is not inhibited by infighting or pulled in contradictory directions by conflicting personalities. If drastic change is needed to turn around a school or system, a strong executive can steer the ship in a new direction much more rapidly than a collegial body could. Any consultative body—whether a board or nonprofit—can devote its energy to building relationships with one individual.

However, there are also significant disadvantages to the executive model. Often in today’s Catholic schools, the pastor is given authority to run a school by virtue of his office. In many cases, the pastor may have little or no professional education expertise, business skills or training for managing a Catholic

<sup>9</sup> Primer, 6

<sup>10</sup> United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools 2013-2014.

***Central-Executive  
School Systems  
Diocese of La Crosse***

In the Diocese of La Crosse, clusters of schools, or school systems, are governed jointly by a dean and school system president. The dean, in consultation with the local pastors, functions as the pastoral authority of the system, as delegated by the bishop. A president maintains the daily operations of the schools as the executive leader of the system. Local pastors appoint representatives to the advisory board, but governing authority derives from the diocese. This model arose more than twenty years ago as a mandate from the diocese to help consolidate small parish schools to create larger classes for students of the same age group.

The model appears to function well for the schools involved, and while it does not seem to face as many of the sustainability challenges in comparison to the other models we examined, it still requires tuition, parish subsidy and third source revenue to finance the schools.

school. An unskilled executive could cause more harm than an unskilled board, precisely because they have the authority and capacity to enact change. Also, when the executive is a pastor with extensive and diverse responsibilities, he may be unable to provide a necessary focus on school governance or administrative matters.

Another disadvantage is that the voices and concerns of parents, parishioners, and the community are sometimes not formally heard and accounted for in the executive system. Many voices and opinions may slow down work, but they can also bring invaluable contributions and new points of view. Without formalized collaboration, issues of a lack of transparency and accountability can arise. Similarly, without ‘checks and balances’ from individuals with relevant professional expertise, executive mismanagement can more easily occur.

## Collegial

The strength of collegial governance lies primarily in the power of collaboration. Diverse individuals with varied backgrounds and expertise can work together to devise creative and effective solutions to the myriad problems of governance. Governing requires knowledge of budgeting, advertising, education policy, personnel, and all manner of other issues. No one person will ever have the know-how to deal with everything. Additionally, when the people who make up the collegial authority are drawn from the local community, it gives that community a sense of responsibility and ownership over the school that

***Central-Collegial  
Regionalized Schools  
Archdiocese of New York***

Pathways to Excellence, the strategic plan of the Archdiocese of New York, was introduced in 2010 to insure academic excellence and increase the financial viability of its schools. It was implemented in 2012 and 2013. The plan created groups of 5-15 schools, organized by geographic region, that share resources and a governing body. Schools were decoupled from the parishes and became part of the regional structure.

Each region is separately incorporated by the New York State Department of Education as a unique non-profit and is governed by a two-tier collegial system with a membership corporation (archbishop, vicar general and chancellor) and a board of trustees appointed by the members. The corporation governs high-level decisions. Most day-to-day governance matters are left up to the board of trustees, who are a mix of clergy and laity, though the clergy always maintains a majority.

The model encompasses 9 regions with a total of 93 schools. Though it is too early to measure success, the model has already achieved its fundamental mission: empowered decision-making.

may be lacking in an executive system. It should also be noted that, with proper delegation, responsibility can be shared among many individuals, reducing the burden on each individual. For these reasons and others, most successful charter and private school adopt some type of collegial-based model.

Despite the numerous advantages, there are also limitations. After all, some failing charter and public schools are also governed collegially. While, in theory, only highly qualified persons with relevant expertise should be selected for a board, this is not always the case. There is no guarantee that the members of a collegial body will be any more qualified than an executive. Some may say that board members are too busy to devote sufficient time to learning the scope and limits of the governing role, while others point to a lack of training provided as the core issue. This can become particularly difficult in a Catholic school, where the relationship between the ecclesiastical offices and governing body must be carefully clarified. Lastly, in sharp contrast to executive authority, a collegial body can easily be bogged down by conflicting priorities or opinions, which slow the decision-making process and stymies change.

As mentioned above, most models do not fall into one extreme or the other, they strike some balance between the collaborative strength of collegial governance and the quick decision-making power of executive governance. For example, the Archdiocese of Chicago developed a strategic agreement with a number of parish schools wherein local pastors would permit closer oversight from the Archdiocese and create a local board. In many of these schools, the boards are still in the developmental stage and require an executive push from the Archdiocese, but collegial governance is clearly valued. Several of the models rely on a distant executive to provide a vision and push change, while empowering a collegial body to take ownership of that change and come up with an effective way to implement the vision. In addition, the adoption of approved bylaws or operating principles clarify the relationship and authority between the ecclesiastical offices and governing bodies, and leads to more effective governance.

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# Measurements of Governance: Local v. Central

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The second measurement used in this matrix is Local to Central. **Local governance** takes place on a school-by-school basis. An example of local governance would be a single school completely detached from any larger system (such as a diocese or non-profit), where every governing decision is made by an entity that only governs said school (e.g., pastor or local board). **Central governance**, by contrast, takes the governing authority away from local actors and vests it in a single office that oversees multiple schools. An example of a central system might be a group of five schools that are all jointly run by a single school board.

As with the previous indicator, complete local or central control is rare. A parish school may be run completely by a local pastor, but it is still part of a diocese and subject to supervision by the bishop (who oversees all the schools). On the other hand, school systems are rarely run without any input from local leaders, and vesting all authority in a single central board or in the office of the superintendent would be nearly unmanageable. Also, theoretically, Catholic schools are guided by the principle of subsidiarity, which “states that whatever can be accomplished by the initiative and industry of one group should not be assigned to or assumed by a higher organization or authority.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, there is an inherent tendency towards local control. The models in this analysis occupy every space between those two extremes, from single schools to diocesan-wide initiatives.

There are several possibilities for how schools are organized along the spectrum of local to central control. A school can be a **parish school**, which is operated and financed by a local parish, a **diocesan school**, which is operated and financed by a diocese, or a **private**,

**independent school**, which is recognized as “Catholic” by the local bishop but operated and financed by an entity separate and apart from a parish or diocese, such as a religious order. Schools can be independent of each other, but some schools may work together in an unofficial **collaboration**, where they share information or even resources without setting up a unified administrative entity. More officially, schools could be a part of a **consortium**, “a term used for a group of schools administered by a single administrative body.”<sup>12</sup> Similar to a consortium, schools could also be a part of a **network**, wherein schools are affiliated with a brand or mission, but not necessarily a central administration.

As with the previous categories, this section outlines the advantages and disadvantages inherent to local and central governance.

## Local

As mentioned above, the principle of subsidiarity with regards to Catholic school governance might suggest a preference for local control. If a school can be run effectively by a local pastor or board, there is no need to cede control to a diocese or other central system. Local control allows school leaders to be responsive to the specific needs of the school. In general, every school environment is shaped by unique outside forces that call for unique solutions. Specifically for Catholic schools, local control allows the community and parish to feel invested in the success of the school. If pastors or boards invest their time and focus into the governance of the school, they are more likely to make an effort to help it succeed in other ways. Involvement of the parish community has been the centerpiece of a number of

<sup>11</sup> Primer, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Primer, 71.

**Local-Collegial**  
**Healey Education Foundation**  
**Schools**

**Allentown, Camden, Philadelphia, Baltimore**

The Healey Education Foundation, an operational foundation, has helped to implement the boards of limited jurisdiction governance model in more than 40 schools in four dioceses. There is a board of limited jurisdiction and a school advancement director in each school.

Local control is the key tenet of this approach.

The pastor serves as a board member with a single vote, but retains his canonical authority:

If the pastor opposes a board vote, he and the board can take the contested issue to the diocese (schools office or bishop) for mediation and potential override.

The board's authority extends to finance, development, marketing and strategic planning. Board members are chosen by the board with relevant input from the bishop. The board oversees the majority of governance issues, with a few reserved powers (e.g. maintaining Catholic identity, approving transactions such as selling property or modifying the school building).

All schools have increased giving and 70% have increased enrollment.

successful initiatives, including the Diocese of Wichita (not included in this study), which reorganized its fundraising model to capitalize on parishioner involvement.<sup>13</sup>

Local control can have limitations, though, which can create barriers to effective governance. Local schools often do not have the resources to afford necessary services. For example, a parish school with two hundred students may not be able to afford a full-time business manager who can supervise its budget and ensure financial efficiency. Locally run schools miss out on the chance not just to share resources, but also to learn from others' successes and failures in an official capacity. If one school discovers a set of best practices, it would be beneficial to quickly export that knowledge to other schools. If schools are run completely independently, they may never try those best practices, either because of unawareness or inability. In addition, a locally-governed school sets its own standards for financial or academic success, possibly with little to no external or third party accountability.

It's important to note that local control with a pastor versus local control with a board can be very different. Changes from pastor to pastor can have little continuity depending on the pastors' interests, experiences, or particular priorities (e.g., a school, or a religious education program). The board can help ensure continuity over time because of its structure. This will be further discussed in the sections titled "Local-Executive" and "Local-Collegial" on page 16.

## Central

Centralized governance affords a school system all the benefits of shared resources. Schools can exchange best practices and implement a cohesive vision. If the system is run by a group of talented leaders, their skills and experience can have a greater impact and even assist small schools. Operationally speaking, a central office can enable multiple schools to pool their resources and leverage collective purchasing power. This can lower administrative costs and enable all schools in the model to benefit from services they could not otherwise afford on their

<sup>13</sup> See Fordham report.

own. A centralized system can also provide stability and reassurance to individually struggling schools. A central office can help a school through a rough patch, impose much-needed change, and draw support from a wide base of parishes or donors.

Despite these advantages, a centralized system can run the risk of ignoring the particular needs of each unique school in the system. A central governing body might not have the time or knowledge to give each school its due, and that can lower the standards of the system as a whole. At the same time, local communities and particularly local pastors may feel disconnected from their schools if they are not directly involved in governance. It can be difficult to feel a connection with a much larger system that oversees schools far away from one's own. Financially, a central system benefits from pooled resources and distributed costs, but it also must sustain significant upfront capital costs to create a well-trained central office.

Many of the models in the matrix take advantage of centralization to spread best practices and absorb some administrative expenses, while simultaneously focusing on empowering local governance. In Los Angeles, for example, 22 schools have agreed to come together to share best practices through an independently governed entity, the Catholic Schools Consortium. Each school remains locally governed and only joins the Consortium voluntarily, but they are all united under a central umbrella.

The Cristo Rey Network functions similarly. They have designed a successful program and vision that have become a replicable brand. Every school that adopts their brand is monitored to ensure adherence to the mission, but otherwise each of their 28 schools is governed locally and independently. Most central systems surveyed for this paper were strongly supportive of local control and stressed the importance of empowering local leaders. While these types of governance are placed here on opposite ends of a spectrum, on the ground local and central governing actors usually function cooperatively and complementarily.

***Central-Collegial  
Catholic Schools Consortium  
Archdiocese of Los Angeles***

The Catholic Schools Consortium (CSC) is an independently board governed, 501(c)(3) entity currently supporting 22 inner-city schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The schools, which have retained their local governance, have voluntarily agreed to participate collaboratively in CSC-created programs, each of which strives to set best practices in an area of governance, curriculum, and operations.

The partnership was established in 2009 with grants from the Specialty Family Foundation to create collective strategy for marketing and development efforts. The CSC as an entity was incorporated in 2014 and has initiated pilot projects in the areas of finance and curriculum. CSC views its efforts as additive to the initiatives and vision of the Archdiocese.



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# Matrix

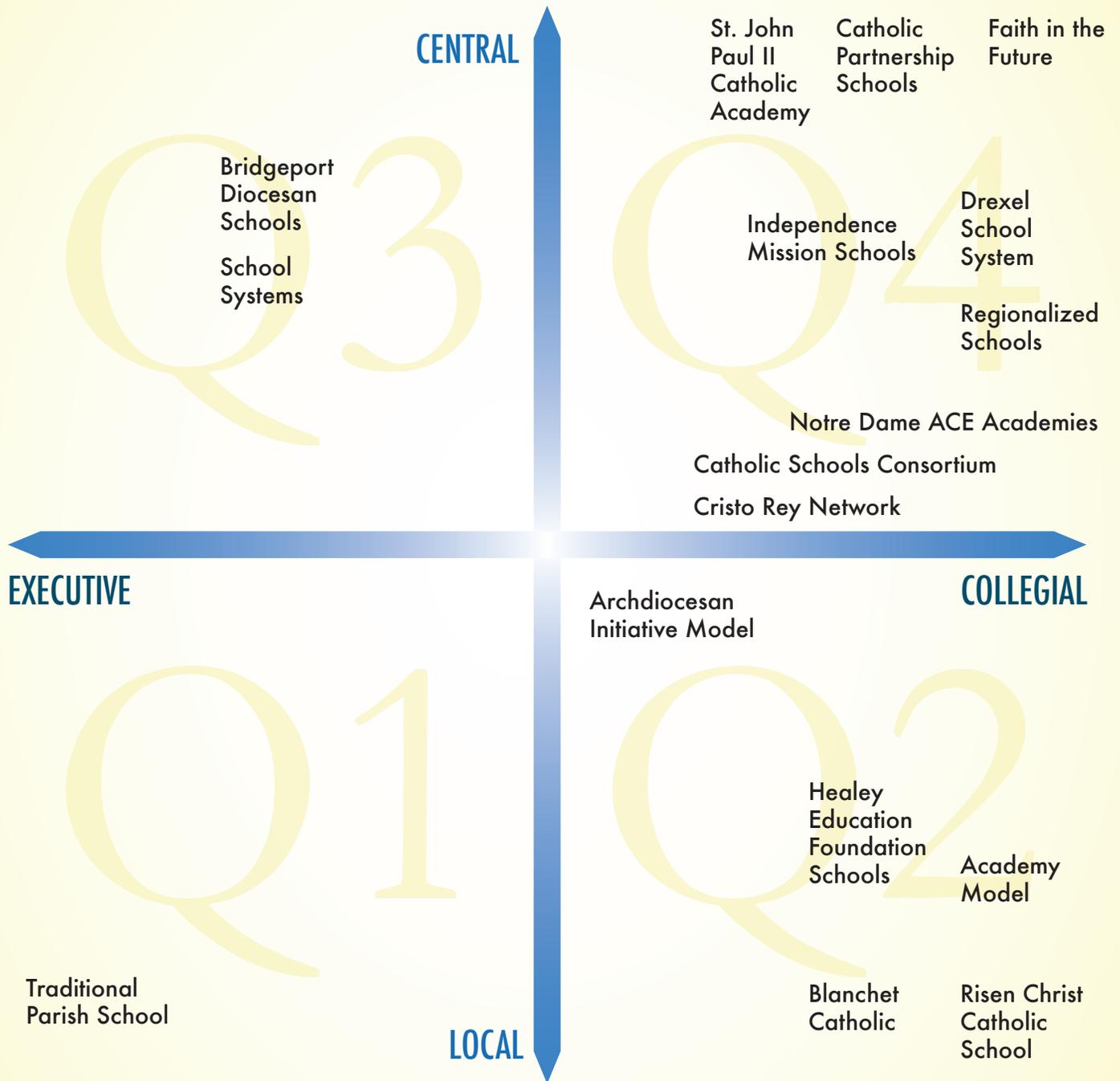
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This section includes the matrix, which assesses each model in our analysis according to the categories described above. The horizontal axis depicts the executive/collegial scale, and the vertical axis depicts the local/central scale. Figure 1 is an un-weighted matrix with each model plotted alongside a few helpful markers. Figure 2 offers a rough breakdown of each continuum into smaller categories, which can give some sense of how the matrix practically applies to other governance terms.

Given that each model is constantly in flux and the context of each model is so distinct, placement on this matrix is fundamentally relative and subjective. Decisions were made based on data collected from a uniform survey and consultation from local school leaders. It is not intended to be scientifically definitive, but simply takes the first step in comparing models that have not received sufficient analysis.

Only select models appear on this matrix, and those models tend to represent the most innovative approaches and systems on the market. Consequently, the matrix skews towards the right-hand side (collegial), since most innovative models adopt a board with some jurisdiction. This matrix does not accurately portray the full distribution of all Catholic schools in the country, which still overwhelmingly gravitate towards the bottom left quadrant (local-executive). However, this matrix is a tool for comparison, and not a chart of demographics.

Figure 1: Matrix



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Figure 2: Matrix Scale Reference

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## EXECUTIVE

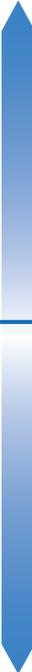
- 
- **No board, full executive authority:** A single individual is responsible for formulating and implementing all governance policies. This may be the pastor, bishop, or superintendent and includes their corresponding office. There may be multiple executives with oversight over different governance areas, but each executive has full oversight in their area(s).
  - **Advisory/consultative board, executive oversight:** There exists a board, which can formulate and suggest policy. The executive may or may not be required to consult with the board, but they are still responsible for all final decisions.
  - **Board of limited jurisdiction, executive with limited authority:** The board has full control over a limited amount of governance. The board oversees up to 90% of governance areas and is not required to seek approval from an executive. There still exists an executive (or multiple executives) who control the remaining areas of governance.
  - **Board of full authority, no executive:** The board has full control over all (or nearly all) areas of governance. One or two issues may still fall to an executive (e.g. the pastor oversees spiritual formation), but that executive is functionally absent from most governance.

## COLLEGIAL

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## CENTRAL

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- **Total central control:** Every school is governed by a singular entity (e.g. diocese or nonprofit agency). That entity controls nearly all (more than 75%) of the governance of the schools, though local leaders (a board or pastor) have control of a few areas.
  - **Consortium:** Every school in the model is part of a single system. The overarching entity/network controls a significant portion of the governance (perhaps 25-75%), but does not have total control.
  - **Network affiliation:** Every school in the model is part of a single system. There exists an entity that oversees the governance of all schools in the model. However, that entity only controls a small portion of governance areas or provides some oversight. Most governance still occurs on a school by school basis.
  - **Collaborative system:** The schools in the model share some overlapping operations or goals. Schools may pool resources or collaborate in certain areas, but most of the daily governance is left up to individual schools or independent regions. There is no over-arching entity that governs every school in the model collectively.
  - **Local management:** Each individual school in the model is run independently of the other schools. There are no shared resources, staff, or strategic goals.

## LOCAL

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# Quadrants

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The matrix above is divided roughly into four quadrants, defined as Local-Executive (Q1), Local-Collegial (Q2), Central-Executive (Q3), and Central-Collegial (Q4). Below is a broad overview of each quadrant, accompanied by specific examples from the matrix.

## Local-Executive

This quadrant hosts the most common and well-known style of Catholic school governance—the traditional pastor-run parish school. In this model, a singular executive authority governs a distinct, individual school. This model empowers an executive, who may or may not be advised by a collegial body like a board, to make all final governance decisions and truly focus on the issues of their particular school. With a talented, engaged executive leader, governance can be simple, effective, and responsive to local needs. However, in the absence of talent and engagement, an executive can quickly drive a school into the ground, with no central system to fall back on.

This model is most called into question today and is the source of many recent governance changes. With a shortage of priests, the financial challenges that many dioceses face for other reasons, and the lack of training and mentoring that priests may have in the business of running schools, many parishes are no longer able to independently support and sustain schools.

## Local-Collegial

The models in this quadrant may look like a modified version of the traditional parish school, but in practice they often create a major change in control and culture. In this model, local boards are delegated a degree of official authority. A local pastor agrees to cede certain responsibilities (not including spiritual duties) to a collegial body that may consist of laity or even other clergy, as is often the case in an interparish school. This arrangement affords a school many of the advantages of collegial governance—diverse pool of talent and expertise, less responsibility on any one individual, community involvement—while keeping all the focus on the needs

of a particular school. The board can also help ensure continuity over time because of its structure, as opposed to the instability that may occur with the change of a pastor or parish priorities.

At the same time, though, this style of governance can pose a human capital challenge. A local school may be limited in its ability to recruit and train community members, parents, or clergy.

### *Local-Collegial* **Archdiocesan Initiative Model** *Archdiocese of Chicago*

The Archdiocesan Initiative Model (AIM) is an agreement between local pastors and the archdiocese, which has been implemented at 29 schools since 2010. In this agreement, the pastors cede control through a written agreement to the archdiocese, which in turn reorganizes the governance and creates a local board of limited jurisdiction. The local pastors retain advisory capacity, but the actual governing is split between local boards and the archbishop's office.

The model ideally requires a strong central governing entity, but with limited resources, the AIM leaders are focusing on implementing successful local control. The initiative came as a result of disparate factors, ranging from lack of transparency to pastoral requests, but the schools have generally increased enrollment and improved test scores. Contracts only last for three years, and two schools have now returned to pastoral governance.

## Central-Executive

This style of governance is not entirely new; many high schools are established and run by a local diocese, which usually means multiple schools all run through the same executive office. A model in this quadrant would place a great deal of authority in the hands of a single executive entity. With a large pool of resources and high stakes, it is likely that the executive in charge would be both highly qualified and completely focused on the task of running the schools. Though the official authority for diocesan schools would be held by the bishop, generally the superintendent or a vicar would act in their stead as the functioning executive. This type of model can ensure that sufficient resources and effective policies make their way to struggling schools. However, there is always a risk that local needs will be ignored and the local pastor will become disengaged.

## Central-Collegial

This quadrant falls on the complete opposite end of the spectrum from the traditional parish model. It is perhaps the most radical type of governance, insofar as it requires not only a bishop or pastor to delegate authority to a collegial board of some kind, but also requires multiple schools to buy into a collective system. Due to the demands of running a central system while operating independently of a parish or diocese, many of these models are governed by a separate non-profit. The rationale for such a system lies in the numbers. A central model can distribute costs over many schools, which enables it to support a central administrative office with highly qualified talent. Since it is collegial, this model can then spend those extra resources in recruiting and training a host of effective governing leaders. The impact of this model can be significant: best practices and sound policies can be implemented for many more students than at a local school. However, this system requires an enormous cost to sustain, and must be careful to balance the particular needs of each school. Above all, this model requires close collaboration with ecclesiastical leaders to ensure legal viability and close adherence to Catholic identity.

### *Central-Executive* **Bridgeport Diocesan Schools** *Diocese of Bridgeport*

In 2002, all elementary schools in the diocese of Bridgeport were converted from parish to diocesan schools in an effort to bring financial stability and share best practices. With more financial resources pooled together, the diocese was able to implement sound professional development and other useful changes. Each school retained an advisory board, which had limited authority in a few areas (setting goals, marketing, approving the budget), but most governing authority remained with the office of the bishop. The model continues to evolve and after years of diocesan control may shift again in the near future.

### *Central-Collegial* **Drexel School System** *Diocese of San Jose*

The Drexel School System, launched in 2013, combines centralized governance with a teaching model called Blended Learning. Drexel is governed by a limited jurisdiction board appointed by the bishop. It centralizes supervision of seven elementary schools to a director of operations in the department of education. The director is appointed by the board of directors. The team identifies, adopts, implements, and replicates best practices to improve operational efficiencies and effectiveness through coordination among the schools in curriculum, administration, facilities, admissions, and recruitment.

The closer integration of curriculums and instructional methodologies bring Drexel Schools together into a true system, which engenders collaboration, cooperation, and success throughout all schools in the system. The Drexel School System has shown increased academic performance and reversed the trend of declining enrollment. It is preparing for phase two, where the model will be scaled to include another cohort of 3-5 schools.

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# Conclusion

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The matrix and two scales of governance are intended to serve as a tool to categorize and compare existing governance models. In conducting this research, we observed several common principles that are the impetus for most innovation and change across models.

***Most schools are confronting similar problems, even though their contexts and responses are different.*** Catholic schools all across the country are struggling to remain viable and compete in a crowded marketplace. Schools are looking to boost enrollment, remain affordable to lower-income and all students, and continue to provide the high-quality education and faith formation for which Catholic schools are known.

***A bounty of options exist.*** Implementing a new governance model in any parish or diocese is no small matter, and requires a great deal of ecclesiastical collaboration and approval. However, philanthropists and school leaders should be aware that inventive models exist and are often quite successful. Pioneers of governance have developed viable models, and they can serve as examples to others.

***Learn from one another.*** This is a lesson derived from the charter-school sector: if schools are free to experiment with many different solutions to a similar problem, then successful innovation will emerge when leaders can communicate and listen to one another. A local school does not have to be on the verge of collapse to consider reforming its governance. Even if the structure remains, there are still valuable lessons to learn from watching the successes and failures of others, and local pastors would benefit from understanding the merits and limits of central or collegial governance.

The collection of models exhibited on the matrix offer a snapshot of the state of emerging innovative models. However, over time, new models will emerge and existing models will shift to new places on the matrix. Our research and conversations with school leaders revealed that no one model is ever a permanent, perfect solution to each school's problems. None of the models described in this paper is a panacea; no section on the matrix is more ideal than any other. Though we do not offer recommendations for a particular structure of governance, three key lessons stood out above all else, across all models.

## Key Lessons

***1. Collaboration is essential.*** Whether or not collaboration is officially acknowledged in any legally binding contract, it is still a basis for any successful governance in the Catholic school sector. Small, locally-run schools can benefit from collaboration by pooling resources or simply sharing best practices or successful policies. Pastors and bishops can benefit from the advice and expertise of the laity, even if they opt not to delegate actual governing authority to them. In places where pastors or bishops do cede authority to a board or nonprofit, collaboration is still critical to ensure ongoing positive relations with the Church and community.

***2. Governance should be a first step.*** For schools and systems that are desperate to make changes to financial structure, marketing, or leadership development areas, governance should be the first step, not the last. Before changes can be implemented, it is vital to first address the questions: Who can implement these reforms? Who is accountable, and how will we ensure they are successful? Execution is key—making sure the right governing structure is in place and staffed with quality leaders is a cornerstone to build on later reforms.

### ***3. Finding and developing talented leaders is a challenge for everyone.***

Leaders of almost every model lamented the difficulty of recruiting a pool of qualified individuals to serve on their boards. Ironically, the lack of skilled leaders is one of the main motivations driving schools away from the traditional pastor-run parish system. Not every pastor has the business or marketing expertise to govern 21st century Catholic schools, and not every community can attract a pool of experts who are willing to dedicate their time to governance. However, in models that called for collegial governance, school leaders report that their schools that had well-developed boards were far more effective than comparable schools that struggled to develop boards. If collegial governance is part of your model, prioritize the board development and recruiting/training of governing leaders. Any further reform will run far more smoothly afterwards.

As noted throughout this paper, models rarely fall on the extreme ends of either spectrum. Striking the right balance between executive/collegial or local/central governance allows many models to capitalize on the strengths of each aspect while avoiding the pitfalls of extremes. Great balance may or may not be illustrated by dead center placement on the matrix. The right combination is entirely dependent on the particular context, but in most cases it requires flexibility and a mixture of options. There exists a strong balance between models. One diocese, as in the case of Philadelphia or New York, may contain multiple governance models that operate side by side. School leaders are in constant dialogue with one another, and that collaborative spirit allows them to adapt their strategies to each unique environment (even if they are contained within the same diocese).

This white paper and matrix were created to provide a tool for philanthropists and school leaders interested in Catholic schools to better decipher the evolving marketplace. Once again, there is no one-size-fits-all approach or a single set of best practices in governance. Deciding on the right governing structure is a process of identifying the unique context and problems, devising an effective strategy, building support from the ecclesiastical

and lay community, and adapting to challenges all along the way. These models are paving the way for others, and their successes and mistakes can serve as examples and “lessons learned” for new models and for each other.

Our hope is that this work will demystify governance and illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of its many manifestations. It is only a first step, though, to effecting positive change and ensuring the highest quality Catholic education for as many young students as possible.

# Glossary

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**Administration:** Oversight of daily operations of a school. Implementing the policy decisions made by a governing body.

**Advisory Board:** A body that participates in governance by formulating and recommending policy to the person with the authority to enact it. The authority is not required to consult with this body.

**Board:** A governing body consisting of individuals who are elected or appointed to it for the purpose of participating in decision-making or advising. Sometimes known as a council or commission.

**Board of Limited Jurisdiction:** A body that participates in governance by formulating and enacting policy. This body has authority in a limited number of areas that are defined on a case-by-case basis by specified by-laws.

**Canon Law:** The official body of laws, codes, and regulations of the Roman Catholic Church.

**Collegiality:** A sharing of responsibility or power between two or more persons or entities.

**Competent Ecclesiastical Authority:** One who possesses the authority to act on behalf of the Church. An example would be a diocesan bishop or his delegate who establish and oversee a diocesan school.

**Consortium:** A group of schools administered and governed to some degree by a single body.

**Consultative Board:** A body that participates in governance by formulating and recommending policy to the person with the authority to enact it. The authority is required to consult with this body on some or all matters.

**Diocesan School:** A school that is owned and operated by a diocese.

**Ecclesiastical:** Of or pertaining to the Catholic Church.

**Executive:** The person or office responsible for putting policies or laws into effect.

**Full Authority Board:** A body that participates in governance by formulating and enacting policy. This body has authority in all or nearly all areas. It is not required to defer to a higher authority in any matter.

**Governance:** Remote authority wielded by a governing body in order to direct the operations of an institution (such as a school). A process to exert authoritative direction or control.

**Incorporation:** A legal process in which a group or organization is created and recognized by the state as a separate entity from the individuals who govern or operate it.

**Interparish School:** A school that is connected to more than one parish. The school may be owned and operated collectively by all parishes involved, or may be directly connected to one parish and receive support from the others.

**Juridic Person:** Entities or things ordered for a purpose in keeping with the mission of the Church.

**Local Ordinary:** Someone who possesses ordinary executive power; for example, in a diocese or a community canonically equivalent to a diocese (c. 134. 1-2).

**Ordinary Power:** Power that is attached to an office and can be exercised by whoever holds that office.

**Parish School:** A school that is owned and operated by a particular parish.

**Policy:** A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a governing entity that can guide discretionary administrative action.

**President of a School:** The leader of a school or system of schools. The president is usually the chief administrator and may or may not have a direct role in school governance. Specific role and responsibility varies between school systems.

**Private Juridic Person:** A private juridic person is established by competent ecclesiastical authority for a specific purpose in the Church. It does not function in the name of the Church nor speak with the authority of the Church. It is governed by its statutes. Its property is not ecclesiastical property and, therefore, not subject to the norms of Book V of the Code of Canon Law.

**Public Juridic Person:** A public juridic person is established to fulfill the function entrusted to it in the name of the Church in view of the public good. Catholic schools are generally public juridic persons (if they are juridic persons at all), since their purpose is for the common good. Its property is ecclesiastical property and, therefore, subject to the norms of Book V of the Code of Canon Law.

**Superintendent:** The person delegated by the bishop to exercise executive power over the schools in an arch/diocese. The scope of a superintendent's power is determined by the bishop and varies across dioceses.

## Additional Model Descriptions

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### ***Local-Collegial Academy Model***

#### ***Diocese of Brooklyn***

In 2008, the diocese of Brooklyn designed the “academy model,” a new system of governance, to respond to the bishop’s request to incorporate more lay leadership. The diocese intends to transition every elementary school into an “academy” by 2017, and has thus far converted 44 schools. The model is a two-tiered governance system: a board of members (local pastors, bishop and superintendent) appoints laity to local boards of directors. These school-specific local boards have nearly complete authority in all areas of governance. The ecclesiastical board of members oversees the Catholic identity of the academies, but otherwise the board of directors immediately supervises all other areas. The model clarifies leadership roles: the pastor can be the true pastoral leader, the principal the instructional leader, and the primary governing body can consist of individuals with the necessary expertise.

### ***Local-Collegial Blanchet Catholic***

#### ***Diocese of Portland***

Blanchet Catholic is a private, independent school established in 1995 for grades 6-12. It is governed by a board of directors that employs a president as CEO of the incorporated non-profit entity. Fully endorsed by the Archdiocese of Portland, Blanchet Catholic reserves seats on its board for a pastor representing the local parishes and for an appointed delegate of the archdiocese.

Among the core contributors to the success of Blanchet Catholic are a talented staff, an effective board of directors (recognized as exemplary by the NCEA in 2013) and a generous community. Blanchet Catholic has successfully advanced its mission by a series of collaborative, board-led strategic planning

processes involving staff, parents and community stakeholders.

The school’s primary and significant challenge is maintaining affordable tuition and funding a robust tuition assistance program.

### ***Local-Collegial Risen Christ Catholic School***

#### ***Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis***

Risen Christ is an elementary school that was created in 2006 through a consolidation of five parish schools with many families living in poverty. It is governed by a board of full authority and operates as a non-profit entity. The archdiocese as a whole is decentralized, and most governance decisions are left to local schools. The board reserves voting seats for the pastors of the five founding parishes, who comprise 25% of the board. Other board members come from a pool of community members. None of the current members are parents. The model has resulted in measurable success, including increased fundraising, community visibility and needed programs, and greater stability for school administrators, who benefit from the support and expertise of a board of full authority. The primary challenge has been recruiting sufficient talent to the board.

### ***Central-Collegial Catholic Partnership Schools***

#### ***Diocese of Camden***

Catholic Partnership Schools, a separate 501(c)(3), is a Catholic school management organization for five elementary schools that were united in 2009 under a single administrative umbrella. This post-parochial model of urban education was developed with the help of the Healey Education Foundation to strengthen and sustain the only K-8 Catholic schools that served Camden’s poorest students.

Though the schools are all still a part of the Diocese of Camden, NJ, CPS governs them through a centralized board of directors that hires an executive director and supports a management team of experts. The board consists of laity, appointed by the bishop, one representative pastor chosen by the pastors of the associated parishes, and one representative from the Diocesan Schools Office.

The bishop retains reserved powers, but the daily governance comes from the authority delegated to the board and the executive director. The executive director is responsible for oversight of finances, development, operations, curriculum, assessments, hiring and supervision of principals.

The approval of policies and the strategic plan as well as the fiduciary responsibility for the budget and fundraising, etc.—fall to the board. Within its short lifespan, CPS has achieved financial stability, undertaken major renovations, expanded scholarship capacity, increased professional development, and maintained the necessary enrollment numbers.

**Central-Collegial**  
**Cristo Rey Network**  
*Many dioceses*

Cristo Rey is a network of 28 schools that are all independently operated and governed by local boards of directors. The level of actual governance at the local level varies on a school-by-school basis. Most have boards of limited jurisdiction where certain power is reserved for a religious sponsor, but others have functionally full authority boards in collaboration with the local bishop. The purpose of implementing the local boards has been to ensure the proper execution of the Cristo Rey model and its standards and practices, such as the work-study program.

The boards are not permitted to be advisory; they must be empowered to act with authority. A central network office exists for the purpose of sharing best practices and reinforcing the brand, but otherwise governance is local.

**Central-Collegial**  
**Faith in the Future**  
*Archdiocese of Philadelphia*

Faith in the Future was founded in 2012 as an independent not-for-profit organization. Through a ground-breaking management agreement with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Faith in the Future has strategic and operational control of the Archdiocese's 17 high schools and 4 schools of special education, in addition to overseeing the School of Catholic Education. A central governing body unifies all schools in the model, and most governing decisions come from the central office. There is also a governing body specific to each school, but they are consultative bodies. Their strategy includes increasing enrollment; professionalizing fundraising; maximizing recruitment, training, and retention of school leaders and instructional staff; enhancing educational and artistic programs, and capitalizing on technology to drive improvement. The organization plans to expand the local school boards to limited jurisdiction in the next few years.

**Central-Collegial**  
**Independence Mission Schools**  
*Archdiocese of Philadelphia*

Independence Mission Schools (IMS) is a group of 15 elementary schools serving low-income neighborhoods since July 1, 2013. It is centrally governed by an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under an affiliation agreement with the archdiocese. The IMS central office is governed by an independent board of directors that manages the schools under the agreement. The single voting member of each school is its own subsidiary LLC wholly-owned by IMS. Each school also has a local advisory board, either converted from the existing board upon formation of IMS or formed in cooperation with IMS since July 2013. The local boards are formed by a joint effort of the school, the central office and the IMS board, and serve in an advisory capacity, functioning as advocates and development vehicles for the schools. A pastor from the local parish sits on the school board (but may not chair) and the archdiocese has a seat on the IMS central board.

The self-appointed central board controls all areas of school operations and governance. Maintaining and advancing the Catholic identity of the schools is a major focus of school leadership, in conjunction with local pastors, archdiocesan representatives and the spiritual council of IMS. The council includes representatives from the religious orders working in the schools.

The model began in 2010 with a single school and expanded in 2013 and 2014. Under IMS management, the 15 schools experienced unprecedented increases in enrollment in each of the first two years, added innovative programming to several schools with the aid of outside funding, and achieved academic gains.

***Central-Collegial  
Notre Dame ACE Academies  
Dioceses of Tucson and St. Petersburg***

The Alliance for Catholic Education, a program of the University of Notre Dame, creates and supports partnerships with existing Catholic schools in the dioceses of Tucson and St. Petersburg to improve academic quality and strengthen enrollment. The schools were rebranded “Notre Dame ACE Academies” and each cluster within a diocese is under the governance of a single, regional board of limited jurisdiction. The boards function as advisory in development, policy, public relations, and have jurisdiction in school finance and hiring school leaders. The pastors and bishops’ offices govern areas where the board does not exercise jurisdiction.

The model was created in 2010 to provide comprehensive support for schools struggling with academic achievement and enrollment. Since then, enrollment and revenue have increased dramatically and standardized test scores have measurably improved.

***Central-Collegial  
Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy  
Archdiocese of Boston***

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy (SJPIICA) is a consolidation of seven parish elementary schools into a single academy with four campuses. SJPIICA is governed by a board of trustees with limited jurisdiction. It has authority over budgeting, strategic planning, and hiring of the school president.

SJPIICA is the flagship school for the Archdiocese’s 2010 Initiative for Catholic Education, which made a number of recommendations, including a move away from pastor-run schools. The school emphasizes academic success and is working to close the achievement gap and raise overall performance to the top quartile of standardized test scores. School leaders highlight the importance of local buy-in and encourage other schools to adopt a similar model.

# The Models

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## **Local-Executive**

Traditional Parish Schools

## **Local-Collegial**

Academy Model (p 22)

Arch/diocese: Brooklyn

Address: 310 Prospect Park West,  
Brooklyn, NY 11215

Phone: (718) 965-7300

Website: <http://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/schools/about-catholic-schools>

Archdiocesan Initiative Model (p 16)

Arch/diocese: Chicago

Address: 835 N. Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: (312) 534-5200

Website: <http://schools.archchicago.org>

Blanchet Catholic School (p 22)

Arch/diocese: Portland

Address: 4373 Market St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

Phone: (503) 391-2639

Website: [www.blanchetcatholicschool.com](http://www.blanchetcatholicschool.com)

Healey Education Foundation Schools (p 10)

Arch/diocese: Allentown, Baltimore, Camden,  
Philadelphia

Address: 2040 Briggs Road Suite C,  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

Phone: (856) 235-5222

Website: [www.healeyeducationfoundation.org](http://www.healeyeducationfoundation.org)

Risen Christ Catholic School (p 22)

Arch/diocese: Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Address: 1120 E 37th, St. Minneapolis, MN 55407

Phone: (612) 822-5329

Website: [www.risenchristschool.org](http://www.risenchristschool.org)

## **Central-Executive**

Bridgeport Diocesan Schools (p 17)

Arch/diocese: Bridgeport

Address: 238 Jewett Avenue, Bridgeport,  
CT 06606

Phone: (203) 416-1375

Website: [www.dioceseofbridgeportcatholicschools.com](http://www.dioceseofbridgeportcatholicschools.com)

School Systems (p 7)

Arch/diocese: La Crosse

Address: Office for Catholic Schools

PO Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004

Phone: (608) 788-7707

Website: [www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministry\\_resources/schools](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministry_resources/schools)

## **Central-Collegial**

Catholic Partnership Schools (p 22)

Arch/diocese: Camden

Address: 808 Market Street 2nd Floor,  
Camden, NJ 08102

Phone: (856) 338-0966

Website: [www.catholicpartnershipschools.org](http://www.catholicpartnershipschools.org)

Catholic Schools Consortium (p 11)

Arch/diocese: Los Angeles

Address: 501 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 703,  
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Phone: (888) 507-1717

Website: [www.believeit.org](http://www.believeit.org)

Cristo Rey Network (p 23)

Arch/diocese: Multiple

Address: 14 East Jackson Blvd. Ste. 1200  
Chicago, IL 60604

Phone: (312) 784-7200

Website: [www.cristoreynetwork.org](http://www.cristoreynetwork.org)

Drexel School System (p 17)  
Arch/diocese: San Jose  
Address: 1150 North First St., Ste 100,  
San Jose, CA 95112-4966  
Phone: (408) 983-0185  
Website: [www.dsj.org/schools/  
st-katharine-drexel-school-initiative](http://www.dsj.org/schools/st-katharine-drexel-school-initiative)

Faith in the Future (p 23)  
Arch/diocese: Philadelphia  
Address: 222 North 17th Street,  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Phone: (610) 491-4470  
Website: [www.faithinthefuture.com](http://www.faithinthefuture.com)

Independence Mission Schools (p 23)  
Arch/diocese: Philadelphia  
Address: 555 Croton Road, Suite 310,  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
Phone: (610) 200-5100  
Website: <http://independencemissionschools.org>

Notre Dame ACE Academies (p 24)  
Arch/diocese: Saint Petersburg and Tucson  
Address: Carole Sandner Hall Notre Dame, IN  
46556  
Phone: (574) 631.7052  
Website: <http://ace.nd.edu/academies>

Regionalized Schools (p 7)  
Arch/diocese: New York  
Address: 1011 First Avenue,  
New York City, NY 10022  
Phone: (212) 371-1000  
Website: [www.adnyeducation.org](http://www.adnyeducation.org)

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy (p 24)  
Arch/diocese: Boston  
Address: 2200 Dorchester Ave.,  
Dorchester, MA 02124  
Phone: (617) 265-0019  
Website: [www.popejp2catholicacademy.org](http://www.popejp2catholicacademy.org)

## Annotated Bibliography

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**Brown, P.J. (2010).** *Restructuring Catholic School Governance for a New Age: Creativity Meets Canon Law*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.

This text provides a general overview of canon law principles as they relate to Catholic school governance. Though dense and technical, this is the best source for anyone interested in understanding the legal theory and support behind current governance models. Since canon law offers few direct recommendations, this report illustrates the range of possibilities that are permissible, without making explicit endorsements of any model. The author takes special pains to unpack the role of the bishop and the meaning of such terms as “juridic person”. Reformers, philanthropists, and school leaders who are interested in the legal underpinnings of governance should begin here.

**Cerullo, D.M. (2011).** *Catholic Schools in Two Worlds: Understanding Governance and Bylaws in Church and Civil Law*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.

As a legal entity, every Catholic school must respect both canon and U.S. civil law. Ensuring that Catholic practice receives proper legal protection and recognition requires careful translation across these distinct codes. This report, by attorney and canonist Deborah Cerullo, explains precisely how concepts and structures from canon law are functionally translated into civil law. New forms of governance require a delicate reinterpretation of canon law concepts, which must then be carefully accommodated by the U.S. civil system. Who assumes legal and fiduciary responsibility for the school? Who has the authority to delegate powers and oversight of the school legally? Is the school a legal entity in and of itself, or is it part of a larger legal body? All of these questions are critical for delineating governance models. This report is a brief and useful introduction into this quagmire, and even offers practical templates for school bylaws.

**Dallavis, C., Cisneros, A. (2013) “A New Model of Sponsorship and Collaboration”: The University of Notre Dame ACE Academies.** *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 17 (1).

This article is a succinct summary of the Notre Dame ACE Academy model, and outlines the process through which they decided on their particular innovations. The Notre Dame ACE Academy initiative is a unique, collaborative partnership between two dioceses and the University of Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education. The article provides an excellent description of the ACE governance structure, which was designed as a tool to empower local school leaders to implement high academic standards and a strong Catholic culture. The authors, who are themselves leaders in the ACE model, explain the internal studies and thought-process that led them to choose their governance model. It is an excellent step-by-step explanation that will be valuable to any school leader or philanthropist considering change in their own diocese.

**Goldschmidt, E.P., Walsh, M.E. (2011).** *Sustaining Urban Catholic Elementary Schools: An Examination of Governance Models and Funding Strategies*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

In this report, Eric Goldschmidt and Mary Walsh of Boston College detail emergent “out-of-the-box” governance strategies and use case studies to offer concrete recommendations to improve the sustainability of schools. The researchers catalogue eight governance types and a variety of strategies for funding. Their goal was to create a resource for dioceses, schools, researchers, philanthropists, and other stakeholders in

Catholic education to assist in strategic planning. Through an examination of case studies and conversations with school leaders, Goldschmidt and Walsh found that while no one model excels above others, certain best practices were apparent. Specifically, they found that centralizing operations, utilizing collective buying power and collaborating with neighboring schools, community organizations, institutions of higher education and the philanthropic community lowered costs and increased access to resources. Using the examples in this report and focusing on their best practices could lead to greater stability and even growth of urban Catholic elementary schools.

**Haney, R., O'Brien, S., & Sheehan, L. (2009).** *A Primer on Education Governance in the Catholic Church*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.

This document is the most recent update to the NCEA's twenty five-year-old primer on Catholic school governance. Using the language of canon and civil law, this primer lays out the legal possibilities for new or traditional models of governance. The report covers the structural differences between single parish, regional, private, and diocesan schools, as well as the role of advisory and limited jurisdiction boards in each of those systems. The authors include flowcharts and other diagrams of complex relations between legal entities, and even add templates for school board constitutions. Much has changed since the primer was first issued, and this latest version offers a solid organizational framework in which to fit innovative new models, while remaining true to canon law.

**Haney, R. (2010).** *Design for Success: New Configurations and Governance Models for Catholic Schools*. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 14 (2).

In this 2010 report, Regina Haney describes a group of successful governance models which were highlighted by Selected Programs for Improving Catholic Education (SPICE). This network is a collaborative effort between the National Catholic Educational Association and the Roche Center at Boston College which seeks to promote school sustainability. The models in this report represent a shift away from the traditional parish model towards new configurations of authority, responsibility, membership, and purpose. The SPICE models include inter-parish and diocesan schools, as well as schools that are independent civil entities. They also include a range of board configurations—from advisory to limited jurisdiction—who are all taking on greater responsibility than boards in previous decades. These radical structural reforms, Haney argues, are necessary in some schools to keep the mission of Catholic education alive.

**Saroki, S., Levenick, C. (2009).** *Saving America's Urban Catholic Schools: A Guide for Donors*. Washington, DC: Philanthropy Roundtable.

This guidebook, created by the Philanthropy Roundtable, summarizes the crisis in inner-city Catholic education and demonstrates creative solutions taken by philanthropists. Though it addresses a range of issues (scholarships, public policy, human capital), new models of governance feature prominently. Through case studies, the report provides an overview of such strategies as: converting parochial schools to private schools (Brooklyn), creating a consortium of schools (Camden), allowing the diocese to take control (Bridgeport), and partnering with a university (Boston). Other innovative governance models—including the Cristo Rey Network and the Alliance for Catholic Education Academies—appear throughout the report, illustrating the intersection of governance, funding, and human capital issues. In each case study, this report emphasizes the powerful role of philanthropists in bringing about successful, lasting change.

# About FADICA

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Catholic foundation leaders and individual donors join FADICA to engage in a dynamic peer philanthropic community. FADICA members share a common interest in support for Catholic activities and initiatives, especially those that support the Church and aid the poor and vulnerable.

## **Mission**

FADICA is a network of private foundations and donors supporting Catholic-sponsored programs and institutions. FADICA's mission is to enable its members to be informed, involved and effective in addressing church needs through their philanthropy.

FADICA accomplishes this mission through ongoing education, fostering the exchange of information and experience, commissioning research, building a spirit of fellowship and shared faith, facilitating occasional joint funding ventures, and promoting interaction with Catholic leadership.

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FADICA serves as a dynamic philanthropic peer community and catalyst committed to Catholic initiatives, the vulnerable and the common good. We are guided by the joy of the Gospel and the Catholic social tradition.

## **Strategic Pillars**

- Joint Learning and Enhanced Collaboration
- Expanding Catholic Philanthropy and Stewardship
- Nourishing a Spirituality of Philanthropy

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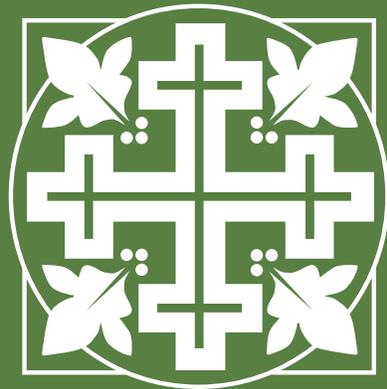
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