

Catholic School Advantage - Fact Sheet

Research Shows:

- The achievement gap is smaller in faith-based schools (Jeynes, 2007; Marks & Lee, 1989).
- Students in Catholic and other private schools demonstrate higher academic achievement than students from similar backgrounds in public schools (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Greeley, 1982; Sander, 1996).
- Latino and African American students who attend Catholic schools are more likely to graduate from high school and more likely to graduate from college than their public school peers (Benson, Yeager, Guerra, & Manno, 1986; Evans & Schwab, 1995; Neal, 1997; Sander & Krautman, 1995).
- The “multiply disadvantaged” benefit most from Catholic schools (Evans & Schwab, 1995; Greeley, 1982; Neal, 1997).
- Social class effects on educational achievement are significantly lessened in Catholic schools (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Greeley, 1982).
- The poorer and more at-risk a student is, the greater the relative achievement gains in Catholic schools (York, 1996).
- Graduates of Catholic high schools are more likely to vote than public school graduates (Dee, 2005).
- Graduates of Catholic schools are likely to earn higher wages than public school graduates (Hoxby, 1994; Neal, 1997).
- Catholic schools tend to produce graduates who are more civically engaged, more tolerant for diverse views, and more committed to service as adults (Campbell, 2001; Greeley & Rossi, 1966; Greene, 1998; Wolf, Greene, Kleitz, & Thalhammer, 2001).

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Nationwide, classrooms are seeing a rapidly growing number of Latino students, but American schools are not serving many of these children well. The successful integration of the Latino community, the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population, into fuller participation in the civic and economic life of the United States requires addressing issues of social justice to ensure the welfare of the common good.

Consider the following facts:

Latino students suffer from a persistent academic achievement gap.

- Only 53% of Latinos graduate from HS in 4 years
- Only 16% of Latino 18-year-olds are considered "college-ready."
- Only 25% of Latinos aged 18 to 24 enroll in college

Catholic schools, however, serve Latino and other underserved students remarkably well, and for Hispanic communities, they represent a beacon of hope. In urban America, Catholic schools often provide the highest quality education available to Latino children and families, and research suggests that students who attend Catholic schools enjoy an educational advantage that helps to close the achievement gap.

Catholic schools are uniquely able to serve Latino students well.

- Latinos who attend Catholic schools are 42% more likely to graduate from high school
- Latinos who attend Catholic schools are two-and-a-half times more likely to graduate from college

The educational attainment rates, as well as a broad range of advantageous holistic outcomes connected to Catholic schools, is what we refer to as the Catholic school advantage. There are many dimensions to the Catholic school advantage, including higher graduation rates, demonstrated academic achievement, character formation, civic engagement, and a variety of prosocial and pro-ecclesial effects.