K-12 PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEADERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF MARKETING PLANS & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP AND ENROLLMENT

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A Dissertation

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The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify the strategies that are currently being used by private Catholic school leaders to recruit and retain students. By asking school leaders directly, the study provides information from the perspective of those who are currently leading the schools rather than observations made by third parties. Leadership, marketing, and enrollment management theory helped to provide the framework for the interview questions and focus groups. School leaders were asked what strategies are currently being used to recruit and retain students, if they are involved in the process, what the results of their recruitment and retention activities are, if they have written marketing plans, and any advice they may have for future leaders. The study revealed that none of the schools interviewed have written marketing plans and the current strategies being used to recruit students are word of mouth marketing through parents, campus tours, open houses, and traditional advertising at the high school level including newspaper, television, and billboards. Additional findings were that all of the principals were directly involved in the recruiting process and they all have a deep concern for decreasing enrollment at their school. Additionally all of the leaders gave advice to future Catholic school leaders that they should have a passion for the job and build relationships with the community in which they serve.

Given the state of current decreases in enrollment, an enrollment management plan is outlined and recommended for implementation. The enrollment management model is designed specifically for K-12 private schools and includes numerous tools and strategies that can serve as
a baseline model to help administration increase enrollment and effectively market their schools. It is hoped that the results of this study will add to the scholarly literature on the topic of enrollment management at private Catholic schools and will help gain insight into strategies that can increase private Catholic school enrollment. It is hoped that the model created in this project can serve as a tool for private Catholic schools whose declining enrollment pose a threat to their survival.

Recommendations for future research include market segmentation studies, a study to quantify current recruitment efforts, understanding the relationship between tuition and enrollment, a possible one-system model for schools located in one town or area, and lastly why parents choose to send their child to a Catholic school.
To Corey, my motivation and my rock. You’ve been there since day one. Your life mapping skills have changed my life forever. Four degrees later you have cheered me on every step of the way. Without you this journey never would have been possible. I thank you and I love you.

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“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”

Eleanor Roosevelt, You Learn by Living: Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life.
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Enrollment management model for K-12 private schools
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

In the United States there has been a significant decrease in Catholic school market share since the 1960s. The waning market share is reflected in declining enrollments and the closure of Catholic schools. In the peak year of 1965, there were almost 13,500 schools enrolling 5.6 million students and today there are 6,841 schools enrolling 2,031,455 students (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). Overall, the enrollment decline nationally since the year 2000 has been greater than 621,000, a 23.4% decrease in the student population (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

While Catholic schools have been experiencing a significant decline in enrollments over the last forty years, non-Catholic private schools have experienced noteworthy growth. Private non-Catholic elementary school enrollment increased from 563,000 students in 1960 to 2,251,000 students in 1995 (McClellan, 2000). Catholic schools, in two geographic regions, have shown slight slowing of enrollment declines. The National Catholic Educational Association Southeast and West/Far West regions have identified aggressive recruiting as a significant reason for their enrollment success (Augenstein & Meitler, 2000). A need exists to add to the body of literature for the enrollment management processes of private Catholic schools and to understand what leadership role, if any, the Catholic school principal has in recruiting students to increase enrollments.

In addition to Catholic schools being at high risk for shutting their doors, Catholic churches in the United States have seen their fair share of struggles as well. The Catholic church has faced a dwindling number of vocations to the priesthood, legal battles surrounding sexual abuse within parishes, declining attendance, and financial issues to name only a few of the many issues (National Catholic Educational Association, 2012).
Background

History of Catholic Education

Exactly when and where the first Catholic school began in the United States remains an unknown. What is apparent is that Catholic education goes deep into the country’s history and can be traced back to French and Spanish settlements that sustained into the colonial era of the nation’s history (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003).

In the book National Catholic Educational Association: The First 100 Years, (2003) it is noted that in 1606 the Franciscans articulated a desire to teach children the Christian doctrine, as well as reading and writing, and went on to open a school in what is now known as St. Augustine, Florida. By the late 1600s, English colonists founded their own publicly funded schools that were predominantly protestant and were for the majority anti-Catholic (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). In 1677, in Newtown, Connecticut the Jesuits founded a prep school that was meant to mostly train boys considered candidates for later seminary study in Europe (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). The Newtown school eventually closed, but the Jesuits opened another one in the 1740s at Bohemia Manor, Maryland. During this time both the Catholic population and Catholic education continued to grow (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). The population rose to 25,000 by 1776 in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York State. In New Orleans, the Franciscans founded a school for boys in 1718 and the Ursulines established a school for girls in 1727 (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003).

Anti-Catholic bigotry was retreating thanks to the American Revolution and participation in that war by catholic heroes such as Charles, Daniel, and John Carroll (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). In 1782 Catholics in Philadelphia established St. Mary’s School which is thought by many to be the first parochial school in the United States (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003).

In 1791, the ratification of the Bill of Rights and the First Amendment promise of religious freedom helped Catholics further strengthen their place in post-Revolutionary America (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). The nineteenth century brought on a flood of innovative change and developments in education. As Catholic education grew, so did anti-Catholic bias (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). Ex-President John Adams wrote to Thomas Jefferson in 1816 that he feared that the reappearance of the Jesuits and their talents as printers, editors, writers, schoolmasters were a threat (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003). Although Adams went on to recognize that he would have to acknowledge them under America’s principles of religious liberty (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003).

The middle of the nineteenth century saw mounting interest in Catholic education simultaneous with the increasing numbers of Catholic immigrants. The attempt to free American public schools of the Protestant overtones failed and Catholics spurred a growth trend in the opening of more Catholic schools in order to meet the growing Catholic communities’ needs (National Catholic Educational Association, 2003).

From 1880 to 1920 the flood of immigration brought over one million Catholics to the United States (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). In 1884, at the United States Catholic Bishops Third Plenary Council in Baltimore, it was planned that a parochial school be built for every parish. The goal for building a school for every parish was never satisfied, although the development of Catholic schools began to increase (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). Before the
Civil War there were 200 Catholic schools in the United States, and within ten years there were 1,300 and 5,000 by the turn of the century (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

The second Vatican Council issued a foundational manuscript for Catholic schools. It was the Gravissimum Educationis, the Declaration on Christian Education (Abbott, 1966). Within the manuscript, the church declared that the purpose of Catholic school was to expand a community culture and a brotherly relationship with other people, so that authentic unity and peace on earth would be promoted (Abbott, 1966). The National Council of Catholic Bishops (1972) maintained that the purpose of Catholic schools in the United States had three parts. The first is the delivery of Jesus’ message, the second is the development of a Christian community, and the third is the act of service in Jesus’ name (The National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1972). The bishops at this Council called on the Catholic community to do everything in their potential to maintain and strengthen the Catholic schools in the United States (The National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1972).

The Code of Canon Law (Coriden, Green, & Heintshel, 1985) defines the rules and regulations of the Catholic Church globally. It holds Catholic schools in all nations accountable to certain objectives, strategies, and goals in compliance with the code (Coriden, Green, & Heintshel, 1985). Canons explicit to education include: Catholic schools be at a minimum as academically distinguished as other schools in the region (cc.806§2), the diocesan Bishop has authority over the school (cc.806§1), when possible Catholic parents are to send their children to Catholic schools (cc.798), when not available the priest is to see that Catholic schools or reasonable alternatives are established (cc. 802§2), and that Catholic parents are obliged and enjoy the right to educate their offspring (cc.793§1) (Coriden, Green, & Heintshel, 1985).
Public and Private School Comparisons

McDonald and Schultz (2012) define private schools as schools that are controlled by a non-governmental entity and financed from sources other than public taxation. Private schools have been a significant factor in American education since the colonial days (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). The fundamental right of parents to exercise freedom of choice in determining the education they deem most appropriate for their children is reflected in the existence of private schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). Parental school choice is normally thought to be based on numerous factors including social, cultural, educational, and religious values that are exhibited by the school (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) survey of private schools for the 2009-2010 school year, shows that there were 33,366 private elementary and secondary schools in the United States (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). These private schools account for 25.2 percent of all schools in America and they enroll approximately 4.7 million K-12 students (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). This enrollment figure represents 8.7 percent of the total student enrollment in the United States (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

According to McDonald and Schultz (2012) private schools are categorized as Catholic, other religious, and non-sectarian. The authors classify Catholic schools in three main areas: a) parochial, b) diocesan, and c) private (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). The category ‘other religious schools’ are comprised of three main areas: a) schools identified as conservative Christian, b) schools affiliated with a specific religious national denomination, and c) schools not aligned with a national denomination (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). Non-sectarian schools are a) regular, b) special emphasis, and c) special education. Catholic schools represent 21.3 percent of private schools; however, they carry a higher percentage of students by enrolling 42.8 percent of all private school students (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).
There is a clear picture of American high school graduates and their post-secondary school experiences thanks to data collected by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). Figure 1 represents the 2011 national secondary school graduation rates. Catholic schools graduate 99.4 percent of their students compared to 75.5 percent at public schools. In addition 84.9 percent of Catholic High School graduates will attended four year colleges versus 39.5 percent of public High School graduates (Broughman, Swaim, & Hryczaniuk, 2011; McDonald & Schultz, 2012; Stillwell, Stable, & Plotts, 2011; Snyder & Dillow, 2011).

**School Funding**

Constitutional battles were fought over compulsory public education and the liberty to choose alternative schooling in the twentieth century. In *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) and *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), the Supreme Court legitimized a dual system of education with decisions that protected the right of the non-public school to exist and the freedom of parental choice in regards to choosing alternative schooling for their children (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

The school choice and funding debate still exists today as part of a national debate about educational reform and the rights of parents to determine the best educational fit for their children (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). In *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002), the Supreme Court ruled that publically funded vouchers can be used by parents to pay for private and religious school tuitions (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). The year 2011 fueled the school choice movements nationally due to the actions of state legislators in various regions of the nation. In 2011, Congress reinstated the Opportunity Scholarship program for the District of Columbia; numerous states had legislation pending, and thirteen states enacted school choice legislation (McDonald &
Schultz, 2012). The state of Indiana enacted the largest choice program by creating a voucher program, expanding the existing tax-credit scholarship program, and creating a $1,000 personal tax deduction for educational expenses for families with children in private schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

While school choice programs are beneficial for some parents, they often do not assist the middle income parents who cannot afford the increasing cost of tuition for private Catholic schools (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). In the past decade Catholic school tuition has risen 84.8 percent for elementary schools and 99.6 percent for secondary schools. The single most documented barrier to a parents’ ability to enroll their children in a Catholic school is tuition (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

The average per pupil tuition in parish elementary schools is $3,673 (CITE). That is approximately 62.2 percent of actual cost per pupil. The actual cost per pupil is $5,387. About 93.9 percent of elementary schools provide tuition assistance. The average high school tuition is $8,182. That is approximately 80% of the actual costs per pupil. The actual cost per pupil is $10,228. About 97 percent of secondary schools provide tuition assistance. There are many ways that the difference between tuition charged and per pupil cost is covered. They include subsidy from the parish, religious congregation resources, development programs, and fundraising activities. The average public school per pupil cost to educate a child is $11,282. Based on this evidence, Catholic schools provide approximately $23 billion a year in savings for the nation (Cicade & O’Hara, 2012; Cornman & Noel, 2012; Gautier & Cidade, 2011; McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

**Statement of the Problem**

Inevitably every product and service passes through a number of stages as they enter, get established in, and leave the marketplace. These stages are commonly referred to as the lifecycle
of a product or service (Levy & Grewal, 2010). In their life cycles, products or services typically pass thorough four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline (Levy & Grewal, 2010). The history of Catholic school education follows the same lifecycle. Typically when consumers start to buy the product or service, the product enters the introduction stage (Levy & Grewal, 2010). Dwyer (2009) shares that during the introduction phase for Catholic schools “schools were begun by religious communities, upon the invitation of the Bishop. The stated purpose was to educate the emigrant Catholic population, and protect the state from the heavily Protestant bias the public schools. Catholic schools grew slowly but steadily” (Dwyer, 2009, pp. 1-2).

In the growth stage, the product gains acceptance, demand increases, sales increase, and competitors may begin to emerge in the new product or service category (Grewal & Levy, 2010). In the growth phase of the Catholic schools in America, Dwyer (2009) states that

As the success of Catholic schools grew, so too did the churches to support. In 1884 at the third planetary Council in Baltimore, American bishops all but required Catholic parents to enroll their children in a Catholic school. In addition, new parishes were expected to build a school before they built a church. (pp. 1-2)

In the maturity stage of the product or services lifecycle, sales typically tend to reach their peak (Levy & Grewal, 2010). Due to this fact organizations continuously try to rejuvenate their products or services by adding new features or repositioning them in the market (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Dwyer (2009) shares that

As Catholic schools reached their peak of popularity and success in the mid-1960s, a number of factors came together to begin a period of decline. The church changed its rhetoric on schools from a mandate to an encouragement. Other private, independent, and religious schools began to appear to compete with Catholic schools. Congregations
of sisters, long the main supporters and staffers of schools, began to decline in number, and began to enter into other ministries of service. Laymen and women required salaries significantly higher than religious statements, thus significantly increasing costs to sponsoring parishes. And finally, as the Catholic population in America became more educated and affluent, and then moved from city parishes to suburban parishes, far less likely to have schools. As a result, the mission of Catholic schools (to protect immigrant children from public schools, and prepare them for successful adulthood) came increasingly into question. (p. 1)

It now is apparent that the American Catholic schools have progressed from the maturity stage of the lifecycle and into the decline phase. In regards to the declining market share of the Catholic schools Dwyer (2009) shares the following insights:

Enrollment continues to decline nationally, and school closures have increased, particularly in urban areas. Parents, as a whole, are less loyal and more demanding. And too many schools seem reluctant to plan and institute change strategies. If, in fact, Catholic schools are in the decline phase, it is currently not a foregone conclusion that they will soon cease to exist. Like many products, new strategies, effective marketing, and renewed commitment to mission, can reverse negative trends and lead to new growth. What is clear though is that Catholic school leaders can no longer rest on past laurels, or continue to resist change. Without the benefit of the church mandate, or an unrealistically low tuition, Catholic schools must develop a marketing mindset in order to tell their story, and convince prospective and current parents that they need what Catholic schools have to offer. (pp. 1-2)
From its inception to its current state of decline, private Catholic schools in America have served as a foundation for many families seeking alternative options to educate their children (Dwyer, 2009). It is now more imperative than ever that Catholic school leaders’ strategically develop a plan to save the Catholic schools.

There was a steady growth of Catholic schools from 1920 to the mid-1960s. In 1965 the peak year, there were 13,500 schools enrolling 5.6 million students (McDonald & Schultz, 2012, p. 2). A drastic decline was seen in both the number of schools and enrollment numbers in the next two decades. In the early 1990s a slowing of both closures and enrollment decline was seen (McDonald & Schultz, 2012, p. 2). The end of the decline was thought to be in sight and was relatively stable until 2008. However due to the downturn in the economy and demographic changes in some areas, the decrease began to accelerate again over the past few years (McDonald & Schultz, 2012, p. 2).

Enrollment figures for the 2011-2012 school year indicate that there was a 1.7 percent decrease from the previous academic year, and there are 34,417 fewer students (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). Enrollment has declined 23.4 percent for a total loss of 621,000 students since the year 2000 in all regions of the country (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). The largest recent decreases are primarily located in the Great Lakes and Mideast areas. Factors that contribute to the declining enrollment are the fact that large numbers of Catholic schools were built in older industrial cities of the nation to serve the children of Catholic immigrants that populated these areas (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). According to McDonald and Schultz (2012), in the beginning the schools were funded through the generosity of parishioners and currently succeeding generations of Catholics have moved out of these neighborhoods and into the suburbs, no longer attending these original schools. Parishes have made numerous efforts to keep
these schools open to serve newly arriving immigrants and low income families even though the parish populations have steadily declined and the bulk of the new students are not catholic (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

In addition to decreasing enrollments, Catholic schools, not unlike most public schools, are faced with the fact that school leaders and principals are often not trained in the areas of enrollment management and/or marketing. With a priest serving as the school superintendent, this role often goes without the understanding of what needs to be done to drive enrollment as well. When the schools’ survival is based on enrollment, leadership and knowledge of enrollment management becomes a key concern for the future viability of the school. Dwyer (2009) supports strategic planning and marketing in Catholic schools and states that “schools that prosper do so by creating and keeping new families (customers). Successful marketing in Catholic schools involves carefully formulated programs, as opposed to random activities. It depends on thorough advanced planning and careful implementation” (Dwyer, 2009, p. 2)

Savage (2002) lists retention as another top issue for private Catholic elementary schools. Eighth grade enrollments in 1997 were 21.7 percent less than the first grade enrollments in 1990 (Savage, 2002). McDonald and Schultz (2012) note that in the last decade it has become increasingly difficult for dioceses to provide the financial assistance required to keep these schools open considering the need for affordable tuition and reasonable compensation for teachers.

Although the number of Catholic schools continues to decline, numerous authors have researched and noted the effectiveness of Catholic school education (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Greeley, 1982). As well as school effectiveness, researchers have also begun to examine the benefit of religious faith on mental and physical health outcomes (Plante, Yancey, Sherman, &
Guertin, 2000). Results from a study conducted by Plante, Yancey, Sherman, and Guertin in 2000 found that the strength of a college student’s religious faith was significantly associated with coping with stress, optimism, experiencing meaning in life, viewing life as a positive challenge, and low anxiety.

In addition to academics, many educators agree that today there is a stronger need for character development within schools than for past generations of students. Dr. Rudy Crew (2007) discusses the fact that:

Whether in private school or public school, whether rich or poor, whether born to a twisted life at the outset or living a life twisted by virtue of things that happen along the way, your child will be confronted with the need to have some qualities that people will not ever teach him or talk to him about, and if they do, it will probably be after he has made a mistake. But given that the United States needs a population of thinking, functioning people to meet the challenges of the global economy, we cannot leave this work up to chance. We need to prepare each child now. The outcome, the product we need our schools to produce our children to come out of our school system with all the qualities they need to compete, and we will have to reframe and redesign schooling to do that. The four qualities of a mature and conscious contributor to society are 1) personal integrity, 2) workplace literacy, 3) civic awareness, and 4) academic proficiency. (p. 33)

Private Catholic school settings continue to embrace the above listed qualities and teach these qualities to our children, thus creating educational cultures of caring (Dwyer, 2009).

College attendance and college graduation is another relatively consistent positive Catholic school effect that is often noted by researchers. Evans and Schwab (1995) found that attending a Catholic high school raised the probability of attending college. This result was
confirmed by Figlio and Stone (1999), who also found that attending a Catholic school had a positive impact on the selectivity of the college attended. Finally, Neal (1997) found that Catholic high school students are more likely to graduate from college.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify the strategies that are currently being used by private Catholic school leaders to recruit and retain students. By asking school leaders directly, the study will provide information from the perspective of those who are currently leading the schools rather than observations made by third parties. Leadership, marketing, enrollment management, consumer behavior, and school choice theory helped to provide the framework for the interview questions and focus groups. Additionally, school leaders were asked what the results of their recruitment and retention activities are. It is hoped that the results of this study will add to the scholarly literature on the topic of enrollment management of private Catholic schools and gain insight into strategies that can increase private Catholic school enrollment.

**Research Questions**

The questions addressed in this study were:

1. What strategies are currently used to recruit and retain students in K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio?
2. What involvement does the principal have in student recruitment and retention activities in K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio?
3. What are the ongoing results of the recruitment and retention activities at K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio?
Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is vast due to the critical times that private Catholic schools are facing. With the national enrollment decline being greater than 23.4% since 2000 (McDonald & Schultz, 2012), private Catholic schools and the Catholic Church must begin to research and address possible solutions to their current business and strategy models.

Given the complexity of the topic area, an exploratory qualitative study such as this dissertation will not only add to the body of literature, it will also cast light into the current strategies being used by school leaders to address the enrollment problems that they are currently faced with.

Unaddressed, the current enrollment situation jeopardizes the continued existence of the Catholic schools system in the United States. Just a generation ago the National Council of Catholic Bishops (1973) called on the Catholic community to do everything in their power to strengthen and maintain the Catholic school system in the United States. One of the objectives of the present study is to aid in that effort.

Catholic schools have increasingly recruited non-Catholic students to compensate for the declining enrollments. The percentage of non-Catholic students enrolled in Catholic schools has risen from 2.7 percent in 1970 to 11.2 percent a decade later and today is 15.4 percent (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). The presence of non-Catholic students in Catholic schools cannot be ignored as it is not without consequence to the identity and mission of the school (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).
Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are used:

**Brand awareness**: measures how many customers in a market are familiar with the brand and what it stands for; created through repeated exposures of the various brand elements (brand name, logo, symbol, character, or slogan) in the firm's communications to customers (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**: a business philosophy and set of strategies, programs, and the systems that focus on identifying and building loyalty among the firm's most valued customers (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Differentiated segmentation strategy**: a strategy through which a firm targets several market segments with a different offering for each (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Enrollment Management**: an assertive approach to ensuring a steady supply of qualified students required to maintain institutional vitality (Kemerer, Baldrige, & Green, 1982).

**Geographic segmentation**: the grouping of consumers on the basis of where they live (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Integrated marketing communications (IMC)**: represents the promotion dimension of the 4P's; encompasses a variety of communication disciplines-general advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and electronic media-in combination to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communicative impact (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Leadership**: a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2007).
**Macro environmental factors:** aspects of the external environment that affect a company's business, such as the culture, demographics, social issues, technological advances, economic situation, and political-regulatory environment (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Market positioning:** involves the process of defining the marketing mix variables so that target customers have a clear, distinctive, desirable understanding of what the product does or represents in comparison with competing products (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Market segmentation:** the process of dividing the market into groups of customers with different needs, wants, or characteristics-who therefore might appreciate products or services geared especially for them (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Marketing:** an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, capturing, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders (Gundlach, 2007).

**Marketing Mix (the four P’s):** product, price, place, and promotion-the controllable set of activities that a firm uses to respond to the wants of its target markets (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Marketing Plan:** a written document composed of an analysis of the current marketing situation, opportunities and threats for the firm, marketing objectives and strategy specified in terms of the 4P’s, action programs, and projected or pro forma income and other financial statements. (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Private Schools:** those schools controlled by a non-governmental entity and financed from sources other than public taxation (McDonald & Schultz, 2012).

**Psychographics:** used in segmentation; delves into how consumers describe themselves; allows people to describe themselves using those characteristics that help them choose how they occupy
their time (behavior) and what underlying psychological reasons determine the choices (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Situation analysis:** second step in a marketing plan; uses a SWOT analysis that assesses both the internal environment with regard to its strengths and weaknesses and the external environment in terms of its opportunities and threats (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Target marketing/targeting:** the process of evaluating the attractiveness of various segments and then deciding which to pursue as a market (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter one describes the background and purpose for the study. It provides the definitions of key terms to be used during the study, as well as explanation of the research questions to be addressed. Chapter two provides a review of the literature related to leadership, marketing, enrollment management, and school choice. Chapter three provides the research focus for the study. Using a qualitative exploratory framework, focus groups and in-depth interviews of private Catholic school principals were used to collect the data that was used in the study. Chapter four provides an analysis of the results of the data collection, and chapter five provides a discussion of the results, conclusions of the study, and implications for future research.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify the strategies that are currently being used by private Catholic school leaders to recruit and retain students. Specifically, the researcher sought to understand how the experiences of these school leaders’ may have influenced their leadership and enrollment management strategies and styles. To go forth with the study, it was critical that a review of the current literature be completed.

The review of the literature explored the following concepts relevant to school leaders’ perceptions of marketing planning activities and enrollment management within private Catholic schools in the United States: leadership, marketing strategy, enrollment management, the consumer decision making process, and school choice. Leadership theory was reviewed to provide a context for understanding what skills and knowledge were perceived as being needed by the school leaders to effectively lead a private Catholic school. A review of the literature on marketing, enrollment management, and consumer decision making processes provides an understanding of the theories, history, and structure of how these processes operate and help to provide financial success and longevity in other organizations. Finally, school choice theory was reviewed to provide a context for understanding the macro educational environment in the United States under which private Catholic schools operate.

Leadership

Within private Catholic schools the principal often serves the school in various capacities with leader of the school being one of his or her top priorities. In addition to leading the school, the principal deals with the financial health and longevity of the school. Strategic planning, marketing, and enrollment management are critical factors in the leadership of the tuition driven private Catholic school. Daft (2008) defines the word leader as “a person in authority and his or her influence upon the followers or organization that he or she is leading” (p.4). Additional
definitions include “an influence relationship amongst leaders and followers who aim for real
changes in outcomes that reflect their shared purposes” (Daft, 2008, p.4) or “a process whereby
an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2007, p. 3).

Organizations today must undergo rapid changes in order to stay competitive. This rapid
change requires that the organization have structures that are adaptive and work efficiently, as
well as requiring the leaders to have vision (Daft, 2008). Understanding the power of strategic
planning processes allows leaders to help secure the financial future of their tuition driven
private school.

The Role of the Leader

Maxwell (2008) shares that leadership qualities can be learned and developed. He further
states that there are ten leadership principles that one must know and understand to excel beyond
straightforward managing and into true leadership. These ten principles are: creating positive
influence, setting the right priorities, modeling integrity, creating positive change, problem
solving, having the right positive attitude, developing people, charting the vision, practicing self-
discipline, and developing staff (Maxwell, 2008).

Specific to the present study are the second, fourth, fifth, eighth, and tenth principles. They are imperative to the success and future existence of private tuition-driven Catholic
schools in the United States. The second principle is what sets the leader apart in his or her
ability to think ahead and prioritize responsibilities (Maxwell, 2008). The fourth principle
focuses on leaders who are receptive to new ideas and create a lincolntes of change within their
organization (Maxwell, 2008). The fifth principle focuses on the leader's ability to recognize a
problem before it becomes an emergency (Maxwell, 2008). This point is especially imperative
for Catholic school leaders given the current financial situation for the majority of private Catholic schools in the United States. The eighth principle focuses on the fact that great leaders know where the organization needs to go and they are able to persuade others to follow them to get there (Maxwell, 2008). Leaders who lack vision or the ability to successfully pass it on are limited leaders and will not be of assistance for the future security of private Catholic schools. Gary Yukl (1981) adds that a work unit's performance depends on multiple variables some of which include availability of resources, teamwork, cooperation, organization of work, subordinate ability, and subordinate effort. He argues that the leader leads by influencing situational variables and intervenes over both long and short periods of time, which in the end influences the variables to make the situation more favorable and helps subordinates improve performance (Yukl, 1981).

Maxwell (2008) describes that good leaders set the environment for visioning by cultivating trust through bridging the organization's vision and the follower’s personal goals. The tenth principle discusses the growth and development of the people within the school (Maxwell, 2008). Maxwell (2008) states that exceptional leaders who keep control of finance, personnel, and planning end up leading winning teams which ultimately creates successful organizations.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) also offer clarity on the roles of leaders. For over thirty years, Kouzes and Posner have traveled worldwide researching the topic of exemplary leadership. They have identified five main practices that are most common to the successful leader. Kouzes and Posner (2002) define these five practices of exemplary leadership as modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Kouzes and Posner (2002) have found that exemplary leaders have a passion for their
institutions, their causes, their technologies, their communities, and that true leaders care about making a difference in the world.

A true challenge for today's school leader is to maintain a future focused vision because on a daily basis there are numerous distractions. Many school leaders find it challenging to focus on the future when dealing on a daily basis with an influx of voicemails, e-mails, student situations, parent situations, and compliance with state and federal laws. Maxwell (2008) suggests that too many priorities paralyze leaders and that when minuscule priorities demand too much of leaders, vast problems arise within the organization. Too often they have learned too late what is really important to the save a deteriorating organization.

Gary Yukl (1981) adds that a leader leads by influencing situational variables and that the performance of a work unit depends on multiple variables. Yukl (1981) states that the performance of a work unit depends on multiple variables that include teamwork and cooperation, availability of resources, task structure, subordinate ability and effort, and the external coordination of work unit operations with other parts of the organization. He adds that leaders’ influence the situational variables by influencing variables directly and also influences the perceived importance of intervening variables (Yukl, 1981). Over both short and long periods of time a leader can correct deficiencies in intervening variables, influence subordinates to internalize values and beliefs, develop skills through selection and training, initiate new activities, and modify formal structures of the organization amongst others (Yukl, 1981). Overall, Yukl (1981) believes that the leader influences variables to make the organizational situations more favorable and over time develop subordinates to improve their performance.
Strategic Leadership

Within tuition-driven private Catholic schools, school performance and financial security are not matters of luck; they are determined mainly by the choices that the leaders make. Strategic leadership is one of the most critical issues facing tuition-driven private Catholic schools today. Strategic leadership is defined by Daft (2008) as “the capacity to anticipate and envision the future, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and work with others to commence changes that will generate a competitive advantage for the organization in the future” (p.388). Often times, the involvedness of the school environment and the ambiguity of the school's future can overwhelm leaders. The leader may be apt to focus on internal issues as opposed to future strategic activities (Daft, 2008).

Daft (2008) states that it is often easier for leaders to deal with operational and daily issues where they can see instant results and feel a sense of control. He goes on to share that many leaders today are flooded with information. Leaders are often overwhelmed and may have difficulty finding the quiet time needed for big picture thinking (Daft, 2008). Yet given these facts, no organization can thrive for the long term without a clear perspective and agenda for the future. Daft (2008) describes strategic leadership as being responsible for the external environment in regards to choices about vision, mission, strategy, and implementation. He states that:

The vision is a clear, compelling vision of where the organization wants to be in five to ten years. The vision reflects the environment and works in concert with the company's mission-its core values, purpose, and the reason for existence. Strategy provides direction for translating the vision into action and is the basis for the development of specific mechanisms to help the organization achieve goals. Strategies are intentions,
whereas implementation is to the basic organizational architecture (structure, incentives) that makes things happen. (Daft, 2008, p. 388)

Daft (2008) goes on to state that “strong missions that reflect a noble purpose and guiding visions are both important, but they are not enough alone to make strong, powerful organizations. For organizations to succeed they need to ways to translate vision, values, and purpose into action.” (p. 403). Daft shares that formulating strategy is where the hard work begins for most leaders. Strategic management is defined by Daft (2008) as the set of decisions and actions used to formulate and implement specific strategies that will achieve a competitively superior fit between the organization and its environment so as to achieve organizational goals (p. 403). Daft (2008) argues that it is the leaders’ job to find the fit and translate it into action.

Strategy can be a useful tool for school leaders that are trying to decide which direction to go in for the future (Daft, 2008). Strategy is defined by Daft (2008) as the general plan of action that describes resource allocation and other activities for dealing with the environment and helping the organization attain its goals (p. 403). Daft (2008) urges that “developing effective strategy requires actively listening to people both inside and outside the organization, as well as examining trends and discontinuities in the environment that can be used to gain an edge” (p. 403).

While developing a strategy, a leader must think about and develop strategies that focus on three main areas; core competence, developing synergy, and creating value for customers (Daft, 2008). Daft (2008) describes core competence as something an organization does extremely well in comparison to competitors (p. 404). School leaders must try to identify the school's unique strengths and illustrate to the public what differentiates their school from the others in the district. Marketers often times refer to core competence as strategic competitive
advantage. Once a strategy is determined by the school's leader it must be appropriately implemented. Daft (2008) describes strategy implementation as putting strategy into action by adjusting various parts of the organization and directing resources to accomplish strategic goals (p. 405). Daft (2008) shares that as much as seventy percent of all business strategies never get implemented reflecting the complexity of strategy implementation. When school leaders fail to provide a clear direction and secure the financial future, schools fail, specifically tuition driven private schools. Daft (2008) shares “leaders establish organizational direction through vision and strategy. They are responsible for studying the organizations environment, considering how it may be different in the future, and setting a direction everyone can believe it” (p. 412). He goes on to state “leaders decide on a direction with their rational analysis as well as intuition, personal experience, and hopes and dreams. Leaders make a real difference for their organization only when they link vision to strategic action, so that the vision is more than just a dream” (Daft, 2008, p. 413).

Bass (2007) notes that if leaders don’t take care of the present they will not have a future. He argues that leaders must free themselves from day-to-day operations and short-term goal orientation to focus on long-term threats and opportunities (Bass, 2007). Becoming distinctive and continued improvement on the organizations ability to deliver to its stakeholders must be top priorities in leaders’ strategy (Bass, 2007).

**Stewardship and Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership and stewardship do all of the things that Kouzes and Posner (2002) suggest, but they do them with a specific method and character to leadership that differentiates their approach from that of other traditional leadership theory.
Robert Greenleaf (1977) and Peter Block (1993) introduced concepts that focus on partnership as opposed to patriarchy. By letting go of past concepts of autocratic models of leadership, leaders will in turn empower their employees to achieve greatness (Block, 1993; Greenleaf, 1977). The concepts of stewardship and servant leadership are profoundly important to leadership theory. Servant Leadership served as the leadership turning point in the 1970’s in regards to the way we lead people and run our organizations (Spears, 2004). Greenleaf’s writings made a deep and lasting impression on the future work of thought leaders on the subject of leadership theory including Covey, Senge, Wheatley, Blanchard, and Block (Spears, 2004, p. 7). Traditional hierarchical and autocratic models of leadership are diminishing to models based on teamwork and community. This rising approach to leadership began with Robert Greenleaf in the 1970’s (Spears, 2004, p. 7).

Standard leadership practices have shifted throughout the years toward the ideas put forth by Robert Greenleaf (1977). Greenleaf’s ideas of servant leadership came through many years of experience in working to shape large organizations and formulated when he read Hermann Hesse’s short novel *Journey to the East* (Spears, 2004, p. 8). Greenleaf had come to the understanding from reading Hesse’s story that the great leader is first a servant to others, and that this simple fact is central to the leader’s greatness (Spears, 2004, p. 8). “True leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others” (Spears, 2004, p. 8). The emphasis of servant leadership is to increase service to others, a holistic approach, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making (Spears, 2004, p. 8).

Greenleaf (1977) went on to state that the best test of the servant leader is as follows: do those served grow as persons and do they, while being served become healthier, wiser, freer, and more likely themselves to become servant leaders? Greenleaf (1977) adds to our understanding of
servant leadership by identifying ten characteristics of servant leaders: 1) listening intently to others, 2) empathy even in the face of unacceptable behavior or performance, 3) healing of one’s self and our relationships with others, 4) awareness especially of self, 5) persuasion rather than reliance on positional power and authority, 6) conceptualization continual learning in skill, thinking beyond, and the ability to see the whole while others see only the parts, 7) foresight the ability to see outcomes both obvious and unintended, 8) stewardship holding something in trust for another, 9) commitment to the growth of people as intrinsically valuable beyond their contribution, and 10) building community within the workplace and modeling the way for others.

In 1993, building upon Robert Greenleaf’s Servant Leadership concepts, Peter Block wrote the book *Stewardship*. In his book, Block (1993) introduces a concept that challenges leaders to choose partnership over patriarchy. Peter Block (1993) challenges the notion of leadership and encourages replacing the term with stewardship. Block (1993) believes that leadership alone does not have the ability to produce essential changes within our organizations, and goes on to share his feeling that leadership predictably becomes self-congratulatory and over-controlling (Block, 1993). Block (1993) goes on to discuss the fact that we expect our leaders to choose service over self-interest, but it seems the choice is rarely made.

Catholic school leaders can embrace the concepts of Greenleaf, Block, Kouzes and Posner, and Maxwell by creating school cultures of caring that include the entire school in the process of securing their financial future through strategic planning processes. It is not enough for a leader to just have vision. The organizational members must acknowledge and commit to the leader's vision and when they do the organizations ability to change and reach its potential increases (Kouzes & Posener, 2002). According to Kouzes and Posner (2002) a vision is all-
encompassing of constituents’ aspirations, it is an ideal and distinctive image of the future for the common good. Kouzes and Posner (2002) go on to state that when leaders effectively communicate a vision it has very powerful positive effects which include increased job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, loyalty, clarity about the organizations values, pride, and organizational productivity.

Additionally, Kouzes and Posner (2002) encourage leaders to question the status quo. Some policies and procedures are vital to predict activity and on the other hand, some policies and procedures are simply a matter of tradition (Kouzes and Posner, 2002). Great leaders eliminate useless procedures and policies and implement new strategies that will grow the organization and secure its future (Kouzes and Posner, 2002).

In addition to the five practices of exemplary leadership Kouzes and Posner (2010) identify ten essential lessons that effective leaders must learn: individuals make a difference, ability is the foundation of leadership, values drive commitment, focusing on the future sets leaders apart, leaders cannot do it alone, trust rules, challenge the crucible for greatness, leaders either lead by example or they do not lead at all, the best leaders are the best learners, and leadership is an affair of the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). Especially imperative to the present study is that point that leaders need to focus on the future due to the current declining enrollments within private Catholic schools in the United States. Based on the surveys of what characteristics people want in leaders, Kouzes and Posner (2010) found that only honesty was more important than being forward-looking, and that all leaders should view themselves as their organizations future department. A leader’s future outlook has a tremendous influence on an organization's success, and by understanding the current reality leaders can be better prepared to address and prosper in difficult times (Kouzes and Posner, 2010). Often time’s understanding
and implementing specific types of strategy, including marketing strategy, can help leaders address and prepare for the future ahead.

**Marketing Strategy**

The American Marketing Association describes marketing as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, capturing, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (Gundlach, 2007). Armstrong and Kotler (2013) define marketing as “the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers and return” (p. 5). Marketing has conventionally been divided into four areas known as the marketing mix or the four P’s: product, price, place, and promotion (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010; Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010). The 4 P’s are the controllable set of activities that the organization uses to respond to the wants of its target markets (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Schools typically fall under the service category which is typically intangible goods and customer benefits that are created by people and cannot be separated from the producer (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Marketing has also become a chief part of strategic planning in recent years for many not-for-profit organizations, including schools, colleges, hospitals, museums, and churches (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013).

Armstrong and Kotler (2013) present a simple five step model of marketing planning and development that include understanding the marketplace and understanding customer needs and wants, designing a customer driven marketing strategy, designing an integrated marketing program that delivers superior value, building profitable relationships and creating happy customers, and lastly captures value from customers to generate profits and customer equity (Armstrong and Kotler, 2013). There are many models of marketing planning that are typically
used by leaders when considering marketing strategy development. This paper chooses to focus on only a few of the main models by Armstrong & Kotler, 2013, Grewal & Levy, 2010, and Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010.

Kotler et al. (2010) share with the readers a history of marketing in three phases in their book *Marketing 3.0*. Kotler et al. (2010) stats that:

In a nutshell marketing has revolved around three major disciplines: product management, customer management, and brand management. In fact, marketing concepts evolved from a focus on product management in the 1950s and 1960s to a focus on customer management in the 1970s and 1980s. It then evolved further and added the discipline of brand management in the 1990s and the 2000s. The continuous adaption of marketing concepts to different areas of human lives is what keeps marketing exciting. Ever since Neil Borden coined the infamous marketing mix term in the 1950s and Jerome McCarthy introduced the 4P's in the 1960s, marketing concepts have undergone significant transformation while adapting to the changing environment. (p. 25)

Kotler et al. (2010) adds that:

Once we look more deeply at marketing’s roots in more fully comprehend them, we discovered ten indisputable credos that integrate marketing and values into our organizations and cultures. Credo one: love your customers, respect your competitors, Credo two: be sensitive to change, be ready to transform, Credo three: guard your name, be clear about who you are, Credo four: customers are diverse; go first to those who can benefit most from you, Credo five: always offer a good package at a fair price, Credo six: always make yourself available, spread the good news, Credo seven: get your customers, keep and grow them, Credo eight: whatever your business, it is a service business, Credo
nine: always refine your business process in terms of quality, cost, and delivery, and

Credo 10: gather relevant information, but use wisdom in making your final decision. (p. 169-178)

**Value-Based Marketing and Competitive Advantage**

Value-based marketing orientation allows the organization to recognize what customers view as the key benefits of a given service and how they can improve those benefits or services (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Consumers make explicit and/or implicit trade-offs between the alleged benefits of a service and its costs (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Customers logically search for options that provide the maximum benefit at the lowest cost (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). Typically there are three activities that an organization focuses on to become value driven (Grewal & Levy, 2012). First they openly share information about their customers and competitors across their own organization. Second, they attempt to balance their customers’ benefits and costs; and, third they focus on building relationships with their customers (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

Grewal and Levy (2010) share that marketing strategy identifies an organizations’ target market, an associated marketing mix, and the foundation upon which the organization plans to construct a sustainable competitive advantage. Sustainable competitive advantage is “an advantage over the competition that is not easily copied, and thus can be maintained over a long period of time” (Grewal & Levy, 2010, p. 33). Ultimately, sustainable competitive advantage can help organizations by supporting their competitive advantage, minimizing competitive pressures, and enhance long-term profits, consequently increasing their chances of survival (Grewal & Levy, 2010). In addition to competitive advantage, organizations want to develop unique market positions (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). Armstrong and
Kotler (2013) define position as “the place it occupies relative to competitors products in consumer's minds” (p. 50) and positioning as “arranging for a product to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers” (p. 50). When positioning offerings, the organization should first identify probable value differences that provide competitive advantages on which to construct the position (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Therefore, according to Armstrong and Kotler (2013) effective positioning begins with differentiation. They define differentiation as “actually differentiating the market offering to create superior customer value” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013, p. 50). If the school is perceived to be exactly like other schools in the market, families have no reason to send their children there and pay additional tuition in addition to their state tax dollars.

**The Marketing Plan**

Grewal and Levy (2010) state that “good marketing is not a random activity, it requires thoughtful planning with an emphasis on the ethical implications of any of those decisions on society in general” (p. 4). This attentive planning normally consists of creating and following a marketing plan. A marketing plan is defined as “a written document composed of an analysis of the current marketing situation, opportunities and threats for the firm, marketing objectives and strategies specified in terms of the 4P's, action programs, and projected or pro forma income and other financial statements” (Grewal & Levy, 2010, p. 38). There are usually three major phases of the marketing plan that includes planning, implementation, and control (Grewal & Levy, 2010). It is imperative that everyone involved in implementing the plan know what the overall objectives for the school are and how the school is planning to meet those objectives. In addition, a written marketing/enrollment plan also serves as a communication piece to the public
and serves as a reference point for evaluating whether or not the school is meeting its goals (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

A marketing/enrollment plan characteristically involves five steps (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). In the first step of the planning phase, the leaders in conjunction with other staff define the mission and/or vision of the organization (Grewal & Levy, 2010). For the second step the leaders’ evaluate the situation by assessing how various players, both inside and outside the organization, affect the firm's potential for success (Grewal & Levy, 2010). This is traditionally known as situation analysis. Situation analysis is conducted by using a SWOT analysis which stands for strengths and weaknesses in regards to the internal environment and opportunities and threats in regards to the external environment (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

In the implementation phase, leaders identify and evaluate different opportunities by engaging in a process known as segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) which is step three of the market/enrollment planning process (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Armstrong and Kotler define market segmentation as “dividing a market into smaller segments of buyers with distinct needs, characteristics, or behaviors that might require separate marketing strategies or mixes” (p. 164), they go on to define targeting as “the process of evaluating each market segment attractiveness in selecting one or more segments to enter” (p. 164), and positioning as “arranging for a market offering to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers” (p. 164). The leader is then responsible for implementing the marketing mix using the 4P’s, which is step four. According to Grewal and Levy (2010)

When the firm has identified and evaluated different growth opportunities by performing an STP analysis, the real action begins. It has decided what to do, how to do it, and how
many resources should be allocated to it. In the fourth step of the planning process, marketers implement the actual marketing mix-product, price, promotion, and place-for each product and service on the basis of what they believe their target markets will value. At the same time, they make important decisions about how they will allocate their scarce resources to their various products and services. (p. 45)

Step five, recognized as the control phase includes evaluating the performance of the marketing strategy and taking any needed corrective action (Grewal & Levey, 2010).

After following the five steps for market/enrollment planning, the written document itself normally contains nine sections. They are the executive summary, organization overview/mission statement, objectives or goals, situation analysis, market/product/customer analysis, marketing strategy, financial projections, implementation plan, and evaluation (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

**Marketing Information**

According to Armstrong and Kotler (2013) “to create value for customers and build meaningful relationships with them, marketers must first gain fresh, deep insights into what customers need and want. Companies use these customer insights to develop competitive advantage” (p. 96). In marketing information systems are designed and used to give organizations access to information that will enable them to craft strong marketing/enrollment plans, generate customer value, and form stronger customer relationships (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Armstrong and Kotler (2013) define marketing information systems (MIS) as “procedures dedicated to assessing information needs, developing the needed information, and helping decision makers to use the information to generate and validate actionable customer and market insights” (p. 97).
Organizational leaders typically obtain the needed information for MIS systems from internal data, marketing intelligence, and marketing research (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Internal databases are composed of electronic collections of consumer market information gathered from data sources internally or within the organization (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Competitive marketing intelligence is “the systematic collection and analysis of publicly available information about consumers, competitors, and developments in the marketing environment” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013, p. 99).

Marketing research is defined as “the systematic design, collection, analysis, and reporting of data relevant to a specific marketing situation facing an organization” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013, p. 100). During marketing research a problem is defined, a research objective is recognized using exploratory research, descriptive research, or causal research, a research plan is created, data collection begins, and then the findings are interpreted and reported (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013).

In educational settings, data mining is frequently used in the enrollment management process. Groth (2000) describes data mining as an iterative process of finding trends and patterns in data. The objective of the data mining process is to typically sort through large quantities of data to discover algorithms or new information (Groth, 2000). In 1996 several organizations, including SPSS, collaborated and created a procedure for data mining that is followed that is called the Cross Industry Standard Procedures for Data Mining, otherwise known as the CRISP-DM model (Groth, 2000). The CRISP-DM model suggests six steps to developing successful data mining models: institutional understanding, data understanding, data preparation, modeling, valuation, and deployment (Groth, 2000).
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

As well as helping with marketing/enrollment planning and strategy, marketing information can be extremely helpful with customer relationship management (CRM) and retention within schools (Dolence, 1993). Armstrong and Kotler (2013) define CRM as “managing detailed information about individual customers and carefully managing customer touch points to maximize customer loyalty” (p. 115).

The marketing of services greatly differs from product marketing because of four fundamental differences that are involved in services that are identified as: intangible, inseparable, variable, and perishable (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Customers have certain expectations about how services should be delivered. If the service fails to meet consumer expectations what is known as a service gap results (Grewal & Levy, 2010). In marketing the gaps model is used to encourage and examine aspects of the service delivery process and help develop optimal service strategies (Grewal & Levy, 2010). The gaps model is composed of four service gaps: the knowledge gap reflects the variation between customer's expectations and the organizations’ perception of those customer expectations, the standards gap refers to the disparity between the organizations’ perceptions of customer expectations and the service standards it sets, the delivery gap is the disparity between the organizations’ service standards and the actual service it provides to customers, and, lastly, the communication gap refers to the disparity among the actual service provided to the customers and the service that the organizations’ advertising or public relations program promises (Grewal & Levy, 2010, p. 376). The gaps model can be specifically useful for educational leaders who would like to focus on student retention.
Integrated Marketing Communications

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) encompasses an assortment of marketing communication styles that include general advertising, personal selling, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations, electronic media, and community building (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). IMC also provides clarity, consistency, and communication for organizations (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Instead of having divided marketing communication elements with no integrated control, IMC programs consider each of the organizations’ marketing communication elements as part of a whole, each of which offers a different platform to connect with the target audience (Grewal & Levy, 2010). The integration of IMC fundamentals provides the organization with the best platform to reach the target audience with the preferred message, and it increases the value story by presenting a clear and consistent message (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

IMC strategy consists of three elements that include the consumer, the channels from which the message is communicated, and the evaluation of the outcome of the communication effort (Grewal & Levy, 2010). After being exposed to marketing communications, customers go through numerous steps before actually buying or taking some other action (Grewal & Levy, 2010). In order to create effective IMC programs, marketers and leaders must understand how marketing communications work. Generally, marketing communications move consumers through a series of mental stages, for which there are several models (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). One of the most common models is the AIDA model (Grewal & Levy, 2010). The first A stands for awareness, which leads to the I which stands for interest, which leads to the D, which stands for desire, which hopefully then leads to the last A, action (Grewal & Levy, 2010, p. 530).
According to Grewal and Levy (2010) “for any communications campaign to succeed, the firm must deliver the right message to the right audience through the right media. Reaching the right audience is becoming more difficult however, as the media environment grows more complicated” (p. 531). Today's typical marketing communication outlets include magazines, newspapers, radio, television, the Internet, social media, satellite radio, wireless technology, pop-up and banner ads on websites, viral advertisements, text messaging, GPS marketing, advertising, personal selling, public relations, sales promotions, and direct mail (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Grewal & Levy, 2010). The proliferation of media outlets and advances in technology has made it even more vital for leaders of organizations and marketers to have strategic planning processes in place to ensure the success of marketing communication efforts.

Paid advertising is known to be the most visible form of marketing communications (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Due to this factor, many people think of marketing and advertising as synonymous. According to Grewal and Levy (2010) global advertising costs reached $500 billion in total in 2008, with almost half of that being spent in the United States alone. Advertising is trying to reach people everywhere, all the time (Grewal & Levy, 2010). Designing and executing a thriving advertising campaign requires a great deal of planning and effort. According to Grewal and Levy (2010) there are seven steps in planning and executing an ad campaign. Step one is to identify the target audience, step two is to set advertising objectives, step three is to determine advertising budget, step four is to communicate the message, step five is to assess and select media, step six is to generate the actual advertisements, and step seven is to evaluate the impact of the advertising campaign (Grewal & Levy, 2010).

Seth Godin (2005) explains that in the old days of marketing showing up was ninety-five percent of a business’ success (xi). If you were a local business that had a long track record,
offered decent quality products with good personal service at a good price you typically were ok (Godin, 2005). Godin (2005) argues the those good old days are long gone due to the fact that “good enough is no longer good enough, because now everything is good enough. We don’t just want to be satisfied; we want to be blown away” (xi). He gives examples of tiny churches that are being taken out by mega churches that are offering day care centers and have rock bands to attract the youth (Godin, 2005, xii). Godin (2005) shares that instead of trying to just survive, it is a better strategy to connect with customers and grow. He shares that growth will come when you decide that you want do something about your current situation and when you decide to become remarkable (Godin, 2005). Godin (2005) states “remarkable isn’t up to you. Remarkable is in the eye of the customer. If your customer decides something you do is worth remarking on, then, by definition, it’s remarkable” (p. xii). In our oversaturated, media-overwhelmed world most messages get lost in the proliferation of other messages (Godin, 2005). Godin (2005) believes that advertising can no longer spread the word about your product. He shares that the only thing left to do is to start doing things that are worth talking about, and when you do share them with customers that have the same worldview that your business does (Godin, 2005). Don’t try to talk to everyone because not everyone wants to hear what you have to say (Godin, 2005).
Enrollment Management

The first book published about enrollment management was in 1982 by Kemerer, Baldrige, and Green. The authors defined enrollment management as an aggressive approach to ensuring a steady supply of qualified students that is required to maintain institutional vitality (Kemerer, Baldrige, & Green, 1982). Additional definitions include “a comprehensive process designed to help an institution achieve and maintain the optimum recruitment, retention, graduation rates of students that is an institution wide process that embraces virtually every aspect of the institutions function and culture” (Dolence, 1993, p. 8).

Huddleston (2000) states both the function and importance of enrollment management:

Optimally, an institution's enrollment is comprehensively developed and is based on a strategic, integrated plan that includes the identification, attraction, selection, encouragement, registration, retention, and graduation of targeted student segments. The quality of the students collegiate experience is based largely on the academic environment, operational excellence of institutions transition programs, student services, and personal development opportunities. Within this broad context an enrollment managers efforts are intended to shape and influence particular units that have significant impact on the students’ decision to enroll, persist, and graduate. The strategic management of these units is important to an institution's growth, fiscal health, and student satisfaction. (p. 66)

Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) conducted a national study that asked colleges and universities what seven functional areas were most frequently identified as enrollment management units. The study found that the top seven functional areas are institutional research and planning, marketing, admissions, registrar, financial aid, student orientation, and retention and advising (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). The study found that each of these practical
areas played a key role within the enrollment management model that increases the opportunities for institutional success (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). Huddleston (2000) states that “the shared missions, primary goals, and the integration and in turn dependence of these key areas are vital to the successful implementation and operation of enrollment management” (p. 66).

Hossler (1996) describes attentive planning and research as one of the first steps in enrollment management process. Huddleston (2000) states that:

An integrated research and planning effort can enable colleges and universities to remain sensitive to the marketplace and carefully assess external social trends and internal strengths and weaknesses, relative to the attraction of new students, and their retention and graduation at the University. Research and planning informed the strategic directions of enrollment managers and institutional research effort manages and provides relevant data including retention rates, historical trends, registration statistics, student characteristics, and enrollment patterns and productions. (p. 67)

According to Huddleston (2000) the application of marketing principles and strategies have become commonplace within higher education institutions. Huddleston (2000) urges that in order to understand the marketplace, each enrollment organization should collect data concerning the students who apply, matriculate, persist, and graduate. The majority of the time this data collected serves as a springboard for the employment of strategic marketing plans (Huddleston, 2000).

Taylor et al. (2008) share that strategic enrollment management (SEM) can have many goals that include to stabilize enrollments, connect with academics, stabilize finances, improve services, reduce vulnerability, and to monitor and evaluate strategic planning processes. Kurtz
and Scannell (2006) share that the most common generic goals accompany enrollment management initiatives are:

- The organization for enrollment management (to organize departments that relates to the management of enrollments in such a way that the coordination of staff, flow of information, and the integration of decisions can most easily be facilitated), student information systems and research (to create an integrated student database and the capacity to use systems, including the web, for coordinated research, planning, recruitment, and communication), admissions marketing (to develop an admissions marketing program in order to attract appropriate students in sufficient numbers), pricing and financial aid strategies (to implement pricing and financial aid strategies that will optimize the institution's ability to generate net tuition revenue and attract and retain (the desired academic, racial/ethnic, and social/economic mix of students), demand analysis and institutional response (to develop a capability to anticipate immediate and long-term student demand and methods of improving the institution's ability to respond to these interests), and lastly retention and transfer students (to formalize and create retention programs in order to identify reasons for attrition, to minimize it to whatever extent desirable, and to enroll qualified transfer students as replacements). (p. 81-82)

Although the importance of enrollment management in higher education is widely recognized, the author finds little to no literature to suggest that strategic enrollment management in tuition driven private Catholic schools in the United States has been researched.

**The Consumer Decision Making Process**

In 2008, many countries including the United States began to experience an economic meltdown unlike anything seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s (Armstrong & Kotler,
This financial crisis left many customers short of confidence and money as well as causing a major credit crunch, rises in unemployment, lost incomes, foreclosures, and the decline in home values (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). After several decades of overspending, many customers started to rethink their spending habits and cut back on consumption (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). With the new economic reality many consumers were forced to ring in their excessive spending habits and rethink their priorities (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Private school tuitions were not exempt from this hard-hit economic crunch (McDonald & Schultz, 2012). In response to this new economic reality organizations from all industries had to reevaluate their marketing strategies to give emphasis to the value in their value propositions (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). The key for economic success according to Armstrong and Kotler (2013) is “the challenge is to balance the brand's value proposition with the current times while also enhancing its long-term equity” (p. 24).

**Consumer Behavior and Informed Choice**

Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) define a market as a collection of users (consumers) who make choices among alternatives. These alternatives include the choice to buy or not buy; the choice of one type over the other; and, the choice of one brand over the others (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Authors such as Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) present theories of consumption principles to explain and predict market choices. These theories are known as choice behavior theories (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Theories of consumption values are pertinent to choices concerning full ranges of products and services and are helpful for influencing an ample assortment of human behaviors (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Understanding market choice behavior is helpful in affecting behavior in the marketplace and is also effective for crafting and implementing public policies (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991).
Key reasons for understanding market choice behavior include universality, diagnostic value, public policy, and marketing efficiency (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Market choice behavior is widespread and most people living in the majority of cultures make daily choices concerning their consumption of goods and services (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). Central to this decision-making are the distribution of three main resources: money, effort, and time. Therefore, anyone concerned with influencing another’s allocation of time, money, or effort, benefits from comprehending market behavior (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991).

Today’s parents approach the K-12 school search with far greater awareness, wariness, and sophistication than preceding generations (Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000). This is in part thanks to the large flow of information from schools, websites, organizations (both state run nonprofit and for-profit), rankings list, student and parent blogs, social media, and media coverage of trends and issues in education (Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000). As a result, students and their parents expect a great deal more from the K-12 school experience than past generations (Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000).

Consumer behavior is defined by Lantos (2011) as the thought processes and actions of those who buy goods and services to please their own or someone else’s personal needs and wants, or to solve personal marketplace problems. Solomon (2011) defines consumer behavior as the process involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires. In addition to defining consumer behavior, Solomon (2011) describes the consumer decision-making process in five steps. The first step is to distinguish a need, the second step is to collect information, the third step is to assess the set of alternatives and/or options, the fourth step is the actual purchase, and the last step is the post purchase phase (Solomon, 2011). There are many factors that persuade the
consumer decision-making process including perception, learning and memory, motivation and values, personality and lifestyle, attitudes, group influencing, opinion leadership, household decision-making processes, income and social class, age, ethnicity, and religion (Lantos, 2011; Solomon, 2011).

**School Choice**

According to Walberg (2007) “the United States of America is arguably the world leader in income, wealth, military power, and cultural influence. Yet U.S. schools are behind those of most other economically advanced countries in both effectiveness and efficiency. By the end of high school, US academic achievement lags behind that of most member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a group that includes most of the world economically advanced countries” (p. 1). Walberg goes on to state that:

In addition to being ineffective, American public schools are inefficient or unproductive, which is to say they get little return on tax payers dollars. Their per student cost ranks among the top two or three countries in a recent OECD survey and have risen substantially over the last few decades. This pattern of low and declining efficiency is at odds with most other American enterprises, in which competition generally leads to improved quality and declining costs. (p. 1)

People in the United States pay more per student for K-12 public education than nearly every other economically advanced country (Walberg, 2007). Academic achievement is imperative for several reasons; including the fact that test scores in mathematics and science are robustly correlated with and predictive of a country’s economic growth (Walberg, 2007).

Crew (2007) shares that in 2007, just six years after the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, 1) one third of American eighth-graders could not perform basic math, 2) one third
of all teachers leave the profession in the first three years of teaching; by five years half of them leave, 3) an African American child in Washington DC, has less than a thirty percent chance of learning how to read before he or she turns ten years old, 4) the odds that any given ten-year-old in a large American city can read are about fifty-fifty, and six in ten for the nation as a whole, and 5) only one in five students entering college are prepared for college-level work in math, reading, writing, and biology (p. 4). Crew (2007) states “for all the laws being passed and mandates being handed out, America's public schools continue to struggle. Every year millions of teenagers graduate from high school with no tools, no skills, and no sense whatsoever of what they are going to do with their lives. But the fact is, those kids aren’t just living in the nation's inner cities; they live in corn fed towns in Iowa and under the shadows of the Rocky Mountains too” (p. 4-5). The educational crisis is particularly concerning when investigating what the students will look to as a source of revenue upon graduation (Crew, 2007).

With unemployment for Americans between the ages of eighteen and nineteen years old at an average of sixteen percent there is a need to look at how this age group will secure employment (Crew, 2007). Crew (2007) shares “our usual response to those numbers is a vague clamor for more jobs and better jobs and job training, and then some screaming about all the jobs outsourced to India and China. Well, in my experience, American businesses want to hire American workers” (p. 5). Crew (2007) goes on to state

The problem was and remains throughout America that we are not providing enough workers with the skills to compete. Major companies look at our cities and ask whether the public school system can produce the quality of people they need to operate their machinery, program their computers, even simply answer their phones. The young people they are seeing out of American public schools are unable to perform even the
most routine, elementary business functions. This, at a time when jobs that involve complex interactions requiring a high level of judgment, according to The Economist, make up some forty percent of the American labor market and account for seventy percent of the jobs created since 1998. By not producing adequately skilled, adaptable workers, we’re all but pointing business toward India and other nations where labor is cheaper and worker loyalty is easier to rely on. The research firm Gartner has calculated that information technology outsourcing will go from $193 billion in 2004 to $260 billion by the end of the decade. Outsourcing is only the tip of the iceberg, though. The real problem lies under the surface, and it is big and dangerous. Not only are our children not able to keep up with the better equipped competition coming from India and China, but if things do not change very soon, all these tens of millions of our sons and daughters will grow up to be adults unable to even function in our economy, let alone compete. What will tens of millions of young adults barely able to read or multiply do with their lives? Who will pay for Social Security and health care? Even the military will be out of reach for them because they will not be able to pass the entrance exams. There will be nothing left for them but to take their meaningless diplomas and plunge into the enormous gap that is opened in this country between those who have and those who do not. No matter where you are from—rural Appalachia, suburban Wellesley, or the ninth Ward of New Orleans—a lack of skills is a tragic life sentence. For millions more, the issue is not that they cannot get a job; it’s that the connection between effort and earning is gone. (p. 5) A study for the Cato Institute by Walberg (2007) points out that regardless of present sanctions, in the face of widespread recognition of the achievement problem, in spite of higher school spending, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (referred to as the nations
report card) reported in February, 2007 that the reading achievement of American twelfth grade students had declined from 1982 through 2005. Standards, instead of rising have declined and in spite of the drop in student performance, teachers are giving them higher grades (Walberg, 2007). This poor high school performance, in turn leads to poor college performance (Walberg, 2007). Out of all high school seniors who took the American College test for admission to college in 2006, only fifty-one percent of the students met the college readiness benchmark for reading (Walberg, 2007, p. 2).

Walberg (2007) notes that as well as the ineffectiveness and inefficiencies of schools located in big cities and serving primarily poor and minority students, these cities also serve as dangerous places for the students attending them. Walberg (2007) polled parents and found that seventy three percent of low income parents and forty six percent of higher income parents said they worried about their children's exposure to drugs and alcohol at school (Walberg, 2007). In addition to drug and alcohol exposure, sixty five percent of low income parents and thirty nine percent of higher income parents worried a great deal about their children being assaulted (Walberg, 2007, p. 3).

Knowing that high levels of skill and knowledge increasingly determine national and individual success, Americans are interested in school change that may be effective in increasing young student’s achievement levels (Crew, 2007; Walberg, 2007; Friedman, 2011). Friedman (2011) sites that “school choice initiatives are based on the premise that allowing parents to choose which schools their children attend is not only the fair thing to do but also an important strategy for improving public education. Instead of a one size fits all model, choice programs are designed to offer parents various alternatives from which to pick the educational settings that
they believe work best for their children” (p. 28-29). Friedman (2011) also shares an insightful historical aspect of school choice:

The earliest expression of this critical and increasingly prominent aspect of education reform is often credited to the free-market champion author of the 1776 book *Wealth of Nations*, by Adam Smith. In that book, Smith argued that parents are in the best position to decide how their children should be educated and that the state should give parents the money to hire suitable teachers. The view that the state should provide funding for poor families to secure a basic education for their children was also endorsed by famous patriot and writer Thomas Payne, toward the end of the 18th century. However, circumstances in the 19th century America would lead to a general consensus against the embryonic notions of school or education vouchers. Especially damaging was the prevalent anti-Catholic bias that existed in the United States following the large influx of largely Catholic immigrant groups. Because of what he viewed as the intolerable resistance of non-Catholics, New York City, Bishop John Hughes asked the public school Society of New York for state aid for Catholic schools in 1840. After his request was denied, Hughes built his own system with private funds. Three decades later, Pres. Ulysses Grant helped certify the United States is educational separation of church and state by explaining that not one dollar shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian school. (p. 29)

Opponents of school choice, according to Corwin and Schneider (2005) duly note that

The ideology of competition behind the choice movement is the same line being used to justify the privatization of all public institutions. The Creed is derived from the laissez-faire economics. But the problem is, public education is not a laissez-faire environment.
There is no free market. Compulsory education laws guarantee a market for the providers. No matter what they may do, and choice schools are underwritten by a vast public system obligated to finish whatever other providers prefer not to do. This includes taking care of the most difficult students needing the most costly services. Moreover, the government, not the market, regulates the competition, because by setting the size of the subsidy, politicians pick the schools that will benefit. But none of this deters school choice advocates. (p. 35)

Extensive ranges of school reforms have attempted to provide parents with more parental choice and a shift of power in the educational process towards their direction (Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000). Reforms vary greatly, and debates about what the most appropriate reforms are will continue (Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000). Although according to Schneider, Teske, and Marschall (2000):

While decision-making processes derived from the Democratic model and the bureaucratic model will always be somewhat necessary to govern American public schools, shifts in power toward parents provide a more bottom up, customer driven model of public education. In theory, this shift can create a better match between what parents want and what they get from their schools, as well as better schooling outcomes. Even though the market model may not apply fully to public schools, the central elements of this model-choice, customer sovereignty, decentralization, and competition-can. Competition implies some innovation in the supply and organization of schools and in the products and services they deliver. Market mechanisms have a genius for matching the supply and demand sides in a decentralized manner that serves consumers preferences. (p. 37)
The question often arises if parents know enough about their children’s educational needs and the offerings of schools to make informed consumer decisions (Bast & Walberg, 2004; Coons & Sugarman, 1978; Schneider, Teske, & Marschall, 2000). Coons and Sugarman (1978) addressed this question early in the school choice debates by writing that “at the outset we concede that school professionals know more than families about how certain types of education have been found to affect broadly defined types or classes of children. Such knowledge is useful for many purposes; however, it does not translate into the kind of understanding about particular children that comes from prolonged domestic intimacy” (p. 53). In addition, according to Bast and Walberg (2004)

Parents should not be presumed to be ill-equipped to make this decision. They are trusted, after all, to choose doctors and hospitals, homes, automobiles, food, and many other complicated and expensive goods and services. Imperfect and asymmetric information are the rule, not the exception, in market processes. They are routinely overcome by advertising, experience, producer reputations, guarantees and warranties, and other personal and public sources of information. (p. 433)

Enormous amounts of research exist both in favor and opposing school choice and according to Bast and Walberg (2004) it is wise to remember that school choice is not permitted on a wide enough scale in the United States for any single study to provide compelling proof that a national school choice program would work or would fail.

**Vouchers**

According to Friedman (2011) school choice advocates owe a debt of gratitude to the 1983 report *A Nation at Risk*. Friedman chronicles that
This highly critical evaluation of US public schools both reflected and initiated concerned about the failure of schools and helped create an environment in which more radical approaches could be encouraged. A new openness to vouchers for private schools was evident in the 1983 Supreme Court case, *Mueller v. Alan*, in a 5-4 decision, the court supported the concept of tuition tax credits, holding that the state government (in this case, Minnesota) could allow taxpayers to deduct expenses incurred due to tuition, textbooks, and transportation at religious, elementary, and secondary schools. Momentum for vouchers also grew in 1990. Following the release of John Chubb and Terry Moe's book *Politics, Markets, and American schools*, in which they claimed that choice all by itself has the capacity to bring about a transformation in public education. A dramatic expansion then took place throughout the 1990s in the use of public school choice and in the more controversy all private and religious school choice programs based on vouchers. The most renowned and contested of these programs were the Milwaukee parental choice program, the Cleveland scholarship program, and the Florida A+ plan. (p. 29-30)

Several years ago, the economist and Nobel laureate Friedman (1964) proposed that if parents were given vouchers to purchase education for their own children, different types of high-quality schools would form to meet their diverse demands. Friedman (1964) acknowledged that because education is a public good, the government is responsible for assuring that someone provides it. He maintained that the government does not itself need to operate the schools. His plan would replace all public schools with a universal voucher plan (Friedman, 1964). Friedman's plan was a far more radical idea than the current voucher programs we have today (Friedman, 1964).
Today there are typically three types of school choice plans (Friedman, 2011). The first one that is the least disputed and most common is the intra-district choice (Friedman, 2011). This type of choice allows parents to select among schools within their home district and which are on average called magnet schools. The second option is typically interdistrict choice also known as open enrollment (Friedman, 2011). Normally under these programs students are allowed to attend public schools outside of their home district. The third option is conventionally associated with voucher programs and is private school choice (Friedman, 2011). This option usually is the center of the majority of arguments about choice, and permit parents to use public funds to send their children to private schools and in many cases religious schools (Friedman, 2011).

Few issues in education, if any, are as intensely debated as private school vouchers (Friedman, 2011, p. 30). Friedman (2011) states that “supporters of the practice often argue that private school vouchers encourage equity by enabling students from families of low socioeconomic status, like their wealthier peers, to escape the trouble of an inadequate public schools. In addition, these proponents also claim that private school vouchers will create competition that will spur innovation, accountability, and improvement in a public school system that serves as a monopoly providing poor services to its most vulnerable clients” (p. 30). On the other side of the coin, Friedman (2011) states that “opponents of private school vouchers generally contend these programs in danger the ideal of offering every student access to high-quality education by treating learning as a commodity rather than a public good. They point out how this competitive conception does not always work in the interest of the consumer. At best, they claim, private school vouchers are a kind of lifeboat that may help the fortunate few while leaving the majority of other stranded in a public system with the pleaded resources” (p. 30-31).
A full discussion of school choice and voucher programs is beyond the scope of the present study. Interested readers should consult the following authors for further readings: Corwin & Schneider, 2005; Friedman, 2011; Gill, Timpane, Ross, & Brewer, 2001; Henig, 1994; Merrifield, 2001; Nelson, Palonsky, & Carlson, 2000; Moe, 2001; Rasell & Rothstein, 1993; Schneider, Teske, Marschall, 2000; Scott, 2005; VanDunk & Dickman, 2003; Walberg, 2007; Welner, 2008; and Wolfe, 2003.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore with a sample of K-12 private Catholic school principals their perceptions of enrollment management and marketing planning for recruitment and retention purposes. The researcher believed that a better understanding of this phenomenon and the lived experiences of the principals would allow other educators to proceed from a more informed perspective in terms of K-12 private Catholic school enrollment management and marketing planning design. In seeking to understand this phenomenon, the study addressed three research questions: 1) What strategies are currently used to recruit and retain students in K-12 private Catholic schools? 2) What involvement does the principal have in student recruitment and retention activities in K-12 private Catholic schools? 3) What are the ongoing results of the recruitment and retention activities at K-12 private Catholic schools?

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is grounded in the fundamentally constructivist philosophical position (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). It is characteristically concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, understood, and interpreted at a particular time and in a particular context (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). The objective of qualitative research is to examine a social situation or interaction by allowing the researcher to enter the world of others and attempt to achieve a holistic rather than a reductionist understanding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005).

Creswell (2009) defines qualitative research as:

A means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and
procedures, data typically collected in the participants’ setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation. (p. 4)

Qualitative methodology places an emphasis on discovery and description (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). The objectives are generally focused on interpreting and extracting the meaning of experience (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005).

The researcher did not believe that a purely quantitative research method would elicit the rich data necessary to address the proposed research goals. The key features and essential assumptions that distinguish what it means to proceed from a qualitative research stance fit well with the current study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). These qualitative features include: (a) comprehending the processes by which actions take place, (b) developing contextual understanding, (c) maintaining design flexibility, and (d) facilitating interactivity between researcher and participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005).

**Rationale for Phenomenological Research Methodology**

Within the framework of a qualitative approach, the study was most suited for a phenomenological approach (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). As a form of research methodology, phenomenological research is
essentially the study of experience (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Creswell shares that phenomenological research is:

A strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. Understanding the lived experiences marks phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method, and the procedure involves studying a small number of subjects through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning. In this process, the researcher brackets or sets aside his or her own experiences in order to understand those of the participants in the study. (Creswell, 2009, p. 13)

Titchen and Hobson (2005) describe phenomenology as the study of lived, human phenomena within the everyday social contexts in which the phenomena occur for the perspective of those who experience them. It is noted by Titchen and Hobson (2005) that the value of examining the phenomena of professional practice has been increasingly emphasized.

Phenomenology had its early roots in the eighteenth century with four major phenomenological philosophers: German philosopher Edmund Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Satre (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Titchen & Hobson, 2005). According to Hesse-Beber and Leavy (2011), Husserl was interested in the human consciousness as the way to understand social reality, particularly about how one thinks about experience. To understand how consciousness operates enables us to capture how individuals create an understanding of social life (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Husserl was particularly interested in how individuals willfully experience their experience. Alfred Schutz, a colleague of Husserl, brought the phenomenological perspective to American sociology. He was
particularly interested in how individuals process experience in everyday lives (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Titchen & Hobson, 2005).

Phenomenology is not only a philosophy; it is also a research method for capturing the lived experiences of individuals (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). For phenomenologists, there is not just one reality. Experiences are thought to be perceived along a variety of dimensions such as time, space, relationships with others, as well as the bodily experience (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Phenomenologists use methods such as observations and in-depth interviewing to collect data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Overall, phenomenology is a methodological viewpoint aimed at generating knowledge about how people experience (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

The Research Sample/Participant Selection

A purposeful sampling procedure was used to select participants and is a typical sampling procedure used with the phenomenological methodology (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The researcher sought to locate principals at K-12 private Catholic school within an Ohio diocese that fell into two categories: principals that have a marketing plan and employ enrollment management techniques for recruitment and retention and principals that do not have a marketing plan and do not employ enrollment management techniques for recruitment and retention. The researcher was unable to secure interviews with any principals or schools that have a marketing plan in place and employ enrollment techniques for recruitment and retention.

A survey (see Appendices A and B) was sent out to every principal in the diocese and then principals were purposefully selected from the original survey group. Every principal in the diocese was emailed and eleven responded back. There are approximately seventy schools in the diocese. Out of the eleven only two volunteered to participate in a one-on-one interview. Given the poor response rate of the online survey, the researcher personally called and emailed each
principal in the Diocese three additional times to try and increase the sample size for the one-on-one interviews. These personal phone calls and interviews increased participation by three more individuals that were willing to meet with the researcher. All five of the participants that agreed to participate in the study are from the same city with two of them being in the same school.

**Data Collection**

The use of a variety of sources and methods to collect information is called triangulation (Maxwell, 2005). According to Maxwell (2005) the strategy of triangulation reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific source or method, and allows you to gain a broader and more secure understanding of the issues that you are investigating.

The use of triangulation and multiple methods is critical to obtaining in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in this study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Maxwell, 2005). These data collection strategies add breadth, depth, and rigor to the study and provide corroborative evidence of the data obtained (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, this study employed numerous data collection methods including a survey, interviews, enrollment reports, and marketing and advertising artifact collection.

**Phase I: Survey**

Every principal in the diocese was contacted with permission from the Superintendent. An informed consent clause was included with each survey (Appendix A). At the beginning of the survey, prospective participants were asked to read the letter of consent and told that if they took the online survey consent was given and they were willing participants in the study. The questionnaire was designed to collect profile data such as gender, race, and years in the position as well as asking the participants what their enrollment planning and marketing planning
strategies are; if any existed. The ten-question survey took approximately five minutes to complete. A question at the end of the survey asked participants if they were willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview. A follow-up e-mail was sent to the participant, thanking them for their time. Eleven principals participated in the online survey. Of those contacted to participate in the interviews, nine individuals declined and two principals accepted. An additional three principals were personally contacted and volunteered to participate in the in-depth interview even though they did not participate in the online survey. All five of the participants that volunteered to participate in the study were from the same city.

The main goal of the survey was to identify interviewees. In keeping with qualitative research tradition, the survey used in the present study included open ended questions that sought to shed light on participant’s enrollment management perceptions as well as principal’s personal experiences with enrollment management (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005, Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The questions that were asked included questions that asked the following: age, gender, race, location, years in position, is there a currently enrollment management plan in place, a retention plan in place, what is enrollment currently, participant contact information, and if the respondent was interested in participating in an in depth interview with the researcher.

The researcher wanted to obtain a snapshot of how a larger group views and conducts enrollment management and marketing practices within their school. The survey had a distinct place in the current studies methodological design and served as an identifier to those participants who were interested in participating in the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).
Phase II: In Depth Qualitative Interviewing

In-depth qualitative interviewing was selected as the primary data collection method in this research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2005). The interview method was used in this study because it has the potential to elicit thick and rich descriptions from participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In-depth qualitative interviewing has several important characteristics. The researcher was looking for rich and detailed information that includes examples experiences narratives and stories. The researcher asked open ended questions and the questions are not fixed (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Further, in-depth qualitative interviewing gave the researcher an opportunity to probe for additional information relating to marketing, enrollment management, and leadership. Refer to Appendix C to see the detailed interview questions.

Creswell (2013), Denzin and Lincoln (2008), Maxwell (2005), and Marshall and Rossman (2011) all agree that one of the advantages of collecting data through in-depth interviews is that it offers the potential to capture a person's perspective of an event or experience. Interviewing is a key tool in qualitative research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) the qualitative research interview is an “attempt to understand the worlds from the subject’s point of view, to unfold the meaning of the subject’s experiences, to uncover their lived world” (p. 1). According to Rubin and Rubin (2012) the naturalistic paradigm of quality, in-depth interviewing means that the results of the research are fresh and real, the conclusions are balanced and thorough, credible and accurate, and the final report is rich with ideas.

The researcher used the study’s research questions as a structure to develop the interview questions. The researcher sent e-mails (see appendix A) to prospective participants that
described the purpose of the study, invited them to participate, and requested a convenient date and time for the interview. The researcher sent confirming e-mails to the five principals that agreed to be interviewed. The interviews took place from May to October 2013. Prior to each interview, the interviewee was asked to review and sign the Bowling Green State University consent form that is required for participation in the study (Appendix E). All interviews were conducted in person and were tape recorded in their entirety. At the end of each interview, the audiotape was transcribed verbatim.

**Phase III: Documentary Analysis**

During each interview, the principals were asked if they would like to share any documents for documentary analysis that could have been helpful to gaining additional insight into the study. These documents could include but were not limited to previous marketing materials, advertisements, press releases, newspaper articles, past interviews, enrollment plans, marketing plans, enrollment data, strategic plan, and any other document that may add depth to the study. The Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association Self Study Reports and School Profiles were collected at the time of the interview.

Rubin and Rubin (2012) state that “documents are most useful when combined with in-depth interviews that allow you to discuss with their creators, what they contain and how they were prepared” (p. 27). Documentary analysis conducted as part of an in-depth interviewing study improves the quality of interviews in several other ways that include engagement, organizational behavior, organizational activities, trust, and familiarity with industry terminology (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).
**Phase IV: Methods of Data Analysis**

Merriam (2009) urges researchers to make data collection and data analysis a simultaneous activity to avoid the risk of overwhelming, unfocused, and repetitious data. The researcher began the process of data analysis by assigning alphanumeric codes to the descriptors and categories of the studies conceptual framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher transcribed and summarized each interview, while coding excerpts that have relevant concepts, themes, events, examples, names, places or dates (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Next, the researcher looked across the multiple interviews to find the excerpts marked with the same code and then sorted them into a single data file and summarized the contents of each file (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). After weighing different versions the researcher integrated the descriptions from different interviewees to create a complete picture, allowing the researcher to combine concepts and themes to generate a theory to reflect the descriptions they have presented (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

The researcher chose to do the coding in two cycles as recommended by Saldaña (2013). First cycle and second cycle coding methods were used. During first cycle coding both descriptive and in vivo coding methods were used (Saldaña, 2013).

Descriptive coding “assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase- most often a noun- the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 74). Descriptive coding helps the researcher to identify topics and build a categorized inventory of the data’s contents that is essential to second cycle coding (Saldaña, 2013). Descriptive coding is one form of documenting from interview notes by creating labels and categories that describe the way the interviewees create, work with, feel, handle, and experience
on a daily basis (Saldaña, 2013). It gives the researcher a method to categorize data and gain an organizational grasp on the study (Saldaña, 2013).

The second coding method that was used during the first cycle was in vivo coding. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) in vivo coding “uses the words or short phrases from the participant’s own language in the data record as codes” (p. 74). In vivo’s root meaning is “in that which is alive” and refers to words from the interviewees actual language that was found in the interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2013).

After the first cycle of coding was complete using descriptive and in vivo coding methods, the researcher went into a second cycle coding method using pattern coding. The primary goal of the researcher during the second cycle of coding was to develop a deeper sense of the categories, patterns and themes that emerged from the first cycle of coding. As described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) pattern coding is a second cycle method that “is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs” (p. 86). Pattern codes are typically explanatory codes that identify emergent themes from the first cycle of coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). According to Miles, Huberman, an Saldaña (2014) pattern codes typically consist of four, interrelated summaries. They are 1) categories or themes, 2) causes or explanations, 3) relationships among people, and 4) theoretical constructs (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p.87).

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues relating to the protection of the participants in this study were of vital concern (Lincoln & Guba, 1999). This study employed various safeguards to ensure the rights and protection of participants, although no serious ethical threats were anticipated to any of the participants.
First, approval was received from the Bowling Green State University Human Subject Review board to conduct the study (Appendix D). Informed consent was a priority throughout the study. Written consent to conduct the study was received from each participant (Appendix E). In addition, the researcher was committed to keeping the names and other identity characteristics of the principals confidential. Lastly, security measures were taken when storing the research related data, and the researcher was the only person to have access to this material.

**Validity/Issues of Trustworthiness**

Often times in qualitative research, issues of validity and reliability are addressed as trustworthiness features (Lincoln & Guba, 1999). To address reliability, the researcher asked colleagues to code several interviews. Qualitative researchers must seek to control for potential biases that might be present in the implementation, design, and analysis of any research study (Lincoln & Guba, 1999).

Nagy Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) state that “validity is a process whereby the researcher earns the confidence of the reader that he or she has gotten it right.” Lincoln and Guba (1999) note:

The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: how can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of the inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive on the issue? (p. 398)

Two broad types of threats to validity were addressed in this study: researcher bias and reactivity. Maxwell (2013) refers to researcher bias as the subjectivity of the researcher. It is impossible to eliminate the researchers’ beliefs and perceptual lens. Qualitative research is chiefly concerned with understanding how those values influence the conduct and the conclusions of the study and try to avoid the harmful consequences of these (Maxwell, 2013).
According to Maxwell (2013) the influence of the researcher on the setting or individual studied is generally known as reactivity. The validity checklist provided by Maxwell (2013) was used by the researcher for ruling out validity threats and increasing the credibility of the research conclusions. They included rich data, respondent validation, triangulation, and comparison (Maxwell, 2013).

**Rich Data**

The researcher had rich data involvement through intensive interviews that were transcribed verbatim from videotaping, detailed and descriptive note taking, and concrete events that the researcher observed (Maxwell, 2013).

**Respondent Validation**

Respondent validation was used by the researcher as the single most important way of ruling out any misinterpreted meanings of what the participants said and did during the interview process (Maxwell, 2013). The respondent validation or member checking was conducted by the researcher throughout the interview process (Maxwell, 2013). Member checking was conducted in two ways. The first member check was conducted during the interview by the researcher summarizing or restating back to the participant to determine accuracy. In the second member check, the researcher submitted all of the transcribed findings to the participant to check for accuracy (Maxwell, 2013).

**Triangulation**

Maxwell (2013) refers to triangulation as “collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings using a variety of methods” (p. 128). Methodological validity of the study was improved by gathering data from multiple sources and using multiple methods to get a richer picture of the phenomenon under evaluation for this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1998; Maxwell, 2013). First, the researcher clarified their assumptions upfront through journal writing.
Second, the researcher used various participatory and collective modes of research, including interviewing, evidence collection, and peer review, which is frequently discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1998). The researcher reviewed and discussed findings frequently with the study’s methodologist and other professional colleagues.

**Comparison**

During each interview, the participants were asked by the researcher if they themselves had experience with other settings or with the same setting and an earlier time. The researcher was then able to draw on this experience to identify the crucial factors and the effect that those factors had (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

**The Role of the Researcher**

It is duly noted that the researcher is a marketing professor in addition to having practitioner experience through employment in the sales and marketing fields for numerous years. It is also noted that the researcher’s child attends a private catholic school and the researcher is active as the marketing committee chair and consultant to numerous private catholic schools. The researcher’s work as an educator, practitioner, parent, and school consultant gives the credibility necessary to conduct research in the field of marketing and education. However this credibility may also lead to potential bias and subjectivity. In order to control for the potential bias and subjectivity two other qualitative researchers were asked to code the transcripts and serve as member checkers for the project.

**Limitations of the Study**

The study contains limiting conditions, some of which are related to common critiques of qualitative research. Consideration has been given to strategies of accounting for these limitations and lessening their impact.
The key limitation of the study is the issue of potential bias and subjectivity regarding the researcher's own participation in marketing private Catholic schools. An additional major limitation to this study was that the research sample was small. Critique of the current study might be the limited generalizability of this study to other schools.

The researcher took several measures to account for these limitations. The researcher removed all participant names and encoded all interview transcripts plainly so that no material or data was associated with a particular individual. Additionally, the researcher made a conscious attempt to create an honest and open dialogue during the interviews through the use of probing questions and reassurance that the data would be transcribed plainly. The use of thick, rich description aided in the studies generalizability.
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, textural description is used to introduce each participant. Each textural description is written as a biographical profile and showcases the participant’s background, experiences, and the school at which he or she worked during the time that the interview took place. The researcher presented this data using the participants’ own voices whenever possible through the use of quotes or paraphrases directly from the interview transcript. Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants’ identities. Paraphrases and direct quotes are cited using each participant’s pseudonym and page number from the interview transcript. Next, the researcher introduces the themes that emerged during the interviews regarding the leaders’ experiences with enrollment management, retention, and leadership. The first set of themes focuses on current strategies that are being used to recruit and retain students. The next set of themes focuses on their involvement in the student recruitment and retention process, followed by the results of the recruitment and retention activity. The last set of themes emerged from the results of current recruitment and retention activity. All of the participants in this study are from the Lincoln. All of the schools within the Lincoln Catholic school system participated in this study. There are four schools total.

Mary and St. Christina Catholic Elementary School

Located directly off a main interstate, Lincoln was once a thriving industrial town that now showed severe signs of urban sprawl. Driving through downtown to reach the western located elementary school of St. Christina, one is reminded of a once thriving downtown with various railroads and beautiful historic vacant buildings that now yearn for downtown business tenants. The centerpiece of downtown is a civic center, a few small Main Street businesses and restaurants, and a courthouse followed by a large hospital. Upon reaching St. Christina elementary school guests are welcomed by a parish church with sits on the right and the beautiful
brick building elementary school building with a large statue of Jesus with arms open welcoming visitors into the school.

Lincoln is the main city located in a county in Ohio covering four hundred and four square miles and serves as home to approximately 110,000 residents. The largest ethnic group is Caucasian at 82.5%, followed by black at 11.8%, and Hispanic at 2.4%. The median household income is $43,632. Nearly twenty-four percent of the county’s workforce is employed through manufacturing jobs. An additional twenty percent of the workforce is employed through educational, health care, or social service professions. Like most of the United States, Lincoln County has not been immune to the effects of the recent recession. As of 2013, 16.3% of the county residents live in poverty (citation omitted to protect confidentiality).

Nearly half of the county residents have identified themselves as belonging to a religious sect. The single largest reporting group was Catholic with a population of nearly 25,000 or 41% of those reporting. Methodist was the second largest reporting group with nearly 8,500 members or 14% of the population (citation omitted to protect confidentiality).

At the time of the interview there were nine public school districts located within the county, each varying in location and student population. Despite the differences in location and population most schools in the county perform academically well, with most schools receiving a rating of excellent or effective on their annual yearly progress report. At the time of the study there were only two schools that had been placed on academic emergency and an additional two on academic watch (Ohio School Report Cards, 2013) In addition to the public school districts, there are six parochial and private schools located in Lincoln. Within the city limits of Lincoln, there are three Catholic grade schools (one of which is St. Christina) and one Catholic High School.
St. Christina Parish and School History

The history of St. Christina began in 1946 when the late Revered of another Catholic Church in Lincoln (St. Roy) and the then current Bishop purchased five acres of land at a popular west end intersection in Lincoln. In the summer of 1953, a priest was appointed to take up residence at St. Roy and begin the process of establishing a new parish. Early in 1954, the name St. Christina was selected as the name of the new parish. The following summer, ground broke on the parish and school. At the time there were three other parishes in Lincoln: St. Roy, St. Jacobs, and St. George. Out of the three parishes today two of them currently have elementary schools that are still in operation: St. Roy and St. George (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

The original building plans for the school included eight large classrooms, an auditorium, offices, library, clinic, and quarters for the Sisters of Charity. The doors of the newly erected building opened for students of the first time in the fall of 1955. Throughout the next several years the school doubled as the Parish of Christina, with the auditorium serving as the church. Because of the rapid growth that was experienced within the parish, work started on two new wings which would add four additional classrooms, basement activity rooms, and a wing for a chapel (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

By the fall of 1963, enrollment in the school had swelled to over 700 pupils. That year the Bishop granted permission to begin work on a permanent parish church, allowing for the conversion of the chapel wing into four additional classrooms. The new church was dedicated on August 23, 1964. In 1967 continued growth required the construction of more classrooms in the church basement. This newest addition brought the total number of classrooms used by the school to eighteen (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).
In the winter of 2006, a capital campaign project was started to provide classroom space for the early childhood program. In the fall of 2007, nearly a year after the idea was first presented; the doors of the newly constructed early childhood wing were opened. With the additional new wing it was possible to accommodate students from preschool through eighth grade all under one roof. Previously the preschool through second graders were housed in a school building four blocks northeast of the St. Christina main location (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

Today the school houses preschool through eighth grade classes containing more than 300 students. The majority of the students come from families that are middle to upper middle class. In recent years the demographic makeup of families has shifted, in large part because of the EdChoice (Ohio’s state) Voucher program. Although St. Christina has become more diversified in recent years, the racial profile of the student body remains primarily Caucasian. A small minority of Black, Asian, and Multiracial students complete the racial profile (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

At the time of the interview, the St. Christina parish was the eighth largest parish in its Diocese and the largest Catholic parish in Lincoln. There were 5,638 registered parishioners, which was a decrease of 111 parishioners from the previous year. Parish enrollment over the last several years has seen a slow and steady decline. Despite the decrease in the parish’s overall enrollment, the number of annual baptisms remained largely unchanged. In 2012 the parish conducted 45 total baptisms, which was an increase of one baptism from 2011 (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

One of the greatest concerns found in the parish data was the number of weddings performed in recent years. A total of seven marriages were performed in 2011 and 2012. The
3.5 average marriages per year is a sharp decrease from the previous years when ten to sixteen marriages were noted as being common (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

**St. Christina School Faculty and Staff**

At the time of the interview the school’s administration was comprised of one principal and a full time administrative assistant. The school employs twenty-one full-time credentialed teachers and four part-time teachers. The total number of certified staff was down slightly from previous years as smaller class sizes and lower enrollment numbers forced them to make difficult, although necessary reductions (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

The school also employs six people that are funded through the Auxiliary Service Program. The ASP covers the salaries of the school nurse, guidance counselor, intervention specialist, Title I teacher, a part time clerk, and speech pathologist. St. Christina also commissions the services of the local Catholic high school band director to provide instruction to the elementary students who are interested in musical instruments (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

In addition to the certified staff members listed above, St. Christina also employs a number of support staff personnel. At the time of the interview, there was one full-time maintenance person, two full-time custodians, five cafeteria workers (three full-time and two part-time) and two administrative assistants (one full-time and one part-time). There was also a part-time paraprofessional to help assist with the five day preschool program (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

The teachers’ salaries are based on an average of the three neighboring public school systems. Traditionally, St. Christina compensates teachers at 80% of the public school average.
However due to parish budget constraints over the past two years, no increase for teachers’ salaries have occurred (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

**St. Christina School Advisory Council (SAC)**

The St. Christina Catholic School Advisory Council serves as a consultative advisory body to the school. The council consists of nine members from the parish and school community appointed by the pastor, each serving a term of three years. In addition to the monthly meetings, council members are also asked to serve of a number of subcommittees which include marketing, facilities, finance, educational outreach, and performance. Collectively, their efforts help to inform the principal and pastor, as well as to help suggest possible policy changes. Although members may make recommendations, the council has no governing power and the final decisions to implement or approve policies and changes must come from the principal and ultimately the pastor.

**St. Christina Tuition**

St. Christina operates off two tuition scales. The first one is used for students that are active members of the St. Christina parish. St. Christina considers students to be active by taking weekly attendance of their trips to mass. Each student is brought up to the teacher on Monday and asked if they attended mass over the weekend and at which church. Those families that are identified through the parish business office receive a reduced rate of around $1,500 per child. The difference between tuition and the per-pupil cost is absorbed between the subsidies provided by the Parish and active involvement of the school families in fundraising efforts (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

The second tuition scale is designed for those families who are either parishioners of another Catholic church or are non-Catholic. That tuition scale reflects a significant increase to more closely mirror the average per-pupil cost. Families on this pay scale still receive a small
subsidy from the parish to cover the difference between tuition and the per-pupil cost; however, the subsidy is greatly exaggerated with the multiple-sibling discount (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012). See Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

*St. Christina Active Parishioner Rate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Child</td>
<td>$2,200</td>
<td>$2,275</td>
<td>$2,335</td>
<td>$2,417</td>
<td>$2,497</td>
<td>$2,620</td>
<td>$2,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Children</td>
<td>$4,170</td>
<td>$4,315</td>
<td>$4,440</td>
<td>$4,596</td>
<td>$4,748</td>
<td>$4,985</td>
<td>$5,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Children</td>
<td>$5,870</td>
<td>$6,075</td>
<td>$6,257</td>
<td>$6,476</td>
<td>$6,690</td>
<td>$7,125</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Children</td>
<td>$6,770</td>
<td>$7,015</td>
<td>$7,227</td>
<td>$7,261</td>
<td>$7,501</td>
<td>$8,175</td>
<td>$8,595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*per-pupil cost $3,931.00

Table 2

*St. Christina Non-Active Parishioner Rate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Child</td>
<td>$3,200</td>
<td>$3,310</td>
<td>$3,400</td>
<td>$3,587</td>
<td>$3,931</td>
<td>$4,228</td>
<td>$4,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Children</td>
<td>$5,875</td>
<td>$6,080</td>
<td>$6,250</td>
<td>$6,594</td>
<td>$7,220</td>
<td>$8,456</td>
<td>$8,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Children</td>
<td>$8,390</td>
<td>$8,680</td>
<td>$8,940</td>
<td>$9,432</td>
<td>$10,328</td>
<td>$12,684</td>
<td>$13,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Children</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>$10,350</td>
<td>$10,920</td>
<td>$11,280</td>
<td>$16,912</td>
<td>$17,650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*per-pupil cost $3,931.00

**St. Christina Parish Subsidy**

Each year the parish provides financial assistance to help support the operating budget of the school. The parish subsidy varies annually depending upon student enrollment and the monetary success of fundraisers. Traditionally, St. Christina has one of the lowest subsidies in
the Diocese. It ranges between 33% and 21% of the schools operating budget. Table 3 shares the past five year’s parish subsidy.

Table 3

*St. Christina Parish Subsidy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Parish Subsidy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*St. Christina Enrollment Data*

The enrollment at St. Christina has seen a drastic decline from the first given starting date of 2001. From 2001 to 2013 the school is down 187 students. The enrollment numbers that the researcher was given only go back twelve years. In the past twelve years enrollment at St. Christina’s has declined by 44.8%. See Table 4.

Table 4

*St. Christina Number of Students Enrolled*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Increase or Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>-28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
St. Christina Curriculum

St. Christina curriculum is based upon the Courses of Study issued by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese. The Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA) operating standards require that educational programs and experiences shall be designed and implemented to provide a Catholic education of high quality for all students. All Diocesan courses of study adhere to requirements for Catholic schools as specified in the operating standards. The courses of study are developed by committees made up of teachers from diocesan schools and facilitated by the Catholic Youth and School services. Courses of study are aligned with Ohio Academic Content Standards, yet are enhanced to reflect Catholic beliefs and practices. Core subjects are infused with teachings based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This applies to all schools that are presented in this study. The areas of academic studies include religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, health, and social studies. St. Christina also provides differentiated math instruction for students in the seventh and eighth grade. In addition to the core subject areas, all students receive instruction in the special areas of music, art, technology, and physical education. In addition to the core curriculum, St. Christina also offers a variety of special education services to meet the many individual needs of the students. At the time of the interview the school offered the services of the Title I program, an intervention specialist, and a speech pathologist. Students who qualify for Title I services receive additional instruction in both math and language arts. The Intervention Specialist works with those students who either have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Minor Adjustment Plan (MAP) (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).
St. Christina Standardized Testing

St. Christina uses a standardized testing series recommended by the Diocese. The assessment modules are Scantron Testing, Writing Competency Test, ACRE Assessment, and AIMs Web. The Diocese mandates that students in grades three, five and seven participate in the annual Scantron assessment. The online assessment is administered in the fall to determine a baseline score for each child. The students then take a follow up test each spring to determine their academic growth. Scantron offers assessments in math, language arts, science, and reading. Students at St. Christina are only required to complete the math and reading subtests. The overall results from years 2008 through 2010 reveal that St. Christina students performed considerably higher than the Diocesan average in both subject matters and all three grade levels (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. Christina Mission Statement

St. Christina, in partnership with our parish, will provide a faith-filled environment which challenges students to become upstanding citizens, stewards, and scholars through instruction and example (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. Christina Belief Statement

We believe…St. Christina provides an atmosphere that is permeated by Christian values which recognizes self-discipline, personal responsibility, and a call to serve others.
We believe…instruction should be student centered which recognizes the dignity and uniqueness of the person so that the gifts of each are recognized, developed, and celebrated.
We believe… our faith community- teachers, staff, students, parents, and parishioners-share the responsibility for the support and obtainment of the school’s mission.
We believe…service to others is important to the growth and development of each child as a whole person. Service to others should be purposeful and generated by both the faculty and students as a means to develop a child’s awareness for the social concerns of others. (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012)

Mary

Mary was born and raised in Lincoln. She has a master’s degree and a bachelor’s degree in education. As soon as she graduated from college with her bachelor’s degree, she moved back to Lincoln and began her teaching career at St. Christina. She served twenty-seven years as a primary teacher at St. Christina, focusing on academics and pedagogy. Mary has a vast background in brain-based learning theory and spent ten of her twenty-seven years training other teachers about brain based learning. After serving as a teacher for twenty-six years, Mary is now in her second year as the Principal.

Matthew and St. Roy Catholic Elementary School

St. Roy Parish and School History

St. Roy was the first Catholic Church founded in Lincoln. In 1845, the first Catholics settled in Lincoln and were connected to the Diocese of another large city in the state. For years, the Catholics of Lincoln were able to go to mass only when a priest from another congregation would come to Lincoln. Otherwise, the mass was offered in someone’s home. As Lincoln grew, the Catholic population grew. There was a priest that was assigned to the congregation and organizing a parish in Lincoln. In 1856, he began raising funds for construction of the first church. The church was completed in 1858.
In 1865, the first parish school was built on West Street and was staffed by two lay teachers. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary assumed the teaching duties in 1868 until 1872. At this time, the original school was moved to the site of the old high school and enlarged.

In 1888, a three-story brick school was built next to the church on West Street. A three-year high school course was started in 1895, with classes being held on the third floor of the grade school building. The front section of the old high school was built in 1906. It housed the high school and the parish groups and included a small gymnasium and swimming pool. A fourth-year course was added to the high school making it fully accredited in 1914.

In 1951, new classrooms were constructed in the basement of the grade school building. In 1952, a new addition was built onto the convent. By December 31, 1952, a cornerstone for a new grade school building was laid and blessed. The building, which included twelve classrooms, a cafeteria, and some offices, was dedicated on April 11, 1954. This is the same building that St. Roy Catholic School still occupies today.

Lincoln Central Catholic High School was built in 1956, and that is when St. Roy Catholic High School changed to a grade school with classes being offered through eighth grade. The school continues to serve elementary grades K-8 today. In 2007, 64% of the students were Catholic and members of the parish, 36% were non-Catholic, and 21 out of 127 students were on the EdChoice voucher program. The majority of families in 2007 were middle to low income with 34% qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch. The student population at St. Roy is the most diverse in Lincoln with twenty-seven percent of the 2007 student body being Indian, Black, or biracial and 73% were Caucasian (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008).
St. Roy School Faculty and Staff

St. Roy has nine full-time teachers, one part-time physical education teacher, a retired art teacher who volunteers for time, and a band teacher who is paid by the local Catholic High School. (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008).

St. Roy School Advisory Council

St. Roy operates under the guidance of the diocese and the Ohio Department of Education. St. Roy also has a school advisory board that advises the principal. Just like St. Christina, the council consists of nine members from the parish and school community appointed by the pastor, each serving a term of three years. Collectively, their efforts help to inform the principal and pastor, as well as to help suggest possible policy changes. Although members may make recommendations, the council has no governing power and the final decisions to implement or approve policies and changes must come from the principal and ultimately the pastor. The principal reports to the pastor of St. Roy parish (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008).

St. Roy Tuition and Parish Subsidy

The tuition rates and parish subsidy historical information was not given in the OCSEA Accreditation Report, nor were they made available to the researcher. A current tuition rate of $4,250 was given for every child for 2013 regardless of active or non-active parish status. It was mentioned in an interview that the parish subsidy is $550 and the principal was unclear about a multi-child discount. Every school was able to provide detailed information on past tuition except for St. Roy. It was implied that the majority of students attending the school are on Ed Choice vouchers or are receiving parish assistance however the number of students or the amount of assistance were never given.
**St. Roy Enrollment Data**

The enrollment data given from St. Roy shows a fairly steady enrollment rate with only a decline of 19.1% in the past seventeen years. See Table 5.

**Table 5**

*St. Roy Enrollment Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Increase or Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>+19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
St. Roy Curriculum and Standardized Testing

St. Roy’s curriculum is virtually the same as St. Christina based upon the Courses of Study issued by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the diocese. The areas of academic studies include religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, health, and social studies. The standardized tests are the same as the other local Catholic schools; as they are issued from the Diocese. St. Roy students did consistently perform below the diocesan percentile on the Terra Nova test in a five year period from 2002 to 2005. The Terra Nova test is given in third, fifth, and seventh grade in October. The test covers reading, language, math, science and social studies. Table six refers to the five year scores in each grade level for each area (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008).
Table 6

*St. Roy Terra Nova Five Year CRST Average from 2002 to 2007*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>5 yr. Diocesan Percentile Avg</th>
<th>St. Roy Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**St. Roy Mission Statement**

St. Roy Catholic school is a K through eight school operated by the parish of St. Roy Church and the diocese. We offer a comprehensive curriculum where every student participates, learns, and grows academically, spiritually, and socially. We achieve success through partnering
with parents and building upon a strong Catholic tradition (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008).

**St. Roy Belief Statement**

1. We believe that student learning and faith development are the chief priorities for our school.
2. We believe that each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
3. We believe that all students are capable of learning and benefit from applying their learning in meaningful contexts.
4. We believe the teachers, administrators, parents and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
5. We believe that a student’s self-esteem is enhanced by path of relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff.
6. We believe that continuous improvement is imperative to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.

(OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2008)

**Matthew**

Matthew is a graduate of Bluffton University for his undergraduate degree and received his master’s in education from the University of Dayton. He spent nineteen years in the developmentally disabled education sector and served as adult supervisor, principal, and superintendent. He then entered into business with his wife. Matthew has also coached basketball for thirty years for teams from seventh grade through varsity level. Upon retiring he worked as a
substitute teacher for five years before accepting the principal position at St. Roy’s. Matthew has been the principal at St. Roy for one year.

**Father James, Joy, and St. George Catholic Elementary School**

**St. George Parish and School History**

St. George School is a preschool through eighth grade school and is located in Lincoln. It is one of 70 schools in the diocese and one of three catholic elementary schools in Lincoln. St. George is located in the northeast quadrant of the city and the area that surrounds it is part residential and parts business (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George Church officially opened on July 16, 1916 in the presence of 115 people. The first June festival was held in 1917 with the parish membership of 150 families. On September 9, 1918, 138 children were placed in the care of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who came to Lincoln at the Bishop’s invitation (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George has two school buildings, as well as a church and a Redemptorist Rectory. Preschool through grade 3, along with the cafeteria, are housed in the older of the two buildings that was built in 1916. It is a three-level building with preschool, kindergarten and first grade located in the basement. Second grade, third grade as well as Title I teacher and intervention specialists are located on the third floor. The cafeteria takes up the main floor of that building with the parish school of religion office. The other building houses fourth grade through eighth grade, the office, and the nurse’s office (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

The sisters of St. Ursula were a part of St. George School and parish for quite some time. The sisters took over the school in 1918 and worked with St. George until their departure in 1998. St. George currently has 104 students enrolled in preschool through eighth grade. There is one class in each grade level and in addition to the core academic classes St. George offers
music, physical education, finance and technology class. Approximately 70% of the classes are Catholic and 30% are non-Catholic. Approximately 25% of the students that attend St. George school are through the voucher program at approximately 45% of the students receive free or reduced lunches. Approximately 21% of the students are Black, Hispanic or two or more races, while 79% are Caucasian (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George School Faculty and Staff

St. George employs ten full-time faculty and two part-time faculty, all of whom hold at least a bachelor’s degree. The full-time faculty are certified teachers with the state. The teachers range in teaching experience from two to thirty-two years. St. George also employs seven support staff three cafeteria staff and three staff for the extended a program. Only one of the twenty-five employees is non-Catholic. Father James serves as the Priest for St. George parish as well as the full-time principal. Joy serves as the assistant principal (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George School Advisory Council

The Council consists of six volunteer members. It is unclear how they are chosen however the assumption is that the Priest appoints the volunteers to the board. St. George's school principal is the primary administrator and serves as the academic advisor to the peerage and finance councils (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George Tuition

The only tuition available to the researcher was the current year 2013-2014. Parish subsidy information was not available to the researcher. No historical figures were given upon request. See Tables 7 and 8.
Table 7

*St. George Active Parishioner Rate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013-2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Child</td>
<td>$2150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Children</td>
<td>$3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Children</td>
<td>$5301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Children</td>
<td>$6000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8

*St. George Non-Active Parishioner Rate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013-2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Child</td>
<td>$3150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Children</td>
<td>$4850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Children</td>
<td>$6475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Children</td>
<td>$7300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**St. George Enrollment Data**

Enrollment data collected from St. George was valid up until 2005 then it dropped off from 2005 to 2010. Given the historical context of the numbers that were given it is clear that enrollment at St. George is declining. Enrollment from 1982 to 2013 decreased by 71% in a thirty-one year period. See Table 9.
# Table 9

**St. George Enrollment Data from 1982 to 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Increase or Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982-1983</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-1984</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>+14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-1985</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1986</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-1987</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-1989</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>+13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>+2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>+15</td>
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<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>+5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
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<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>315</td>
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<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>Same as previous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>-13</td>
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<td>2000-2001</td>
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<td>2002-2003</td>
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<td>2005-2006</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
St. George Curriculum

St. George’s curriculum is virtually the same as St. Christina and St. Roy based upon the Courses of Study issued by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese. The areas of academic studies include religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, health, and social studies. The standardized tests are the same as the other local Catholic schools; as they are issued from the Diocese. The only specific Terra Nova test results that were found in the school improvement plan from the 2012 OCSEA report. The preparer compared 2007/2008 to 2010/2011 data. There is no reference or table to show the diocese comparisons for 2010/2011. Across all grade levels reading showed the highest scores at 81% for grade three, 85% for grade five, and 70% for grade seven. Math showed as the lowest area with 37% for grade three, 37% for grade five, and 33% for grade seven (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George Mission Statement

St. George School educates the minds, hearts, and hands of our students by infusing Catholic values and faith formation into everything we do. We collaborate with parents to create a safe environment where students strive to become contributing members of society (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

St. George Belief Statement

1. All students are capable of learning. By honoring their style of learning in a safe classroom environment, they become successful in the learning process.
2. Parents are their child's first teacher and we work in collaboration with them.
3. The curriculum prepares students to exist in the world that is around them and helps them to become contributing members of society.
4. It is important for students to become productive members of society by following life skills based on the Lifelong Guidelines and Life Skills.
5. Our school building community within our classrooms and the entire school where everyone is recognized as important.

6. Faith formation as the core reason for Catholic education.

7. We must work together to help students understand their faith and use Lifelong Guidelines, modeling kindness and forgiveness (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2012).

**Father James**

Father James serves as both pastor and principal at St. George. At the time of this research he had been in Lincoln for two years. Prior to living in Lincoln he lived in Long Island, New York. He was a public accountant before he entered the priesthood. He entered the priesthood on January 1, 1999 and was ordained on May 6, 2006. Father James is a highly involved and dedicated priest who donates his time as the principal, therefore saving the parish school the annual salary of the principal’s position.

**Joy**

Joy is an alumnus of St. George as were her parents. She has been in education for 42 years. Her first two years were in public education and then she took a position at St. Christina’s as a teacher and principal for 28 years. She then moved to Lincoln Central Catholic and served ten years as the assistant principal, Director of Academics. Upon her retirement she was asked by St. George to come in on a part-time basis of twenty hours per week to serve as the assistant principal. Joy’s experience and passion for Catholic education serve as a wonderful asset to the administrative team at St. George.
Joseph and Lincoln Central Catholic High School

Located in Lincoln sits a private Catholic school named Lincoln Central Catholic High School (LCC). Lincoln Central Catholic owes much of its rich history and effectiveness to the spiritual foundation laid by its predecessors, the three local Catholic high schools that flourished prior to the establishment of LCC. The first of the three high schools St. Roy opened in 1895. St. Jacobs followed in 1919 and St. George graduated its first class in 1926. When these three schools closed to accommodate a central location, St. Roy had educated fifty-nine classes, St. Jacobs had educated thirty-five classes and St. George had educated thirty-two classes.

Under the leadership of the Bishop of the diocese, the four Lincoln Catholic parishes including the newly formed St. Christina, Lincoln Central Catholic purchased land and broke ground for the newly consolidated High School on August 25, 1959. Prior to the land purchase, St. Roy and St. Jacobs consolidated in September of 1956 and St. George joined that consolidation in 1957. The building where Lincoln Central Catholic currently is housed opened in September of 1960.

The initial cost of the Lincoln Central Catholic building was $630,000 and accommodated 650 students in twenty-three classrooms. Additional sections of the building included a chapel, gymnasium, cafeteria, and several multipurpose rooms. In the following decade, the student population doubled and the addition of two more wings was necessary (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).

Lincoln Central Catholic School Faculty and Staff

Originally serving as faculty were the Sisters of Charity along with Ursuline sisters, Franciscans, and other sisters of various orders. The lay faculty grew slowly and by the late 1970s, they comprised the entire teaching staff. The original principal of Lincoln Central
Catholic became a Monsignor in 1963. His love and dedication to the students and Catholic education has won him a permanent remembrance as a great leader and educator. He remained active in the Lincoln community even after his retirement in 1980 due a leukemia diagnosis. He died in 1986; however, his vision and spirit for excellence in education live on.

The current administration is made up of one president, one principal, one director of finance and operations, and one director of development. There are two guidance counselors, one administrative assistant for guidance, one athletic director and three athletic department members (two full-time and two part-time), two administrative assistants in the business office (one full-time and one part-time), two full-time maintenance employees, one full-time cafeteria employee and three part-time cafeteria employees, and thirty four teachers (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).

**Lincoln Central Catholic Board of Governance**

The Lincoln Central Catholic School Governance Board serves as a consultative, advisory board. There are fifteen members on the board. Three of those positions are held by the priests in each of the three parish churches. The other members are chosen by an interview system. Applications are taken from interested parties and then each candidate is interviewed by a subcommittee of the board. That subcommittee makes a final recommendation and the board, along with the president and priests makes the final decision. There are five committees that meet monthly outside of the monthly governing board requirements. The five committees are: academic affairs; building and grounds; finance; marketing, development, and communications; and mission, policy, and board governance.
The board member responsibilities are to:

1. Support and uphold the mission of Catholic education in the Lincoln community.
2. Select, support and evaluate the President.
3. Ensure effective strategic planning.
4. Monitor and strengthen Catholic educational programs and services.
5. Ensure the financial viability of the school and its assets through the support and participation of the local parishes and surrounding community.
6. Build a competent board.
7. Ensure legal and ethical integrity.
8. Enhance, maintain, and support a positive public image in the community for the school and the diocese.
9. Approve and guide policy development and oversight.
10. Oversee the work of standing and ad hoc board committees.

(OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009)

Lincoln Central Catholic Tuition

Lincoln Central Catholic students and families have seen a drastic increase in tuition. In the past twenty-three years there has been a 373% increase in tuition to attend Lincoln Central Catholic High School (see Table 11). In the past ten years there has been a 119% increase in tuition as shown in Table 10 below. In addition to tuition increases, families with three or more children in the past received a third child free rate up until 2003 which is now nonexistent.

(OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).
Table 10

*Lincoln Central Catholic Tuition Rates 1990-2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Parishioner Tuition</th>
<th>2nd Student Parishioner</th>
<th>3rd Student Parishioner</th>
<th>Non-Parishioner</th>
<th>2nd Student Non-Parishioner</th>
<th>3rd Student Non-Parishioner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>1,206.00</td>
<td>1,116.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>1,890.00</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>1,305.00</td>
<td>1,215.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>1,980.00</td>
<td>1,890.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>1,395.00</td>
<td>1,260.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,070.00</td>
<td>1,935.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>1,485.00</td>
<td>1,380.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,160.00</td>
<td>2,025.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>1,575.00</td>
<td>1,440.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,250.00</td>
<td>2,115.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>1,665.00</td>
<td>1,530.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,340.00</td>
<td>2,205.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>1,755.00</td>
<td>1,620.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,430.00</td>
<td>2,295.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>1,845.00</td>
<td>1,710.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,520.00</td>
<td>2,385.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>1,935.00</td>
<td>1,800.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,610.00</td>
<td>2,475.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>2,100.00</td>
<td>1,700.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>2,800.00</td>
<td>2,800.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>2,225.00</td>
<td>2,800.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>3,225.00</td>
<td>4,000.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>2,350.00</td>
<td>4,050.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>3,350.00</td>
<td>5,050.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>2,600.00</td>
<td>4,300.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>3,600.00</td>
<td>5,300.00</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>3,050.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
<td>3,700.00</td>
<td>6,500.00</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>3,050.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
<td>3,700.00</td>
<td>6,500.00</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>3,250.00</td>
<td>5,400.00</td>
<td>7,600.00</td>
<td>3,900.00</td>
<td>6,700.00</td>
<td>9,550.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>3,660.00</td>
<td>6,320.00</td>
<td>8,880.00</td>
<td>4,370.00</td>
<td>7,740.00</td>
<td>11,101.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>3,860.00</td>
<td>6,720.00</td>
<td>9,480.00</td>
<td>4,570.00</td>
<td>8,140.00</td>
<td>11,610.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>4,060.00</td>
<td>7,120.00</td>
<td>10,080.00</td>
<td>4,770.00</td>
<td>8,540.00</td>
<td>12,210.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>4,260.00</td>
<td>7,320.00</td>
<td>10,280.00</td>
<td>4,970.00</td>
<td>8,940.00</td>
<td>12,810.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>5,275.00</td>
<td>9,550.00</td>
<td>14,825.00</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>5,475.00</td>
<td>9,950.00</td>
<td>14,425.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>5,710.00</td>
<td>10,420.00</td>
<td>15,130.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>5,710.00</td>
<td>10,420.00</td>
<td>15,130.00</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11

*Lincoln Central Catholic Percentage of Increase in Tuition Dollars*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Increase in Dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>23% increase for parishioner 6.1% increase for non-parishioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lincoln Central Catholic Parish Subsidy**

The furthest back the parish subsidy and tuition information the researcher was given went back to the year 1990. From 1990 to 2010 the parish subsidy was included in the tuition rates. There was a parish tuition rate and a non-parishioner tuition rate regardless of which parish the student attended. During the 2010-2011 school year, all students began to be charged one flat rate and the student had to fill out a parish subsidy form that was approved or denied by the pastor of requested parish. The parish subsidy also vastly decreased per student to between
$600.00 and $800.00 from a previous range of anywhere from $600.00 to $1,200.00 depending on the year. Table 12 below reflects the parish subsidy over the past three years (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).

Table 12

*Lincoln Central Catholic Parish Subsidy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>St. Christina</th>
<th>St. George</th>
<th>St. Roy</th>
<th>St. Jacobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lincoln Central Catholic Enrollment Data*

The enrollment at LCC has seen a drastic decline from the first given starting date of 1978-1979. From 1978 to 2013 the school is down 399 students or a decrease of 55.5%. Over the past ten years the enrollment has decreased by 18.8% for a total of 74 students. The enrollment numbers that the researcher was given go back thirty five years (see Table 13).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Increase or Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-1979</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1980</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1981</td>
<td>649</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981-1982</td>
<td>610</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1983</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-1984</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-1985</td>
<td>515</td>
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<td>1985-1986</td>
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<td>1986-1987</td>
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<td>1987-1988</td>
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<td>1988-1989</td>
<td>301</td>
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<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>+21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>+34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>+29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>409</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>+25</td>
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<td>1996-1997</td>
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<td>1997-1998</td>
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<td>1998-1999</td>
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<td>1999-2000</td>
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<td>2000-2001</td>
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<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>387</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>+29</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>-23</td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>383</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>368</td>
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<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>368</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>-33</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lincoln Central Catholic Curriculum

The Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association (OCSAA) operating standards require that educational programs and experiences shall be designed and implemented to provide a Catholic education of high quality for all students. All Diocesan courses of study adhere to requirements for Catholic schools as specified in the operating standards. The courses of study are developed by committees made up of teachers from diocesan schools and facilitated by the Catholic Youth and School services. Courses of study are aligned with Ohio Academic Content Standards, yet are enhanced to reflect Catholic beliefs and practices. Core subjects are infused with teachings based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Lincoln Central Catholic is operated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Ohio Department of Education and the Catholic Diocese (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009). In addition to the traditional high school curriculum, the school offers various college on campus classes at a much reduced tuition price. The students are able to take college classes taught by qualified faculty on the LCC campus from three local universities.

Lincoln Central Catholic Standardized Testing

The Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) is administered in the spring to all sophomore students. The tests are aligned to Ohio’s academic standards, as adopted by the State Board of Education in the areas of Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, and Writing. A student must pass all five tests as a graduation requirement. According to the Ohio Graduation Test Results report powered by Gerber Analytics, LLC (2013) LCC ranked 86th out of all public and private high schools in the state of Ohio. LCC continuously places among the top academic schools in Ohio.

All Lincoln Central Catholic students take the PLAN test in October of their sophomore year. It is preliminary to the ACT, which is one of two college entrance exams. The PLAN test helps Lincoln Central Catholic administrators identify academic strengths and weaknesses, and
supports meaningful high school course selection for the students’ junior and senior years. All Lincoln Central Catholic students are urged to take the ACT and SAT tests. Upon review of the ACT and SAT scores the LCC students are consistently above the State’s average scores (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).

**Lincoln Central Catholic Mission Statement**

Lincoln Central Catholic is committed to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, providing a faith-based education through quality academic, artistic, and athletic programs combined with opportunities for spiritual formation and growth (OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009).

**Lincoln Central Catholic Belief Statement**

1. We believe that the teachings of Jesus Christ influence all of our decisions.
2. We believe that teaching is a ministry of the Gospel.
3. We believe that teachers should be good role models of the Christian faith.
4. We believe that community service is a vital component of education that develops social awareness.
5. We believe that extra-curricular activities help teach important life skills.
6. We believe that parents are important partners in their student’s educational process.
7. We believe that every student is entitled to a quality education in a safe environment.
8. We believe that teachers should be committed to high standards of teaching.

(OCSEA Accreditation Report, April 2009)

**Joseph**

Joseph came to Lincoln Central Catholic with a rich history of thirty-six years spent in the Catholic education system with many of those years spent in Catholic school leadership.
Joseph holds a master’s degree and bachelor’s degree in education. Positions held in the past include President, Principal, Teacher, Coach, Athletic Director, and Dean of Students. He is actively involved with the many leadership positions within diocese and is currently the President at LCC.

**Emergent Themes**

The goal of this study was to obtain from K-12 private Catholic school leaders’ their practices, perceptions and lived experiences with marketing and enrollment management plans within the schools that they have held leadership positions in. The recruitment of leaders yielded a sample of two females and three males both with a vast amount of experience in private Catholic schools. As previously discussed in the textural descriptions, each leader had his or her own unique path to their leadership position and while they all work in the same Catholic system, in the same town, they all have varying views on marketing and enrollment management. While each school was strikingly different, there were many similarities within the school leaders’ leadership experiences and views on marketing. The main emergent themes that directly correlate to the research questions include: (a) strategies that are currently being used to recruit and retain students; (b) the principals’ involvement in the student recruitment and retention process; (c) results of the current recruitment and retention activity; and the last additional finding was (d) influences that shape the participants’ leadership abilities, particularly in regards to enrollment management and catholic school education.
Research Question 1: Strategies that are Currently Being Used to Recruit and Retain Students

Three strategies emerged as being currently used to recruit students within all four schools: (1) word of mouth marketing, campus tours, and open houses; (2) traditional advertising including newspaper, television, and billboards; and (3) no formal written marketing plan.

Word of Mouth Marketing, Campus Tours, and Open Houses

Word of mouth marketing was a strong theme during all four interviews. Mary specifically referred to word of mouth and referral marketing as being their number one recruitment tool:

The majority of marketing and recruitment success comes from word of mouth. Word of mouth from parents, teachers, and parish. I think there is just a real positive feeling about our school from lots of different people and that is just communicated. (Mary 1, 26-28)

Mary went on to share that

I can count on so many parents to be as good of a marketer as I am. We just have parents who say you need to bring your kids to St. Christina and here is why. They are very good at marketing. (Mary, 1, 29-31)

All four leaders voiced that word of mouth marketing is their number one recruitment tool. They also shared that open houses are another main form of recruiting students. Interestingly, the open houses at St. Christina have traditionally invited current students and families to come into the classrooms to view the current students work rather than advertising and inviting the public and PSR students. It is held after mass on a Sunday during Catholic Schools week typically in February. Father James shared that they are focusing their open houses towards the pre-K and kindergarten students and families:
We had an open house this past year and we just aimed it at pre-K and kindergarten. Prior open houses weren’t successful so we just tried to gear it to them really. Then I would say that word of mouth from the podium that kind of stuff but we have no formal marketing plan and it would be word of mouth as a main marketing tool and gearing up for open house. (Father James, 1, 27-30)

Traditional Advertising

Joseph shared that Lincoln Central Catholic incorporates the use of billboards, television advertising, and newspaper advertising at the high school level to increase brand awareness for the high school as well as all Lincoln Catholic schools. Joseph shared that

We are really unique in that we are the only one of two schools left in the diocese that is a 9-12 and not a system-wide Catholic school so we are trying to regroup from different angles. We do a lot more television advertising in Lincoln than I have ever done in the past. We tried to do a collaborative with newspaper ads with the elementary schools at Lincoln Central Catholic’s expense. So the advertising that we do with the newspaper, billboards, radio, TV is to increase brand awareness. (Joseph, 1, 1-24)

No Formal Written Marketing Plan

All four leaders shared that there is no formal written marketing plan for their school. All four leaders did express interest in writing one in the future. Joseph shared that

I do have one in my head. I have been doing it for so long that I know the things that I want to do and when they need to be done. (Joseph, 1, 27-28)

Joseph also shared that while Lincoln Central Catholic currently does not have written marketing plan they are currently in the process of writing a strategic plan for the school for the first time. Documentary analysis was done on the documents provided by LCC however the
elementary schools had no documentation to share with the researcher. The strategic plan Joseph shared is for 2013 to 2015. They started in the fall of 2012 by crafting the mission and vision statements. Joseph as well as the governing board is spearheading the effort after the stark realization that future enrollment numbers are looking drastic and that an effort to do everything possible to change that is in order. The governing board’s finance committee ran numbers from the current enrollment numbers at the elementary levels for their future enrollment projections at LCC and this was the data that Joseph shared with me (see Table 14).

Table 14

Lincoln Central Catholic Future Enrollment Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomores</th>
<th>Juniors</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Less 5% retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nine years projection with current elementary school numbers shows a drop of 41.8% in LCC’s future enrollment. This is a critical projection. Joseph shared that if this enrollment cliff crisis is not dealt with at the elementary level which serves as the enrollment pipeline for the high school, LCC will be facing critical financial issues by 2022. The researcher found it interesting to note that these projections have been shared with the elementary school principals and none of them mentioned the future projections to the researcher during the interviews nor have they conducted any type of future enrollment projections for their own organizations.
After seeing that they were facing a 41.8% decline in enrollment in the next nine years, Joseph and the governing board started focusing major effort on the crafting of their new strategic summary. A few interesting aspects emerged from the documentary analysis of the LCC Strategic Summary. While Joseph shared that they don’t have a written marketing/enrollment plan, the strategic summary is closely related to many of the aspects of a marketing/enrollment plan. Under the strategic focus/differentiators section, the following are listed as key points:

We provide an environment that promotes mutual respect, discipline, security and a greater opportunity for learning; we are able to teach the Catholic religion and instill Catholic values. All students, regardless of background, participate in faith education; we are a private school and are able to manage without some constraints facing public schools, allowing us to be more responsive to our customers and our staff; close collaboration between all stakeholders (parents, staff, students, alumni, parishes) creates a higher level of ownership in the school's mission and raises the probability of successful outcomes; extracurricular activities offered to all students are premium in nature, embodied in arts, music, sports, and global culture; and a college on campus focus affords availability of college-level courses to students where they can accelerate their transition to higher education and lower future college costs at the same time. (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013)

In the strategic choices section they have target markets/offerings listed with the following four targets:

Catholic families that currently enroll their children in the parish elementary schools in Lincoln; Catholic families for currently enrolled their children in PSR programs, public or homeschooling programs; non-Catholic families desiring a premium or college prep
education and environment for their children; and lastly non-Catholic families the desire a faith-based education. Additional target clients in this section are listed as having the following five characteristics: parent/student places a high value on a Catholic or faith-based education; parent/student desires a safe, high-quality learning environment; parent/student wishes to accelerate academic accomplishments by securing college credits to reduce costs of higher education; parent/student desires extracurricular opportunities; and parent/student seeking an education that prepares them for the next level and life. (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013)

The next section of the LCC strategic summary is the key reality assumptions which are the current environmental variables that the school must accept. There are seven factors listed in this section. They are:

1) Declining enrollment in the Catholic elementary schools is a major concern. This reduction is gradual over the next several years and then enters a steep decline after this year's fourth grade class (Class of 2021, freshman in 2017). There is a correlation with this and declining activity in the Catholic faith. Each parish contributes to the life of the elementary school.

2) Education choice remains a viable state program that allows interested students are currently enrolled in underperforming schools to use a voucher for financial assistance and enrollment in LCC. The program is slated for expansion to students in low income households regardless of school district, as part of the governor’s education proposal.

3) Although there is a history of failing to collaborate among the Catholic schools, the board and pastors now believe significant collaboration needs to occur among the parishes and the high school.
4) A strong sense of community exists at LCC that allows the school to succeed in tough times, especially when fundraising efforts are necessary. The school supported by members of all four Lincoln parishes and therefore can be construed as the force that brings the entire Lincoln Catholic community together.

5) Solid competitive public schools are present in our markets, offering more choices to families without the added cost of private school tuition. Open enrollment and these public schools are available.

6) Debt owed to the diocese exists that may affect our decision downstream.

7) A perceived stigma exists for Catholic education is not embraced by all, and a perception that had choice students and their families are not as engaged as the rest. (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013)

Key external factors are listed as positive and negatives that will help or hurt the school.

The positive factors are listed as:

Ed Choice (Ohio’s voucher program) will remain for the time being, assisting LCC financially. Currently 25% of all students enrolled are on Ed choice vouchers; elementary schools are interested in shared marketing efforts; and a large alumni base with financial resources. (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013)

The negative factors listed are:

elementary school enrollment in serious decline; parishes desire shared development outcomes are limited; cooperation from elementary schools regarding curriculum, teachers and etc.; and public school open enrollment. (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013)
The next section lists three local public schools as LCC’s main competitors, a thorough SWOT analysis is conducted and listed, a vision statement is listed along with key goals, strategic priorities, and financial expectations (LCC Strategic Summary, June, 2013).

In addition to the strategic summary, the mission, policy and board governance committee introduced the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic and Elementary and Secondary Schools* (2012) to the president and the governing board as tool to benchmark and assess where the school currently is as a parallel to the strategic planning process. *The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic and Elementary and Secondary Schools* (2012) is a collaborative effort that came out of a partnership between the Center for Catholic School Effectiveness at Loyola University Chicago and the Roche Center for Catholic Education at Boston College. The document was a product of a two year collaboration between the two schools that included the collaboration of Catholic educators across the nation including leaders and scholars in Catholic institutions of higher education, superintendents, principals, bishops, congregational sponsors, pastors, national Catholic Educational Association directors and executive committee members as well as other Catholic school supporters.

*The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic and Elementary and Secondary Schools* (2012) was produced to “provide a national articulation of defining characteristics and performance benchmarks that will enable all sponsors of Catholic elementary and secondary schools to assess, strengthen, and sustain their operations” (Ozar, 2012, p.V). In addition, “conference participants voiced the conviction that collectively endorsed national standards supported and advocated by the bishops offer the opportunity for the Catholic community to clarify the brand of Catholic schools” (Ozar, 2012, p.VI). The interesting aspect of this document is that it is intended to serve a school as school effectiveness standard rather
than curriculum content standards, although they do align with the common core. The standards provide “benchmarks to determine how well a school is fulfilling its obligation to those who benefit from its services (e.g. students, parents/guardians and families, faculty and staff), to donors and contributors, to the church, and to civil society” (Ozar, 2012, pVI).

The document contains three types of statements: The defining characteristics which are directly from the Holy See’s teaching on Catholic schools as compiled by Archbishop J. Michael Miller and from statements by the American bishops and by Pope Benedict XVI (Ozar, 2012, p.VI). They are: centered in the person of Jesus Christ, contributing to the evangelizing mission of the church, distinguished by excellence, committed to educate the whole child, steeped in a Catholic worldview, sustained by gospel witness, shaped by communion and community, accessible to all students, and established by the express authority of the bishop (Ozar, 2012, pVI).

The second statements are the standards. They describe processes, policies, structures, and programs that “should be present in mission-driven, program effective, well-managed, and responsibly governed Catholic schools” (Ozar, 2012, p. VI). The standards include four areas: mission and Catholic identity, governance and leadership, academic excellence, and operational vitality. The last of the three statements are benchmarks (Ozar, 2012, p. VI). The benchmarks are measureable descriptors for each standard. In total there are four standards and twenty one benchmarks under mission and Catholic identity, two standards and thirteen benchmarks under governance and leadership, three standards and eighteen benchmarks under academic excellence, and four standards and eighteen benchmarks under operational vitality. The standards and benchmarks under operational vitality are the most closely aligned with this study. The specific benchmarks are 10.6, 10.7, 13.1, 13.2, and 13.3 (Ozar, 2012, pg. 4-16).
The LCC the mission, policy and board governance committee has asked that each of the governing board subcommittees investigate and incorporate the aligned standards and benchmarks with their committees to put together a report that aligns with the strategic plan.

**Research Question 2: Principal Involvement in Student Recruitment and Retention**

**Principal Involvement in Student Recruitment**

Lincoln Central Catholic has a different organizational structure than the three elementary schools. Lincoln Central Catholic is the only one of the four schools that employs a director of development and a part-time marketing representative. Lincoln Central Catholic also has an academic principal and a president. The three elementary schools are much leaner administratively and do not have any additional administrative staff that serve a marketing role. All four organizational structures lend themselves to placing the majority of the marketing and enrollment planning function on the principal/president. Therefore, all three principals at the elementary level and the president at the high school level are tasked with dealing with the academic, discipline, and marketing roles. Matthew shared that the principal is not involved in the recruiting process however he did not tell the researcher who was in charge of recruiting. Mary shared that

> We don’t have a marketing person so I think it comes to me. I do have an administrative assistant that actually is good at marketing and she takes on the role of when new families walk through the door and would like to take a tour or want new information. I try to be there first to give them the academic perspective but she is really good at the facility perspective, so even though we don’t have marketing listed amongst her thousands of other roles she is our lead person in tours and if anyone walks through the door or calls.  

(Mary, 1, 18-24)
Joy shared that the principal involvement in recruiting at St. George’s is minimal right now. Joy shared

The involvement of the assistant principal is minimal right now. If it ever happens to come to be the responsibility of the principal or vice principal we would step up.

Basically, I believe and Father shares this belief with me that the best marketing tool is to have a great product. Have a good product and they will come. But we aren’t quite there yet. (Joy, 2, 46-49)

Father James shared that

The only marketing thing for me right now is just getting out in the public, going to all of the games, just bringing religion in because I think it is getting people excited about their faith and stuff of that nature. I think that all of the social dimensions are just getting out there and to start getting the faith out there. (Father James, 2, 50-53)

None of principals’ mentioned priorities that placed an emphasis on enrollment growth or enrollment management.

All four of the elementary school leaders interviewed shared recruitment strategies that were generally passive. None of the elementary leaders shared any strategies that actively seek to create enrollment demand. Joseph was the exception with marketing efforts through the use of billboards, TV, newspaper, and radio by the Lincoln Central Catholic. Joseph shared that the planning and institutional viability fall on his shoulders and he enjoys doing it.

The recruitment or the marketing of the school is directly under me the president, she (the principal) does the academic side and if I want her to speak to students she will but for the most part all the strategy and planning is done out of my office and we do have a part-time marketing person who goes out and buys for us with our ads for the newspaper,
television, and radio. She sends out our press releases and updates social media on a regular basis. We utilize her to high degree right now and then we also have a development office that also helps coordinate everything. (Joseph, 3, 100-106)

**Principal Involvement in Retention**

Two strategies emerged as being currently used to retain students. The strategies are to (a) monitor re-enrollment forms at the end of the academic year and (b) contact families that have not re-enrolled during the summer months. If the family mentions financial hardship explanations of financial assistance programs are explained and possible offers of financial assistance are made upon a family sharing the need. Mary shared that

Basically we send out re-enrollment early just so that we are getting an idea of who is sending it back right away and who is not. Then what I did was I made a list of all of the people that had not sent the forms back in. Some of them I know will be fine. They just aren’t people that get things done right away but then as the list gets smaller and smaller I kind of find my target people. Those are the people that I make a phone call to right away. (Mary, 2, 41-46)

Matthew shared that

If a student is enrolled from fourth through eighth grade, St. Roy awards a partial scholarship to Lincoln Central Catholic. In our view it helps keep the students retained at the elementary level. (Matthew, 1, 5)

Joy shared

This past year I knew of two families that we were curious about not returning, so I made the phone calls, and they actually came in and visited with me. I know from previous
experience I did make it a point to call every family that there was even an indication that they might not be returning. (Joy, 2, 57-59)

**Research Question 3: Results of Current Recruitment and Retention Activity**

Three leaders shared a deep concern for the dwindling enrollment numbers at their school except for one (Matthew) who feels that their numbers have been fairly stable. Enrollment was a key code that emerged in the first cycle descriptive coding process. In addition, the in vivo coding process found that the three main emergent themes from all four interviews in enrollment trends were 1) low 2) decreasing 3) smaller for many reasons. Mary stated

For the diocese I think that our enrollment is pretty high. For our past experience I feel it is low right now. We are much, much, much smaller for lots of reasons. (Mary, 3, 80-81)

While all of the leaders expressed concern in this area except for one, none of the elementary schools offered any additional conversation of immediate action plans. Three of the four schools have seen drastic decreases in enrollment with the fourth school staying fairly steady as shown above in tables four, five, nine, eleven and thirteen. Joseph did share all of the current recruitment activity as mentioned above however he could not pinpoint if it had any direct correlation to enrollment numbers.

**Participants’ Leadership Advice for Future Leaders**

One of the strongest emergent themes when the leaders were asked about giving future leaders advice was having a passion for the job and the faith and building relationships with the community. Both passion for the faith and passion for Catholic education as building community relationships emerged in every interview. Joy shared

You better have a passion for it or you probably won’t enjoy it and that’s why I stick with it. I was probably a principal for a half dozen years before I was really proud to say that I
was a principal because it was such difficult work and it can weigh you down but it is also very exhilarating right now. I think if you can have a spirit and passion for it is a great job. (Joy, 12, 390-394)

Father James shared

I would say for me it’s the importance of Catholic education, the influence it can have, the impact it can have. I didn't perceive it. Even as a priest, I didn’t perceive the impact it can have so I just not only influencing the kids, but the families and the community. A lot of parents don’t know how to discipline their children; don’t know how to teach them manners, but what better than teachers. Teachers that do it all the time on teaching the parents on how to control and the parents are good role models but they just don’t know how to do it. The school can contribute and assist them in that having a passion for the faith and teaching faith in roles. With the public schools not allowing church in schools due to separation of church and state it is essential that the private Catholic schools to this I know I need to be here to teach the spirit. (Father James, 12, 396-405)

Joseph also added

If you don’t have the passion for being in Catholic education then you may as well not even waste your time, because you are not getting the same financial return. You have to feel that this is part of what you are giving back to the church as a ministry. That’s the difference between being in a school like ours versus a public school. (Joseph, 9, 283-287)
Table 15 represents a conceptually clustered matrix using the themes that emerged from the data collected from each of the specific interview questions. The richest data came from the LCC and Joseph interview. The other three schools had very little documentary evidence to share and had no enrollment/marketing/strategy plans. The elementary school coding showed little concern over lack of current recruitment activities in general and they currently have little marketing activity unless it was a commercial paid for by the high school.
## Table 15

**Conceptually Clustered Matrix of Emergent Themes from the Overall Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mary St. Christina</th>
<th>Joseph LCC</th>
<th>James &amp; Joy St. George</th>
<th>Matthew St. Roy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years at current school</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Two / Two</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of educational experience</td>
<td>27 years at St. Christina</td>
<td>36 years with 32 of the spent in administration</td>
<td>James-2 years Joy- 28 years</td>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-What strategies are currently being used to recruit students within your school?</td>
<td>Word of Mouth Current student Open House</td>
<td>Word of Mouth Open House Billboards TV Ads Newspaper Ads</td>
<td>Word of Mouth Kindergarten Open House</td>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Do you have a formal written marketing plan?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not written, &quot;In my head I have a plan&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-If you have a marketing process in place, do you feel that it is successful?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Is the principal involved with recruiting at your school?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (president) – new organizational structure +development &amp; mkt pos.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-What strategies are currently being used to retain students within your school?</td>
<td>Monitor Re-enrollment forms Offer Financial Assistance</td>
<td>Monitor Re-enrollment forms Offer Financial Assistance</td>
<td>Monitor Re-enrollment forms Offer Financial Assistance</td>
<td>If a student is enrolled 4-8 a partial scholarship is rewarded to HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Do you have a formal or written retention plan?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- If you do have a retention plan in place do you feel that it is successful?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- What is enrollment currently like at your school? High/Avg/Low</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- What is retention currently like at your school? High/Avg/Low</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-What do you think are the important personal characteristics needed to be successful in your position?</td>
<td>Know the families Passion for the faith -Passion -Thinking outside the box -An extreme passion for Catholic education/Passion for the faith -Ministry</td>
<td>-Passion for the faith -Passion/love for what you are doing -Strong dedication to the school/community/families</td>
<td>Hard Working Integrity Honest Able to communicate vision for school Work well with others Organized Love for children Positive role model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11- How do these personal characteristics describe you?</td>
<td>Well</td>
<td>Well</td>
<td>Well</td>
<td>Well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-How important do you think that planning &amp; strategy are to the enrollment success of a private catholic school?</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13- Do you have any business background?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>James- Yes Joy-No</td>
<td>No formal classes but ran business with wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-What would you advice a new young principal on what they need to know about enrollment, retention or leadership?</td>
<td>-Get to know family &amp; staff -Build relationships -Take mkfg plan to focus on strengths of families &amp; staff</td>
<td>-Have a clear understanding of the different hats you have wear (one day mkt, one day counseling, one day discipline, etc.) -Have pride in all things in the little ones -Bring the community together through leadership</td>
<td>-Have a deep passion for what you are doing -Keep your spirits high -Realize what an impact you have on children’s lives -Teach the faith</td>
<td>-Open to ask questions -Rely on background -Seek answers from those with more experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In conclusion, several themes emerged during the interviews with the four participants regarding their experiences and perceptions of marketing plans and leadership as private Catholic school leaders. The first three themes were those that shared current recruitment strategies: word of mouth marketing, campus tours and open houses; traditional advertising including newspaper, television, and billboards; and no formal written marketing plan. The second set of themes described the principal involvement in student recruitment and retention: all four are involved in both recruitment and retention; they monitor re-enrollment forms at the end of the academic year; and contact families that have not re-enrolled. The third section shared three emergent themes for the results of the current recruitment and retention activity: low; decreasing; and smaller for many reasons. The last section of themes shares advice that the current leaders would share with future leaders; they are a passion for the job and the faith and building relationships with the community. The summation of all of the themes is important to the essences of the phenomenon of private K-12 Catholic school leaders’ perceptions of marketing and enrollment plans. In Chapter Five the researcher suggests and discusses a model to increase enrollment in K-12 private Catholic schools that she created.
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate leaders’ practices and perceptions of enrollment management processes in private K-12 Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio. There were three research questions: (1) what strategies are currently used to recruit and retain students in K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio, (2) what involvement does the principal have in the student recruitment and retention activities in K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio, and (3) what are the ongoing results of the recruitment and retention activities at K-12 private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio? In addition to a survey administered to identify interviewees, two different forms of data collection were used: In depth interviews and artifact collection and analysis. Enrollment management and strategic marketing planning are a major factor in the success of tuition-driven schools (Dolence, 1993; Hossler, 1996; Huddleston, 2000; Kemerer, Baldridge, & Green, 1982; Taylor et al., 2008; Kurtz and Scannell; 2006). When solid enrollment management plans are in place, the future financial viability of the school strengthens (Dolence, 1993; Hossler, 1996; Huddleston, 2000; Kemerer, Baldridge, & Green, 1982; Taylor et al., 2008; Kurtz and Scannell; 2006). This chapter discusses the findings and implications that were found from the research.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study suggest that, while the leaders of elementary level private Catholic schools in this study are passionate and strong leaders, they do not use written enrollment plans and do not have written marketing plans. Among the participants, the exception is the high school leader who is currently writing a strategic plan that will encompass enrollment management planning in the future stages. The findings also suggest that enrollment is steadily declining and that the schools’ leaders have various roles that they must fulfill every day at the
school that serve as distractions to the enrollment goals of the school. All of the leaders expressed an interest in enrollment management; however, they also made it clear just how time limited their day is due to fulfilling numerous roles within the organization.

The high school is currently creating a strategic plan that directly coincides with a possible enrollment plan. This strategic plan, along with the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar, 2012), could serve as excellent tools in the crafting of a specific enrollment plan in the future to coincide with the plans that are currently being written. Many of the points of the LCC strategic summary serve as differentiation points that share what makes LCC special. They put into words why parents choose to pay tuition and send their child there. They are imperative aspects of a well-crafted communications plan for educating LCC’s target markets about whom they are and why they are special. Godin (2005) reminds us that

> Marketing is about spreading ideas, and spreading ideas is the single most important output of our civilization. Religions thrive or fade away because of the marketing choices they make. Children are educated, companies are built, jobs are gained or lost—all because of what we know (and don’t know) about spreading ideas. Am I trivializing these important events by implying that marketing is at the heart of the issue? I don’t think so. I think that commercials and hype trivialized marketing, but in fact, my definition of marketing casts a much wider net. These issues are too important not to be marketed. If you care about the future of your company, your non-profit, your church or your planet, marketing matters. Marketing matters because whether or not you’re in a position to buy a commercial, if you’ve got an idea to spread, you’re now a marketer. (Godin, 2005, pp.17-18)
The findings of this study are important because private K-12 Catholic schools are facing severe declines in enrollment and the findings show that there is considerable opportunity for growth in the enrollment management and strategic planning areas. To increase enrollment, leaders must make enrollment management and strategic planning a priority. As shared in *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005), challenges in the areas of the changing face of the church, personnel, and finances were recognized. In this document the bishops called on the Catholic community to reach out to the broader community in order to address the challenges. They shared

Our vision is clear: our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church. We must respond to challenging times with faith, vision and the will to succeed because the Catholic school’s mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation, and most especially our Church. (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005, p.15)

Leaders who make enrollment management and strategic planning a priority will reap the benefits of future financial security and viability for the school. According to Godin (2005) “wanting growth and attaining growth are two different things” (p. xv). He shares that if you have a product that will be obsolete in five years the time to start panicking is not four years from now, it is today. Godin (2005) believes that “every organization that gets into trouble falters because it waited too long to do the stuff that it should have been doing a long time ago” (p. 31).

The concept of a leader switching focus from daily managerial functions to that of a visionary leader are shared by Robert Greenleaf (1977) in *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Greenleaf (1977) shares that during times of risk and growth leaders need to shift their personal efforts towards building institutions and “become
more the manager of process that gets the job done and less the administrator of day-to-day operations” (p.151). Greenleaf goes on to share that servant leaders who can

Move from a preoccupation with building and operating the business day to day, to one of building an institution that has an autonomy of its own, that will do as well on large scale what you have been able to do so well on a smaller scale, and that will have a life span, as a large and exceptional business, that is far beyond what it is likely to have if you continue in your present role. (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 151)

The more visionary a leader is the better the chances of future success for the organization. All of the leaders in this study expressed an unwavering passion for their careers and ministry to the Catholic Church. Kouzes and Posner (2002) define passion for something as “an indication of what you find worthy in and of itself” (p. 112). In the present study, it was clear that the leaders are passionate. Kouzes and Posner share that where the leadership disconnect often comes in is during the practice of communicating that passion and vision with the organization. “One of the most important practices of leadership is giving life and work a sense of meaning and purpose by offering an exciting vision” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 112). In addition, Kouzes and Posner (2002) found that it is not enough for a leader to have a vision, they must share it. “The members of the organization must understand, accept, and commit to the vision and when they do, the organization’s ability to change and reach its potential soars” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 143). While the leaders in the present study are passionate and strong, there seems to be a lack of urgency by Catholic elementary school principals in recruiting and retaining students. In addition to the lack of urgency is an environment where enrollment management is not emphasized. The elementary school principal mindset seems to be one of a public school principal with public funding rather than a private business in a competitive
market. While recruitment is not a top priority for the elementary school principals, all expressed a desire to increase enrollment. In order to accomplish this, leaders must share the current enrollment numbers with their organizations (Kouzes and Posner, 2002). After everyone in the organization is aware of existing challenges they will be able to fully embrace and support any future vision and planning in a more informed way (Kouzes and Posner, 2002). Enrollment should be a top priority for everyone in the organization.

Educational leaders can benefit from the present study by making enrollment management planning a part of their daily role. In his book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins (2001) studies what the difference is between good companies and great companies. Collins (2001) shares that “good is the enemy of great” (p. 1). Collins (2001) shares that people, not unlike companies, never attain greatness because it is so easy to settle for a good life and that change does not happen overnight. Collins (2001) refers to this concept as “the flywheel and the doom loop” (p. 14). He shares that in the great companies the “good-to-great transformations never happen in one fell swoop” (p. 15). There is typically not one defining moment or innovation but rather a process that “resembled relentlessly pushing a giant heavy flywheel in one direction, turn upon turn, building momentum until the point of breakthrough and beyond” (p.14). Change takes time; however, daily devotion to the goal is imperative. Collins (2001) found that tremendous power lies in continuous improvement and the delivery of those results. Regardless of how small the accomplishments are at first, share how they fit into your overall plan (Collins, 2001).

The principals in this study are all personally involved, at least indirectly in the recruiting process of new students. However, the majority of marketing activities at the elementary level are best described as reactionary. Market segments are not defined, the process is not systematic,
and the goals of the marketing activities are unclear or unknown. A personal tour or parental visit is the only documented activity that was given as being effective in the recruitment of students. Senior leaders must instill a sense of urgency in the organization in regards to enrollment and enrollment management planning. The findings of this study imply that traditionally the enrollment management role is so weak at the elementary level that the role has been adopted by the volunteer school advisory councils that meet once per month. Although there are passionate leaders at each elementary school, the lack of recruitment goals combined with the lack of an enrollment management or marketing plan through a systematic process shows that it is not possible to declare that the current recruiting processes are aligned with the enrollment needs of the school. As shared in *The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar, 2012), Catholic schools must adopt and maintain standards for operational vitality in these areas and define the norms and expectations for fundamental procedures to support and ensure viability and sustainability. When a school does not maintain standards for operational vitality, the continuation of academic excellence is in grave jeopardy. Over time, even and academically rigorous school with strong Catholic identity will not survive without operational vitality. (Ozar, 2012, p. 13)

In conclusion, the low priority given to student recruitment, lack of approaches to recruiting, lack of market segmentation, and the uncertainty of why parents are choosing to send their child/children to Lincoln County Catholic schools, it is clear that the current recruiting activities are not successful and need to be revisited. There is no doubt by the researcher that the leadership talent exists within each school to make this happen.
An Enrollment Management Model for K-12 Catholic School Leaders

To increase enrollment, principals must effectively implement and carry out an enrollment management process or plan. An enrollment management plan that focuses on specific target markets and seeks to actively create enrollment demand is a must for the survival of private tuition driven schools. Built upon knowledge gained from this study, the author created an enrollment management model for the use of strategic enrollment management planning in private tuition driven K-12 schools. It directly builds on the passion and strength that the current leaders have. It also builds upon what the high school is currently doing in regards to strategy planning and the implementation of *The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar, 2012).

The researcher has broken down the enrollment plan into phases and recommends that the school leader calls on their advisory/governing councils or other volunteers to accomplish writing the plan. It is imperative to set monthly meetings outside of the current meetings with accountability dates set for the end product.

Modeling the groundwork that Lincoln Central Catholic has laid with their strategic plan, it is suggested that schools that do not have a strategic plan start by writing a plan for their school using the same strategy model that LCC used. The imperative sections in this plan, as mentioned previously, give everyone in the organization a clear understanding of the school’s mission, vision, target markets, external and internal environment, and financial future.

Bass (2007) notes that if leaders don’t take care of the present they will not have a future. He argues that leaders must free themselves from day-to-day operations and short-term goal orientation to focus on long-term threats and opportunities (Bass, 2007). Becoming distinctive
and continued improvement on the organizations ability to deliver to its stakeholders must be top priorities in leaders’ strategy (Bass, 2007).

While writing the strategic plan, it is suggested that The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (Ozar, 2012) be broken down and assigned for review by the governing board. Specific to the enrollment management function are:

1) Standard 10.6 - financial plans include educational materials for distribution to all members of the community explaining the total cost per child and how that cost is met by identifying the percentage of cost that is paid for by tuition and the remaining amount of cost that is supported by other sources of revenue.

2) Standard 10.7 - the governing body and leader/leadership team provide families access to information about tuition assistance and long-term planning for tuition and Catholic school expenses.

3) Standard 13.1 - the communications/marketing plan requires school leader/leadership team and staff person(s) to insure the implementation of contemporary, multiple information technologies to reach targeted audiences, and to establish reliable and secure databases and accountability to stakeholders.

4) Standard 13.2 - the enrollment management plan requires the governing body to review and the school leader/leadership team to supervise annual and continuous measurement and analysis of both enrollment and retention patterns for all student groups.

5) Benchmark 13.3- the development plan requires school leader/leadership team, in collaboration with the governing body, to insure that key strategies are in place to
identify, grow and maintain significant funding prospects, including alumni(ae), over time and when appropriate. (Ozar, 2012)

Strategy can be a useful tool for school leaders that are trying to decide which direction to go in for the future (Daft, 2008). Strategy is defined by Daft (2008) as the general plan of action that describes resource allocation and other activities for dealing with the environment and helping the organization attain its goals (p. 403). Daft (2008) urges that “developing effective strategy requires actively listening to people both inside and outside the organization, as well as examining trends and discontinuities in the environment that can be used to gain an edge” (p. 403). After the strategic plan is written it is suggested that the plan is viewed as a live document and revisited at monthly meetings with an end of the year session set aside specifically for the plan.

Once the strategic plan is written and the standards and benchmarks have been assessed, the specific enrollment plan can be crafted. The first suggested item in the enrollment management process is to conduct an enrollment and marketing audit of the organization. This includes but is not limited to current enrollment, current recruiting and retention strategies, and a brand image audit. Identify the current market segments by conducting marketing research to find out who the current families are and why they attend your school. Identify historical enrollment data and collect competitive intelligence. Know who the competitors are and what their tuition rates are. Conduct an internal audit of your organizational challenges and know what your strategy processes currently are. Understand and address if there is a need to change your current processes. Create an organizational profile with a mission statement, a vision, and a belief statement. All of these items will be directly taken from your strategic plan and copied into
the enrollment plan. Lastly identify your current enrollment form and what your current retention processes are.

The second suggestion is the hire an enrollment management director if the organization cannot devote a current employee to focus on enrollment management. In addition to a person with a focus on enrollment, create an enrollment management budget to support the role. It does not have to be a huge budget; however some money has to be spent in this area in order to accomplish the school’s enrollment needs. It was found in this study that many of the leaders expressed an interest to create an enrollment plan and devote more time to marketing; however they don’t have the time. As mentioned by Collins (2001) level five exemplary leaders hire individuals that fill their voids or weaknesses and build superior executive teams (p. 47). In the case of Lincoln Central Catholic the person that runs the development office and the person that runs the marketing campaigns are alumni that are fiercely dedicated to the mission of the school. An additional idea for an enrollment management director would be a shared position for all four schools. This would lessen the financial burden but still allow for one person to train all four schools on successful enrollment techniques, streamline processes, and stay focused on enrollment trends as they are occurring. Huddleston (2000) states that

Within this broad context, an enrollment manager’s efforts are intended to shape and influence particular units that have significant impact on a student’s decision to enroll, persist, and graduate. The strategic management of these units is important to an institution’s growth, fiscal health, and student satisfaction. (p.65)

The third step is to write the actual enrollment management plan. Grewal and Levy (2010) state that “good marketing is not a random activity, it requires thoughtful planning with
Huddleston (2000) encourages enrollment planning and states

   Optimally, an institution’s enrollment is comprehensively developed and is based on a strategic, integrative plan that includes the identification, attraction, selection, encouragement, registration, retention, and gradation of targeted student segments. (p. 65)

   The enrollment management plan should at a minimum incorporate the following five areas:

   1) STP strategy. Find who your market segments are. Use historical sales data to create predictive models. Once you have your segments, target them. Find out their usage patterns in regards to media consumption. Once you have targeted them position yourself in the market.

   Armstrong and Kotler define market segmentation as “dividing a market into smaller segments of buyers with distinct needs, characteristics, or behaviors that might require separate marketing strategies or mixes” (p. 164), they go on to define targeting as “the process of evaluating each market segment attractiveness in selecting one or more segments to enter” (p. 164), and positioning as “arranging for a market offering to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers” (p. 164).

   2) Educate your community. Emphasize and create recruitment priorities within the school that build and fulfill the church and schools mission and vision. Harvey and Busher (1996) argue that

   The concept of marketing is regarded with suspicion by many in education because of its commercial implications. Marketing is seen as a potential tool for the application of market forces and is therefore regarded as ethically undesirable. This article argues that
the methods and ideology of commercial marketing, if properly understood and correctly applied by professionals in education, can be beneficial rather than harmful, and may be imperative for schools and colleges wishing to attract students and offer them the most relevant provision. (p. 26)

McGibbon (2011) states that “for most Catholic schools, relying solely on the quality of their product to attract new students- the “if you build it they will come” approach- is no longer sufficient for attracting and retaining new students.” (p. 2). He goes on to share that playing defense is no longer an effective recruiting strategy. McGibbon (2011) urges schools to increase enrollments by “adopting proactive marketing strategies to inform parents of the value of Catholic education and the opportunity to attend Catholic schools at a tuition level they can afford” (p. 2). He argues that given the “high quality of education Catholic schools provide, more parents would be interested in sending their children to Catholic schools is they were better informed of the benefits and the associated costs” (p. 2).

When educating your community and target audience, emphasize spiritual and human capital. Use the integrated marketing communications approach by diversifying your educational and marketing tactics in five areas: advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct and social media platforms, and personal selling processes. Social media is specifically attractive to schools with limited budgets. The passion of the leaders will be put to great use in this section. Be sure to incorporate storytelling. Godin (2005) reminds us that we must share our success to an audience that has the same worldview as our organization. The STP strategy will help you identify these people so that you can speak directly to them and not to a mass market. This point is imperative. Godin (2005) shares that “worldview is the term I use to refer to the rules, values, beliefs and biases that an individual consumer brings to the situation” (p. 32). He goes on to
share that frames are “elements of a story painted to leverage the worldview a consumer already has. “A frame in other words, is a way you hang a story on to a consumer’s existing worldview” (p.32). Godin (2005) encourages people to stay away from trying to use facts to prove your case or change people’s worldviews; you will never have the time or money. He instead urges us to identify a population with a certain worldview that fits our own and frame the organizations story to fit that population (Godin, 2005, p. 33).

3) Create a data capture system to capture the leads information once they do show interest or contact you. It is not a wise investment to spend marketing dollars educating consumers about your school and then when they reach out to you there is no process in place to capture their contact information. Advertising educates and informs, beyond that you must use other systems to capture their information and build a trusting relationship with them. This cannot be accomplished if you don’t have a number or email to follow up with them. This system needs to use technology and be data based.

4) Once someone has shown interest in your school invite them to see the school. Use school tours, student ambassadors, baptism and birthday programs, PSR list and etc. as an invitation to tour your facility.

5) Follow up with families and students that have shown interest in your school. Be sure to create a personal selling plan that incorporates meaningful follow-ups with interested families.

Lastly, you must incorporate into the Enrollment management plan an annual way to gauge if the plan is effective. The last step is meant to serve as an evaluation tool for your enrollment management plan. Be sure that the enrollment management plan is implemented and emphasize recruitment priorities to everyone in your organization. Adjust educational offerings to match market expectations once you start to receive feedback. Hold monthly enrollment
management meetings and hold an end of the year strategy session after the last day of school and before summer that will create the entire next year's enrollment planning process. At the end of the year strategy session set specific budgets and create the entire next year’s enrollment plan. Make the plan specific and use a monthly calendar to set and plan the entire year’s events. If flyers and mailers need to be made the summer months is the time to do that work. Figure 1 below is a visual representation of the above mentioned enrollment management model.
Figure 1. Enrollment management model for K-12 private schools.

Step 1
- Conduct an Enrollment / Marketing Audit.
- Including but not limited to current enrollment, current recruiting and retention strategies, brand image audit
- Identify current market segments.
- Identify Historical Enrollment Data, demographics & psychographics of current families/students.
- Collect competitive intelligence.
- Internal audit of organizational challenges. Know what your strategy process is. Should you change it?
- Create an organizational profile with mission, vision, and belief statements.
- Identify current enrollment form process and retention processes.

Step 2
- Hire an Enrollment Management Director if the organization can not devote a current employee to focus on enrollment management. Create an enrollment management budget.

Step 3
- Write an Enrollment Management Plan that accomplishes and incorporates the following 5 steps
  1) STP Segment - Target - Positioning Strategy
  2) Educate your consumers and share your story. Emphasize and create recruitment priorities that build & fulfill the church & school’s mission & vision. Emphasize spiritual & human capital. Use the Integrated Marketing Communications approach by diversifying your educational pieces in five areas: advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct & social media platforms, and personal selling processes.
  3) Create a data capture system to capture the educational investment dollars. Once you have inquiries capture their data to build a meaningful relationship with them once they are interested. This system needs to use technology and be databased.
  4) Trialability/Tour. Invite the interested families to see your school. Use school tours, student ambassadors, baptism and birthday programs, PSR lists, etc. as an invitation tour the facility.
  5) Follow up- Once the families have visited or shown an interest in your school be sure to create a personal selling plan that incorporates meaningful follow ups with interested families.
- Put this plan in writing. Use it as an actual working document to check, track, and document these items.

Step 4
- Implement Enrollment Management Plan. Align the enrollment management plan with your strategic plan.
- Emphasize recruitment priorities and share with everyone in the organization.
- Adjust educational offerings to match market expectations.
- Hold monthly enrollment management meetings and hold a year end meeting after the last day of school and before summer that creates the entire next years enrollment planning process with a specific budget and dates.
Leadership, Strategic Planning, and Support from the Diocese

Organizational Structure and Support from the Diocese

The current organizational design of the Catholic school system places responsibility of educational positions on priests. Whether it is lack of interest for some priests or lack of training for others, it is clear that the diocese needs to address the schools’ organizational model. It is the same with the principal’s position. The principal serves so many roles within each school that an enrollment management director or development office needs to be created in each school in order to survive the decrease of enrollment that they are currently seeing.

It became clear through this study that strategic planning, specifically in the enrollment management sector, is not emphasized by the diocese. If the diocese wants all of the current Catholic schools within its area to stay open, there needs to be a strategic enrollment plan rolled out and implemented in every school within the diocese. Training needs to take place to train the priests and the principals on what enrollment management is and why it is imperative to the survival of private tuition driven Catholic schools. Twelve administrators are listed on the diocese website and not one of the positions has an enrollment title. Additional resources that are not currently being used by the schools in this study would include the support and incorporation of current initiatives that are already in place by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). The NCEA publishes an annual statistical report on schools, enrollment and staffing in United States Catholic elementary and secondary schools that would serve as an excellent read to see where the market is currently. In addition the NCEA has Catholic school strategic marketing planning workbook that helps to analyze the current environment and plan for enrollment.
Strategic Planning and Tuition

It is worth noting that none of the leaders that participated in this study brought up tuition as a barrier for enrollment. Tuition has been identified nationally as driving down enrollment at private Catholic schools (Convey, 1992; Hallinan, 2000; Zehr, 2003).

Parents who have or had children in private Catholic schools, including the researcher, are fully aware of tuition costs and the high volume of fundraising activities needed to keep the cost of school operations low. Being frugal and doing significant fundraising combine to lower tuition fees or at least keep the next years’ increases minimal. Interestingly, none of the leaders mentioned any efforts to lower tuition to increase enrollments through the use of scholarships or to increase endowments to provide tuition relief. Endowments and development office fundraising help to keep tuition modest at most tuition driven educational institutions. The high school was the only school to mention the use of a development office.

In addition to tuition and fundraising, none of the leaders mentioned the increase of voucher students entering the school paid for by the state voucher programs. Future research should investigate if there is a relationship between the amount of students attending for free or little out of pocket versus the parents whom are paying full tuition and if the parents who are paying full tuition feel resentment towards families who attend for little out of their own pocket. As the cost of tuition increases families that pay full tuition may hit a price break point, specifically if they have numerous children in the system. Families considering college for their students may consider the cost of the Lincoln private school system versus the cost of saving for college for their child or children. For example, if a child attends St. Christina from kindergarten to eighth grade (using 2013 tuition amounts with no increases built in), he or she will pay
$25,110. At Lincoln Central Catholic High School he or she will pay $22,840 for high school for a combined total of $47,950 before additional fees and yearly tuition increases.

**Limitations and Lessons Learned**

This study focused on four private Catholic schools’ and their leaders’ perceptions of marketing plans and enrollment management as it pertained to their professional and personal lives and endeavors. The conclusions established from the participants’ experiences should not be generalized to other private Catholic school leaders’ or beyond. However it is equally important to note that their views may offer some insights for other leaders in the field.

Additional limitations may include the fact that although the researcher tried to take as neutral of a stance as possible as noted in the methodology section, it should be noted that the researcher’s background including being a marketing professional and Catholic may have influenced this study. Although the researcher used member checking to account for these types of effects it should be noted that the researcher’s background could still influence the interpretation of the data.

Another limitation is that the scope of this study was limited due to numerous reasons including lack of response from principals, time and resources. If the researcher had more available resources it would have benefitted the study to have a larger sample size. Although the study included two women and three men, the study could have been enhanced if it would have included individuals with different racial backgrounds.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

In addition to the recommendations in the beginning of this chapter, there is a continued need for further study in this area. Further study is needed to study the market segmentation of schools. The study of market segmentation is effective by taking current enrollment
demographics and creating statistical predictive models. The second area of further study that would be meaningful is a study that looks at why parents choose to send their child to Catholic schools. There is not much literature available in this area, yet it is the most meaningful information when crafting marketing strategies.

The third area of interest for future research would be to understand the relationship between tuition and enrollments. Quantifying supply, demand, and price elasticity is critical to success in the enrollment and marketing aspects of private schools. While identifying if there is a relationship between tuition and enrollment it should be noted that different methodologies should be used for the study of enrollment management. The field of enrollment management would benefit from both qualitative and quantitative studies.

The last recommendation for future research would be to undertake a study that looks at future collaborations from all schools within a district that is not bound into one system. Possible one system models that include all current locations would be of interest. For example, in the present study, each school exists as its own separate entity, if the schools operated as one system there are numerous components that could be streamlined including expenses and enrollment management processes.

Conclusions

Private Catholic schools in the United States have strong historical foundations. The U.S. Catholic Bishops’ expressed in their joint statement issued in July, 2005, titled *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* that the children are the future of the church and that Catholic schools serve as the most effective way to educate them about the faith. If the church believes this statement to be true, attention must be paid to enrollment management. The findings of this study are significant
to the conversation of strategically planning for the future of Catholic schools in the United States. The themes that emerged from this study shared that none of the schools within the small sample have written enrollment management or marketing plans. Greater competition exists in the school market due to additional private school options, the parents’ perceptions of improving local public schools, and an increase in tuition at private Catholic schools (Convey, 1992; Hallinan, 2000; Zehr, 2003). Due to the declining enrollment numbers that threaten the existence of many private Catholic schools enrollment management must be a top priority within the schools.

As shared by Bass (2007) “top management sets the strategic purpose and direction of the firm by articulating and communicating a desired vision of the organization’s future” (p.41). If the schools are not willing to address the issue the Diocese must take a leadership role in training and implementing enrollment management programs at the local levels in order for these schools to exist in the years to come. Enrollment management provides a framework that shares with the community who you are as a church and school and builds a positive and meaningful relationship with those community members.
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APPENDIX A. INFORMED CONSENT

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Project Title: K-12 Private Catholic School Leaders’ Perceptions of Marketing Plans and Enrollment Management: Implications for Leadership and Enrollment

Dear Principals,

I am a doctoral student in the Leadership studies program at Bowling Green State University conducting research for my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is K-12 Private Catholic School Leaders’ Perceptions of Marketing Plans and Enrollment Management: Implications for Leadership and Enrollment. You are invited to participate in a research study that explores marketing planning and enrollment management in private Catholic schools.

The purpose of this study is to assess school leaders’ perceptions of marketing plans and enrollment management processes. This study hopes to identify school leaders’ perceived barriers and incentives on using marketing planning and enrollment management in private Catholic schools.

From a practitioner's perspective, the study could provide information that creates greater awareness and understanding of the marketing planning and enrollment management process in private Catholic schools, which could then be used to improve current and future practice. Identifying factors that encourage enrollment growth and student retention could provide information that can be used to structure, marketing planning and enrollment management systems that could facilitate enrollment growth and help secure the future of private Catholic schools. In addition, research on leaders’ perceptions of marketing planning enrollment management could serve as the basis for constructing and delivering effective training and staff development programs for private Catholic schools.

I am aware of your demanding schedule; however I would greatly appreciate your input and contributions to the completion of this project. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary, and you can refrain from answering any or all the questions without penalty or explanation. Your decision whether or not to participate will not interfere with your relationship with Bowling Green State University. You are also free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the project at any time. It is estimated that the online survey will take approximately five minutes to complete, and if you are chosen, and wish to participate in the in depth one-on-one interview, it will take approximately sixty minutes. Participants for the one-on-one interview will be intentionally selected based on willingness to participate, years spent in the leadership position, and if there is currently an enrollment/marketing plan in place at the school. Two principals with more than five years of leadership experience and with marketing/enrollment plans in place will be selected and two principals with more than five years
of leadership experience without marketing/enrollment plans in place will be selected to participate in the one-on-one interviews. If you are chosen and with your permission, the interview will be audio taped and transcribed, the purpose thereof being to capture and maintain an accurate record of the discussion. Your name will not be used at all on any transcripts or data collected. You will be referred to only by way of pseudonym. The study will be conducted by Danielle C. Foster, a doctoral candidate at Bowling Green State University. The interview will be undertaken at a time and location that is mutually suitable.

Risks and benefits:
This research will contribute to understanding the marketing planning process in private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio. There is no financial reimbursement for your participation in this study. The risk of participation is no greater than that experienced in daily life.

Data storage to protect confidentiality:
Under no circumstances will you be identified by name in the course of this research study, or in any publication thereof. Every effort will be made that all information provided by you will be treated as strictly confidential. All data will be coded and securely stored, and will be used for professional purposes only. The researcher and her advisor are the only people that will have access to the data. Confidential completion of the online survey indicates your consent to participate in the study. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the survey results you may contact me by e-mail and a summary will be forwarded to you. When you are finished taking the online survey please clear the web browser cache and page history. The completion and submission of the online survey constitutes consent to participate.

How the results will be used:
This research study is to be submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of education at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. The results of this study will be published as a dissertation. In addition, information may be used for educational purposes and professional presentations and/or educational publications. If you have further questions or comments concerning this study, please contact me at (419) 230-8665 or fosterdc@tiffin.edu or my advisor Dr. Pauken at (419) 372-9234 or paukenp@bgsu.edu. If you have any questions regarding the conduct of the study or about your rights as a participant, you may also contact the chair of the Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 or hsr@bgsu.edu.
APPENDIX B. ONLINE SURVEY

Online Survey Questions sent out by Mr. Christopher Knight, Superintendent of the Toledo Diocese to every principal in the Toledo Diocese on April 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2013.

1) My gender is _____ Male _______ Female

2) My age is _____ 23-30 ______31-40 ______41-50 ______50+

3) My race is 
   _____ White ____African American ____Multiethnic _____Asian _____Hispanic
   ____Native American

4) School Name and Location: ______________________

5) Year in Leadership/Principal position: _________________

6) Does your school currently have a marketing or enrollment plan in place? Yes ___ No__

7) Does your school currently have a retention plan in place? Yes ___ No ___

8) How would you categorize your current enrollment status? Above Average ___
   Average____ Below Average ______

9) Are you interested in participating in a one-on-one interview to share with the researcher your thoughts and experiences with marketing planning or enrollment management? Yes ___ No ___

10) If you are interested how may the researcher contact you? Phone __________ Email
    __________
APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Foster Dissertation In-Depth Interview Questions

1) What strategies are currently being used to recruit students within your school?

2) Do you have a formal or written marketing plan?

3) If you do have a marketing process in place, your opinion do you feel in that it is successful?

4) What involvement does the principal have with the recruiting process at your school?

5) What strategies are currently being used to retain students within your school?

6) Do you have a formal or written retention plan?

7) If you do have a retention plan in place, in your opinion do you feel that it is successful?

8) What is enrollment currently like your school? High, low?

9) What is the retention rate currently at your school? High, low?

10) What do you think are the important personal characteristics needed to be successful in your position?

11) How do these personal characteristics describe you?

12) How important do you think that planning and strategy are to the enrollment success of a private Catholic school?

13) Do you have any background experience in the business field or have you ever taken any business or marketing classes?

14) If you were to advise a group of young principles entering the private Catholic school system on what they need to do or know about enrollment, retention, and leadership, what would you tell them?
APPENDIX D. BGSU HSRB APPROVAL LETTER

DATE: March 18, 2013
TO: Danielle Foster
FROM: Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision
ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: March 14, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE: February 24, 2014
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is available as a published Board Document in the Review Details page. You must use the approved version of the consent document when obtaining consent from participants. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please add the text equivalent of the HSRB IRBNet approval/expiration date stamp to the “footer” area of the electronic consent document.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

You have been approved to enroll 5 participants. If you wish to enroll additional participants you must seek approval from the HSRB.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS Involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office.

This approval expires on February 24, 2014. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.
Research Description

Participant Researcher: Danielle C. Foster

Research Title: K-12 Private Catholic School Leaders’ Perceptions of Marketing Plans and Enrollment Management: Implications for Leadership and Enrollment.

You are invited to participate in a research study that explores marketing planning in private Catholic schools. The purpose of this study is to assess school leaders’ perceptions of marketing plans and enrollment management processes. This study hopes to identify school leaders’ perceived barriers and incentives on using marketing planning and enrollment management in private Catholic schools.

From a practitioner's perspective, the study could provide information that creates greater awareness and understanding of the marketing planning and enrollment management process in private Catholic schools, which could then be used to improve current and future practice. Identifying factors that encourage enrollment growth and student retention could provide information that can be used to structure, marketing planning and enrollment management systems that could facilitate enrollment growth and help secure the future of private Catholic schools. In addition, research on leaders’ perceptions of marketing planning enrollment management could serve as the basis for constructing and delivering effective training and staff development programs for private Catholic schools.

Risks and benefits:
This research will hopefully contribute to understanding the marketing planning process in private Catholic schools in Northwest Ohio. There is no financial reimbursement for your participation in this study. The risk of participation is no greater than that experienced in daily life.

Data storage to protect confidentiality:
Under no circumstances whatsoever will you be identified by name in the course of this research study, or in any publication thereof. Every effort will be made that all information provided by you will be treated as strictly confidential. All data will be coded and securely stored, and will be used for professional purposes only. The researcher and the dissertation advisor are the only people that will have access to the data. Confidential completion of the online survey indicates your consent to participate in the study. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the survey results you may contact me by e-mail and a summary will be forwarded to you.
How the results will be used:
This research study is to be submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of education at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. The results of this study will be published as a dissertation. In addition, information may be used for educational purposes and professional presentations and/or educational publications.

Participant’s Rights

- I have read and discussed the research description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding the study.
- My participation in this research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time. My decision whether or not to participate will not interfere with my relationship with Bowling Green State University.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has developed, becomes available that may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the researcher, Danielle C. Foster, who will answer my questions. The researcher’s phone number is (419) 230-8665 or email at fosterdc@tiffin.edu. I can also contact the researchers dissertation chair Dr. Patrick Pauken at (419) 372-9234 or email at paukenp@bgsu.edu.
- If at any time I have comments or concerns regarding the conduct of the research, or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact Bowling Green State University Human Subject Review Board. The phone number for HSRB is (419) 372-7716 and their email address is hsrb@bgsu.edu.
- Audio taping is part of this research. Only the principal researcher and the members of the research team will have access to written and taped materials. Please check one:
  ( ) I consent to being audiotaped.
  ( ) I do NOT consent to being audiotaped.

My signature means that I agree to participate in the study.

Participant signature:________________________________   Date: _____/_____/_______
Name (Please print) _________________________________

Investigators Verification of Explanation

I, ____________________ (researcher), certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to______________________________ (participant's name). He/she has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement to participate in this research.

Investigator signature:_______________________________ Date: _____/_____/_______