



CULTIVATING TALENT:

A Summary Report of Findings from the

National Education Panel on

Highly Talented Children

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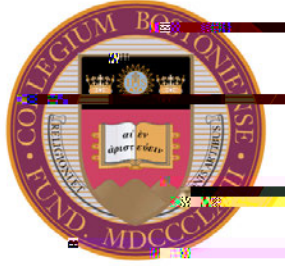
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The National Study

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As a Catholic university rooted in the Jesuit tradition, Boston College remains committed to groundbreaking research that helps Catholics in the United States (US) and others interested in Catholicism to understand and appreciate the various ways in which Hispanics are transforming the American Catholic experience. Research that supports, strengthens, and transforms our Catholic schools is of particular interest, as these Pre-Kindergarten-12 (PK-12) institutions have served as beacons of light for many immigrant communities in our nation. The present study,

is one important step on this journey.

In 2016, Boston College released

which became a turning point for several conversations about Catholic education and Hispanics throughout the country.

In that same year, we at Boston College hosted a national summit that brought together Catholic education stakeholders to discuss the report. Led by the Roche Center for Catholic Education and the School of Theology and Ministry, bishops, pastors, superintendents, diocesan leaders, philanthropic organizations, researchers, principals, teachers, parents, and students, among others, came together to reflect on effective practices Catholic educators should embrace in an increasingly Hispanic church. Participants in the summit discussed the good work being done in many Catholic schools to reach out and support Hispanic students and the growing number of initiatives implemented to support these institutions in achieving that goal. At the same time, participants acknowledged that the good being done is not good enough. Hispanics remain severely underrepresented in Catholic schools at all levels, and the number of Catholic schools that stand out

for their excellent outreach to Hispanic children and families pales compared to the number of schools that are not doing enough to engage this population.

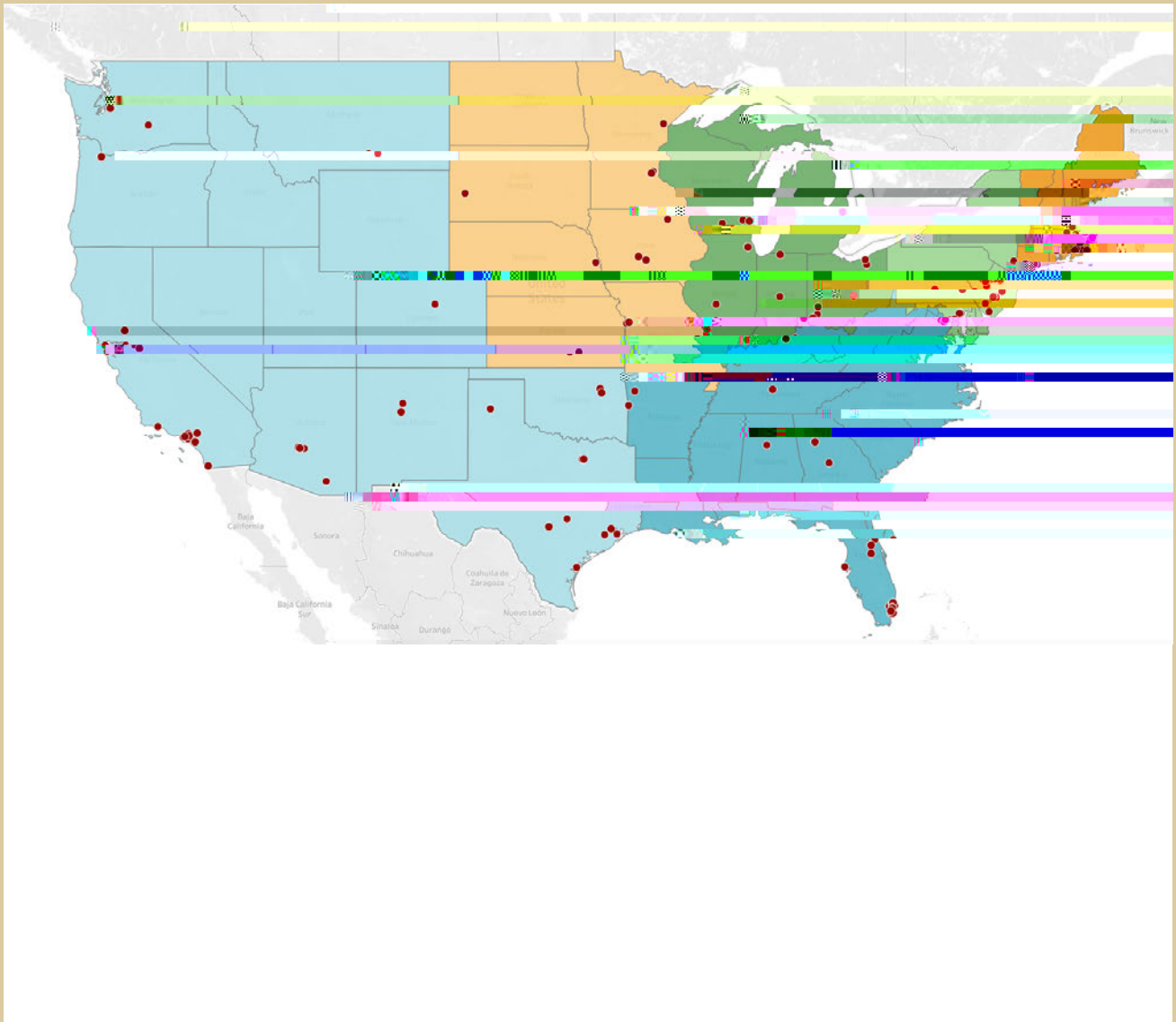
Following this national summit, participants returned to their dioceses and schools and held local conversations about how to address the findings from the study and its recommendations. Philanthropic organizations encouraged new initiatives and strengthened others to support Catholic schools in their outreach to Hispanics informed by the report. Data from the study played a central role in grounding the conversations about Hispanic Catholic children, youth, families, and education during the process of the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry, known as the V Encuentro, and subsequent published proceedings and conclusions from the 2018 gathering.

One of the main contributions of the 2016 report was to expand the conversation about Hispanics and Catholic schools beyond the concern for enrollment. Many Catholic educational and pastoral leaders assume that increasing the number of Hispanic students in Catholic schools is the primary goal of outreach to this community. Without a doubt, there is much truth to this commitment. We all need to do much more to encourage Hispanic families to enroll their children in Catholic schools. Yet, enrollment is only part of a much larger equation. The 2016 study demonstrated that the creation of a healthy and welcoming school environment for Hispanic families was a necessary, if not major prerequisite, for successful recruitment, enrollment, and retention. The study also highlighted the importance of engaging Hispanic families and leaders in exercises of advocacy, such as promoting legislation that supports school choice options. As schools and philanthropists support Hispanic children and their families with scholarships and other forms of assistance, we must be attentive not to reduce such support into forms of "assistencialism", where such financial support attacks symptoms, but fails to address social ills and create opportunities to empower the Hispanic community.



discernment categorized questions into the following four domains: 1) personal discernment, 2) discernment with(in) the institution, 3) from the community into the Catholic school, and 4) from the Catholic school into the community. Respondents' perceptions regarding the vocational discernment in each of these domains highlighted critical characteristics of the Hispanic educator experience.

All responding Hispanic educators signed a consent form and all survey emails were followed with monthly electronic



Per the latest NCEA Report in 2020, there are an estimated 146,357 teachers working in Catholic schools throughout the US. Of that workforce, Hispanic educators are estimated to comprise approximately 9%. These educators work in schools across the nation, although not in equal numbers by region.

The predominant regions of the country that employ higher percentages of Hispanic Catholic school educators are in the Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest, with clusters in major mid-Western cities (e.g., Chicago). In total, 291 Hispanic Catholic educators responded to the

and intellectual wisdom placed at the service of educating all children—Hispanic and non-Hispanic—enrolled in Catholic schools. They are role models for the next generation of children who long to see other Hispanics in professional positions to which they can aspire. They are cultural accommodators and mediators helping families negotiate the intricacies associated with educating children from immigrant and underrepresented communities. They are advocates uniquely positioned to ask critical questions, explore prophetic answers, propose innovative solutions, and imagine alternatives to any status quo that insists in minimizing the value of the Hispanic experience in the Church and in the larger society. They are mirrors to Catholics who are more established than those immigrant ancestors who built Catholic schools to make the idea of a better future for their children and grandchildren truly possible.

The broader research on the impact of underrepresented educators demonstrates that having the opportunity to learn with underrepresented educators diverse backgrounds—namely racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities who reflect the students and communities in their schools and classrooms—is an important factor in supporting academic and non-academic outcomes for all students, and particularly underrepresented students. In addition to increased academic scores in reading and mathematics, underrepresented educators from diverse backgrounds positively impact students' social-emotional learning (SEL), diminish absenteeism rates, and incidents of suspensions and expulsions. Hispanic educators are an important subset of this larger category of underrepresented educators from diverse backgrounds, particularly in Catholic schools. They serve a significant number of Hispanic students and families with an imperative to better serve Catholic children and understand the needs of Latino and Latin American students. This is particularly true in Catholic schools where the presence of underrepresented educators is critical to the success of the school. The presence of underrepresented educators in Catholic schools is a key factor in the success of the school. The presence of underrepresented educators in Catholic schools is a key factor in the success of the school.

Hispanic Teacher Representation in Catholic Schools



response to the public sector mismatch, public school leaders and policymakers have been striving to close the gap by pursuing a number of innovative strategies and opportunities. Catholic schools have the opportunity to learn from these attempts, including empirical research conducted on attempted interventions, to inform their own efforts to recruit and retain Hispanic educators in a research-informed, mission-driven manner.

Research studies and reports, predominantly focused on the traditional public and public charter sectors, have determined that increasing the number of underrepresented educators, including Hispanic educators, requires a new and explicit commitment of strategy and resources. A stronger commitment to this goal means investing in educator preparation and formation programs specifically targeting underrepresented educators, providing intentional mentoring and induction for beginning educators, and

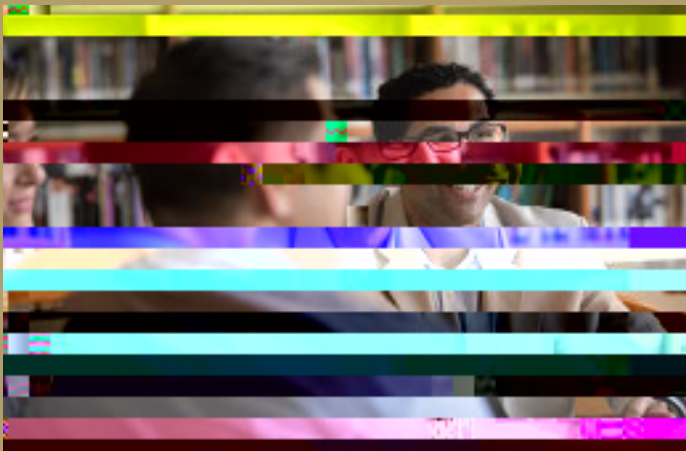
examining school culture and practices to create environments that welcome and support underrepresented educators, regardless of years in the education profession.²⁵

State education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), non-profit organizations, and others in the public sector have led the way exploring and investing in new strategies and initiatives to recruit and retain underrepresented educators. For example, recommendations have informed the creation of new educator preparation programs and pathways, scholarships and other funding supports, loan forgiveness programs, teacher residencies, Grow Your Own programs, mentoring and induction programs, and other initiatives.²⁶ As Catholic schools look to recruit and retain underrepresented teachers, much can be learned from public sector peers who have explored and invested in a number of strategies and initiatives.

Brigitte Connolly

Efforts to Recruit and Retain Underrepresented Educators

As Catholic educators, we have an opportunity to learn from our public school counterparts. Connecticut (CT) is a state taking noteworthy efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented educators in their public school system. CT uses their identified shortage areas,²⁷ including high-need areas, supporting students from diverse backgrounds and Hispanic students like Bilingual Education and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), to offer specific benefits such as loan forgiveness²⁸ and mortgage or housing assistance.²⁹ Additionally, CT has focused on retention³⁰ by attending to beginning educators and the relationship between their completion of an educator preparation program and their school-based support via mentoring and induction opportunities.

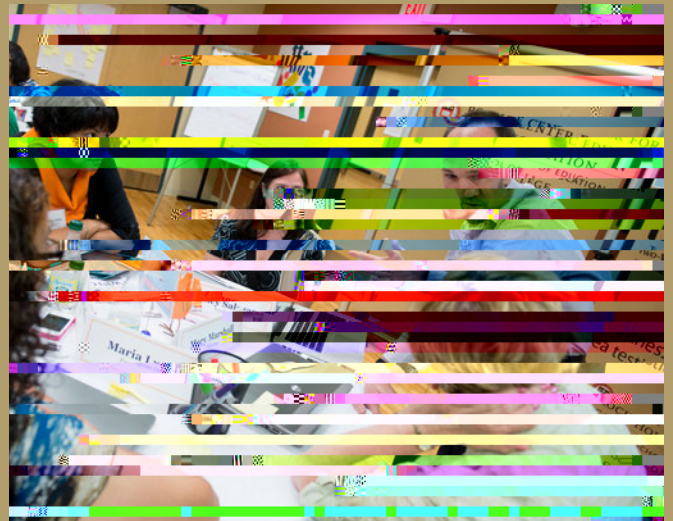


These efforts and investment have resulted in an increase in underrepresented educators in CT. In 2016, the State Board of Education set a five-year goal to increase the number of underrepresented educators in CT schools by 10% by 2021. In May 2021, the governor announced that the goal had been met,³¹ with individual districts with higher percentages of underrepresented students, such as Hartford, attaining a much higher percentage.³² As of 2021, Hartford has at least 27% underrepresented educators in schools across their district. Unfortunately, the CT report does not break out the statistics by stating the improvement in the number of Hispanic teachers.

While these efforts in CT strive to close the mismatch gap between underrepresented students and educators in the public sector, broader systemic needs remain, especially when looking across the nation. A comprehensive commitment to diversity is needed at all levels, but particularly by those in systems-level leadership positions.³³ This call equally applies to those in leadership in the US Catholic education system at the local, (arch)diocesan, and national levels.

Brigitte: Cultivating a network in a diverse world

Developed in 2013 by faculty in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College, the TMN-CS network has grown from 12 original members to 22 member schools across the US. While many schools are Spanish-English programs, the Network also has a Mandarin-English school, a Lakota-English school, and one that is both Spanish-English and Mandarin-English. Two-way immersion and dual-language instruction is utilized in a number of educational settings; however, the TMN-CS network is unique in its focus on ethnic and cultural diversity.



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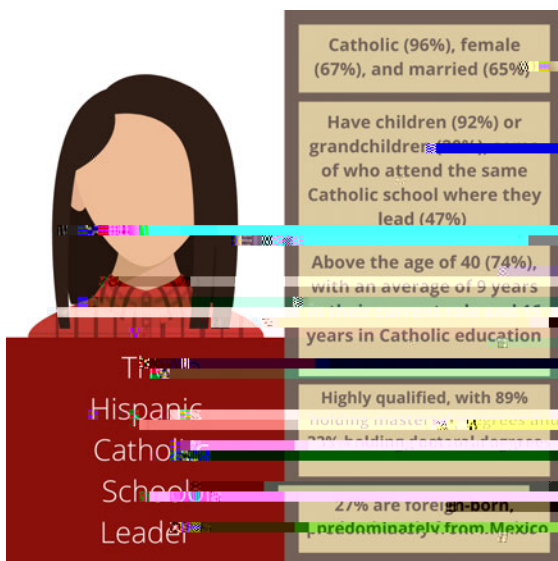
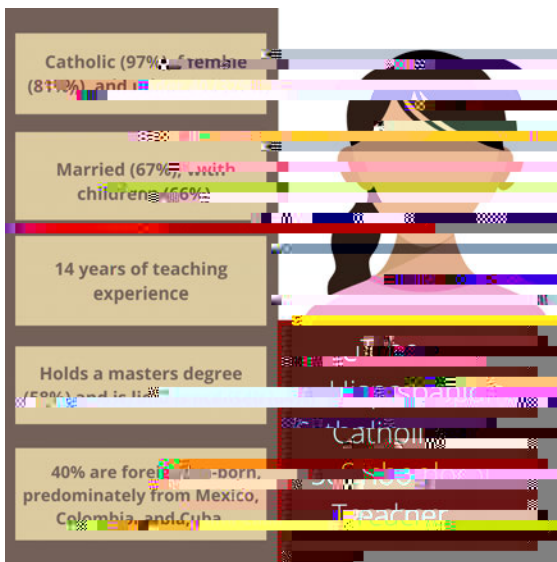
The 62 million Hispanic people living in the US are as diverse as any ethnoracial group in the world. They represent a tapestry of races, ethnicity, customs, academic trajectories, income levels, cultural traditions and even languages. Their profiles and identities in the US are very much defined by their roots— the US, Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain—, with salient differences deriving from place of birth and generational background. About two thirds of Hispanics are US born (67% in 2020). Nearly 20 million are immigrants. Their indigenous, Latin American, African, Caribbean, European and North American backgrounds come together to give birth to new ways of being American, shaping how they are integrating

into the larger US culture and how they nurture their spiritual lives

Our study sample, i.e., Hispanic PK-12 educators in Catholic schools in the US, reflects this rich tapestry. Despite the diversity of Catholic educators who participated in our study, our research data highlights some important commonalities 1) the vocational call to Catholic education, 2) the motivational factors for working in Catholic schools, and 3) the evolution of professional identity. We begin with a descriptive overview of the Hispanic Catholic school teacher and leader, then expand on the identified commonalities by drawing from the voices of participating Hispanic Catholic school educators

We begin with a profile of the 142 responding Hispanic Catholic school teachers. The overwhelming majority of these teachers self-identify as Catholic (97%) and are predominantly female (81%). Thirty-seven percent are under 40, 67% are married, a majority have children (66%), a handful have grandchildren (15%), with 42% of them enrolling their children or grandchildren to attend the same Catholic school where they teach. Study findings also indicate that Hispanic teachers in US Catholic schools are highly qualified and well-educated: they have an average of 13.7 years of teaching experience, 97% have bachelor's degrees, 58% have master's degrees, and 10% have doctoral degrees. Forty percent of the teachers are foreign born, with Mexico, Colombia, and Cuba cited more frequently as countries of origin.

While we know that 9% of all public school principals are Hispanic, only 7% of principals in Catholic schools self-identify as Hispanic. Of the 143 school leaders that participated in our study, the vast majority self-identify as Catholic (96%). Two-thirds (67%) self-identify as female and 65% as married. The majority of Hispanic Catholic school leaders have children (92%) or grandchildren (20%), with 47% of them registering their children or grandchildren to attend the same Catholic school where they lead. Highly qualified, with 89% holding doctorate or master's degrees, 21% are foreign-born, predominately from Mexico



The results of this research can help Catholic school leaders think about what attracts and retains Hispanic educators. These educators feel a sense of vocational calling to serve others and have a sincere desire to make the world a better place. Often encouraged by others to

compensation through a retirement pension from previous experience in the public school system. Sixty-eight percent of leaders feel they are fairly or well compensated, on average making over \$70,000, and 43% indicated their salary "does not influence" or "slightly influences" their motivation to work.

While salary might not be the top driving motivation for many Hispanic educators, it cannot be ignored. The survey responses indicate that it still may be an important factor in being able to retain teachers and leaders in Catholic schools. Although there are a number of conditions that impact educator turnover and retention, the importance of salary should not be discounted.

"My career is about kinship...accompanying my students on their life's journey."

Evolution of professional identity

Professional identities are multifaceted, with different components interwoven; family, ethnic origin, academic background, and occupational experience are all part of the mix. Research on how Hispanics define identity has found that this population is inevitably influenced by two major paradigms (a) identity as influenced by political and racial discrimination; and, (b) identity as influenced by family, community/class and religion.

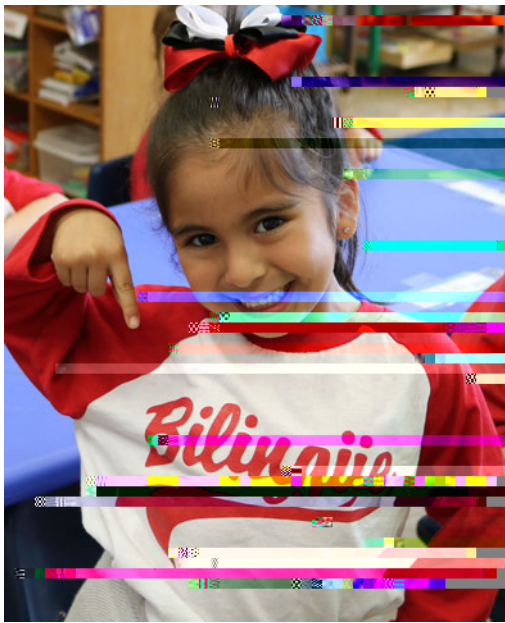
Much of the research about underrepresented teachers and leaders in the field of education highlights that many enter the field with the motivation to work with minoritized students. HowC

individuals who feel stigmatized, it can be difficult to see themselves as an essential part of the professional

These data raise important questions about the formation and training of Catholic educators. Catholic institutions of higher education do not seem to be playing a major role in attracting and forming Hispanic educators for Catholic schools. While Catholic school leaders fare better as graduates from these institutions, that does not seem to be the case for Hispanic teachers. As the Hispanic presence increases in Catholic schools, especially in terms of students, a great opportunity exists for Catholic colleges and universities to recruit and form Hispanics in undergraduate and graduate programs to cultivate vocational callings to teach and lead in educational settings, particularly Catholic schools.

When exploring pathways into teaching and leading in Catholic schools, it is important to realize that a significant number of Hispanic teachers received training and formation outside of the US, especially those who are immigrants. Our study indicates that 20% of teachers and 8% of school leaders in Catholic schools hold degrees from institutions of higher education not located in the US. Establishing degree equivalence and transferring educator credentials are difficult processes to navigate. This may be a factor in the relatively low percentage of Hispanic educators in Catholic schools.

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Teaching and Leading with Hispanic Catholic Imagination

Catholic schools have a long tradition of being communities dedicated to the cultivation of the Catholic imagination. In an increasingly Hispanic church, as in the US, the Catholic imagination is enriched and expanded by the traditions and contributions of the many Hispanics,

Central to this engagement is the connection between increasing student learning by leveraging the impact of student identification with native culture and language. When Hispanic students are guided and supported by Hispanic teachers and school leaders, they can leverage the gift of *confianza*—that is, establishing the trust and consequent willingness to share information with others—to strengthen the teacher-student relationship that is so integral to student success. We also see that the transformative power of those relationships translates into increased student representation in gifted programs at the national level.

“When partnerships with communities bring in guest speakers, things like that... so confianza that in past a brief time that a perspective,

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One example of an archdiocesan system engaging in preparation and formation specifically for Catholic school educators, including Hispanic educators, is the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. With a teacher shortage on the horizon, the Catholic Schools Office created a residency model, entitled the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catholic Residency Program, in partnership with a local Catholic university, Immaculata University, to offer a cost-effective pathway to preparation and formation to teach in Philadelphia Catholic schools. Supported by local foundations, the model involves initial coursework and training with extensive coaching once educators enter the classroom while continuing their courses at Immaculata and other formation through the Archdiocese.

This model, currently supporting 40 residents in 25 schools, mirrors residency pathway options across the country in which new educators begin with an intensive intro



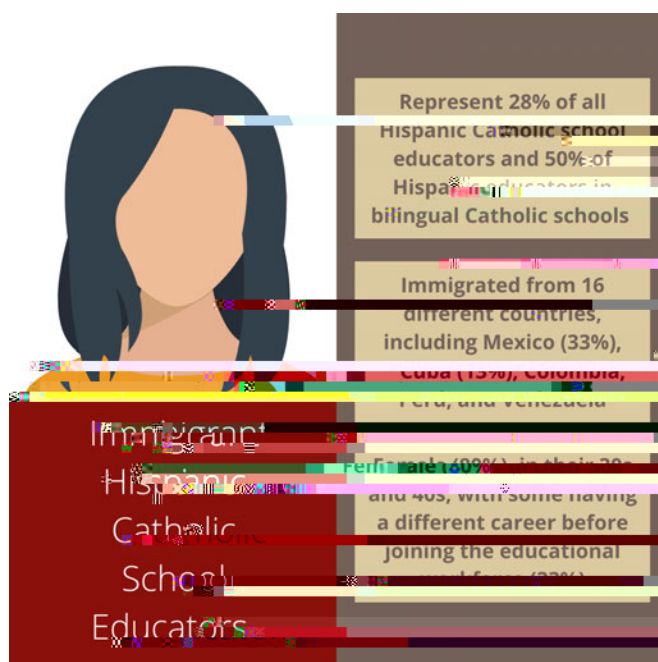
becoming an educator at the Catholic school where they work. Considering nearly half of participants indicated engagement in parish life as a pathway to working in a Catholic school, parishes and Catholic schools have an opportunity to create grow-your-own programs by strengthening relationships between parishioners and school personnel.

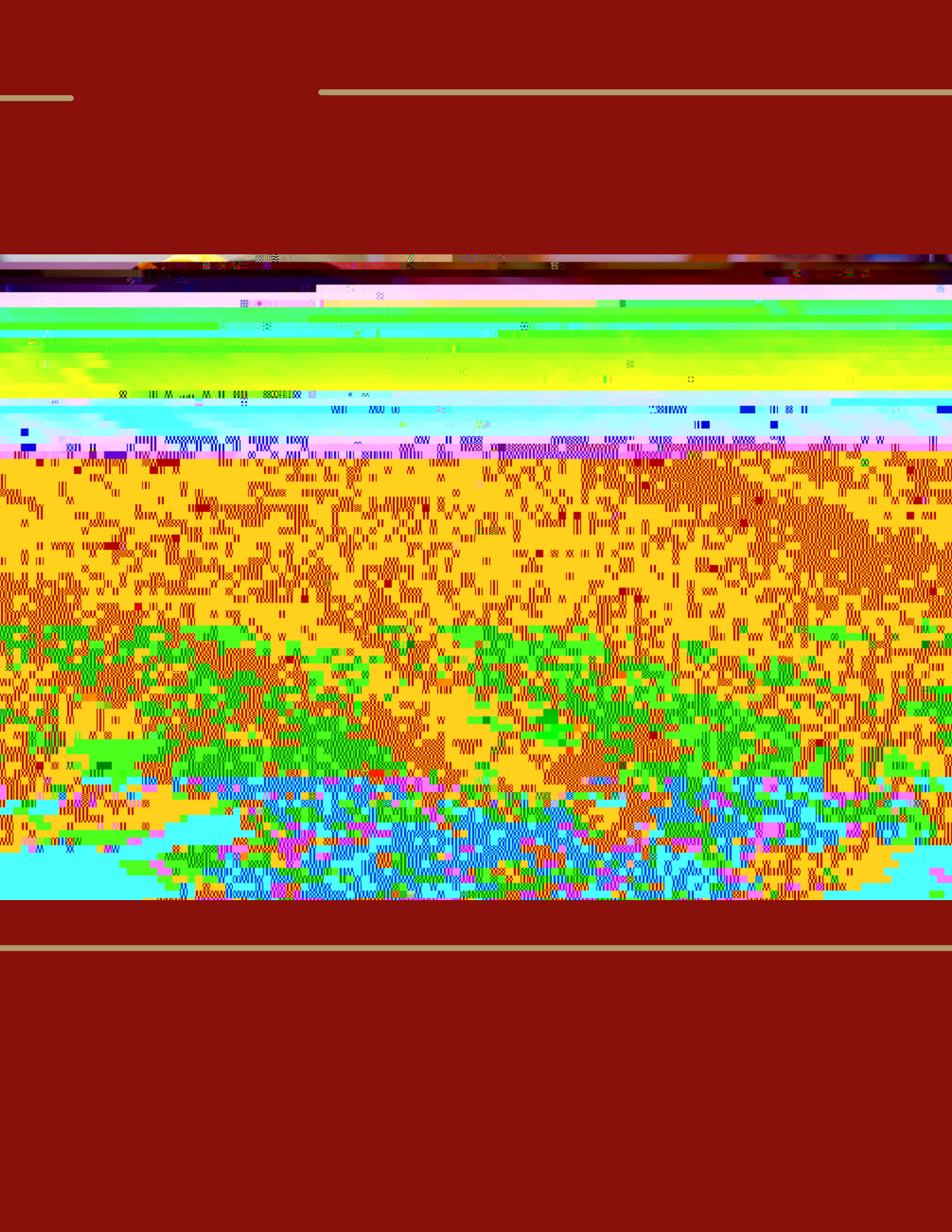
When asked whether they were engaged in activities at their Catholic parishes, an extraordinary 88% of respondents say that they attend church regularly. About 11% serve as catechists in their parishes, about 6% are involved in Bible study groups, and about 6% teach Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Nearly 29% serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, about 16% as lectors and about 9% are members of a choir.

As of 2020, there were 16,703 Catholic parishes in the US, and only a little over a quarter of these parishes (26%) offer Hispanic ministry. A very small percentage of respondents in the study (2%) indicated they are directly involved in Hispanic ministries, 17% indicate that they collaborate with someone in their (arch)diocese whose work focuses on Hispanic ministry. If more parochial and diocesan offices of Hispanic ministry were to make a stronger effort to collaborate with Catholic schools, it is possible that more Hispanic educators in Catholic schools would be open to collaborating with their projects. Increased collaboration also bears the possibility of unifying and streamlining the messaging and outreach needed to recruit and retain Hispanic children, families, and educators within Catholic school communities.

Parishes can play a major role in identifying, recruiting, and mentoring Catholic school educators. Parish leaders have an opportunity, and perhaps the responsibility, to attract educators from within the parish community. This hope, however, is curtailed by the fact that a large numbering,

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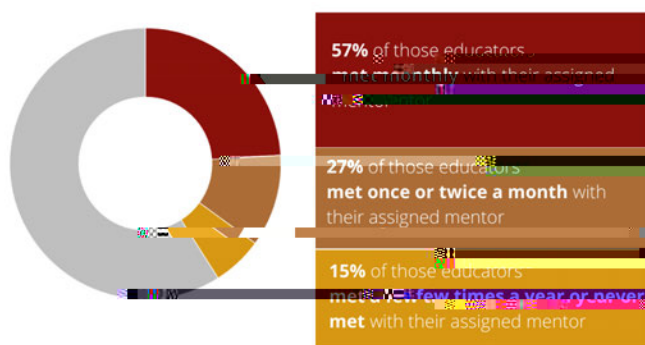
Support Structures within the Catholic School and across the (Arch)Diocese

Support structures e.g., mentoring, communication with

and learning, foster self-direction and autonomy, and cultivate a collaborative workplace culture grounded in continuous learning. While researchers have widely promoted mentorship as a promising practice for professional learning and development in Catholic schools, there is little evidence that formalized mentorship

Hispanic Catholic Educators' Mentorship Support Frequency

Only **42%** of Hispanic educators were assigned a mentor or master teacher during their year of teaching in a Catholic school.



While making connections with educators across various educational sectors can provide valuable pedagogical, emotional, and psychological support, spiritual support anchored in the Catholic tradition can be provided only within the Catholic spaces. Practices of spiritual accompaniment and discernment have the potential to amplify system-level support and collaborative professional opportunities. For educators to feel supported not only during their first year, but throughout their career, an emphasis on relationships within a school community across the (arch)diocese and across educational sectors is critical. Investing in the expansion of an educator's social network is necessary to support educators in their personal and professional growth. Doing this for Hispanic educators in Catholic schools creates opportunities for connection, increasing the potential to impact their retention in Catholic educational institutions.

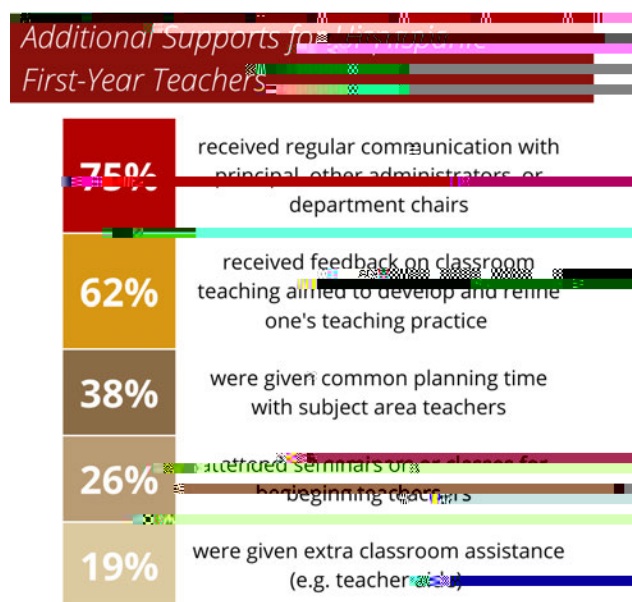
Onboarding & First-Year Supports

Participants in our study reflected upon onboarding, also known as the orientation, process, and additional support that they were provided during their first year. Examining these practices gives us a glimpse into Hispanic teachers' first days in Catholic school communities as well as into the ways they received professional assistance throughout the first year.

During the onboarding process, 83% of study respondents indicated that they interacted with school leaders. The majority noted that the focus of these orientation days was primarily on developing an understanding of the foundational purpose of working in a Catholic school and building relationships.

School leaders often begin the orientation process with an overview of the school's mission and vision, along with the values the Catholic school community embraces. These foundational guideposts allow leaders to develop a shared understanding of the why of Catholic education with all faculty, new and returning. When reflecting back on their first year of teaching, over three-quarters (78%) of Hispanic educators responded that their leaders took the time to help them understand this shared purpose.

Among the practices considered of great value were the introduction of new teachers to other faculty members (90%), community building exercises (46%), and a faculty retreat (32%), all of which helped Hispanic educators in the school community get to know one another better. Such relationship building exercises instill a strong sense of belonging in, something that is often perceived as a challenge among Hispanic Catholic educators, particularly in PWMs. Research has found a strong correlation between teachers' feelings of belonging and job satisfaction, increased job performance, and greater retention. Further, teachers' feelings of being valued are often in alignment with their feelings of being supported by their school leaders as well as the development of positive relations with colleagues and parents.



Hispanic first-year teachers ranked receiving regular communication and feedback on classroom teaching instructional as the highest additional support they receive in Catholic schools for. Similar to what happens in other educational sectors, only a few teachers in the study received additional time as a support structure, such as a reduced teaching schedule for additional preparation time or release time to participate in support activities for new teachers. While many leaders would be interested in allowing for such time, the inability to provide it likely reflects the thinly staffed composition of Catholic schools, lacking additional personnel to cover classes and financial resources to compensate them.

Three out of four Hispanic teachers in our study see themselves as *gente puente* for other Hispanic families (88%), students (83%), and fellow teachers (75%). Among Hispanic school leaders, this percentage is even higher because they see themselves as bridge builders for Hispanic families (91%), students (88%), and fellow teachers (68%). As Hispanic leaders embrace their identity as *gente puente* they realize the impact they have on future generations of Hispanic teachers and leaders

"I see in the Hispanic teachers in my class the hopes and dreams of my own relatives who came from another country to make a difference for themselves and their loved ones. I intentionally develop personal bonds with these young Hispanic teachers to mirror their aspirations and potential. By showing them a window of possibilities and laying down the opportunities before them, we are creating a pipeline for cultivating talent in our class."

-Andrea, female Assistant Superintendent, Midwest

"I intentionally develop personal bonds with these young Hispanic teachers to mirror their aspirations and potential. By showing them a window of possibilities and laying down the opportunities before them, we are creating a pipeline for cultivating talent in our class."

The interviews conducted as part of this study demonstrate the importance of personal relationships in the process of building bridges, and that *gente puente* are essential in the professional path for Hispanic educators and others. Hispanic leaders in Catholic schools see themselves as *gente puente*—mentors, survivors, learners, or a combination of all of these. They have learned to compensate for stigmas and biases, learned to navigate the predominantly white environment in which they have been educated and work, and serve as ambassadors for Hispanic people.⁸⁸

Affirming their Hispanic and professional identities, grounded in a profound sense of mission, Hispanic leaders are instrumental in creating thriving school environments where Hispanic students, families and educators feel at home. Hispanic teachers in the classroom exercise their calling to be *gente puente* by serving as mentors and increasing the possibilities of achievement for underrepresented students. Their presence allows them to serve as role models, teacher encouragers, and mentors to other educators and underrepresented students.⁸⁹ Their presence and contributions can counteract unfortunate and harmful stigmas imposed upon Hispanics and other minoritized communities in the US.⁹⁰

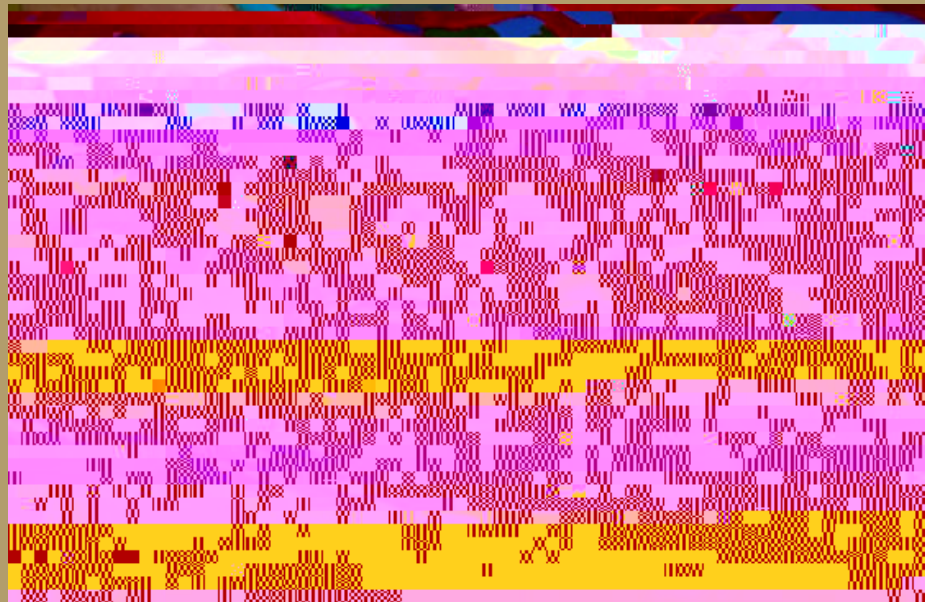


An opportunity Catholic schools have to grow their own talent is to remain connected to their alumni through formal **Graduate Support Programs**. Provides mentorship, career advising, and academic support during high school and college years, **Graduate Support Programs** are key features of schools in the Cristo Rey Network and Nativity Miguel Coalition.

One Nativity Miguel school, Notre Dame Academy, located in Milwaukee, WI is also part of Boston College's Two-Way Immersion Catholic Schools Network (TMN-CS) — a network of 22 dual-language Catholic schools across the US. Notre Dame Academy graduate support personnel intentionally remained connected to their young bilingual alumni. This school, founded in 1996 as an all-girls middle school, saw its first graduates go on to complete college in 2004. The school has since expanded to serve 3-year-old kindergarten through 8th grade. At Notre Dame Academy the graduate support personnel has a program to accompany graduates throughout high school and college.

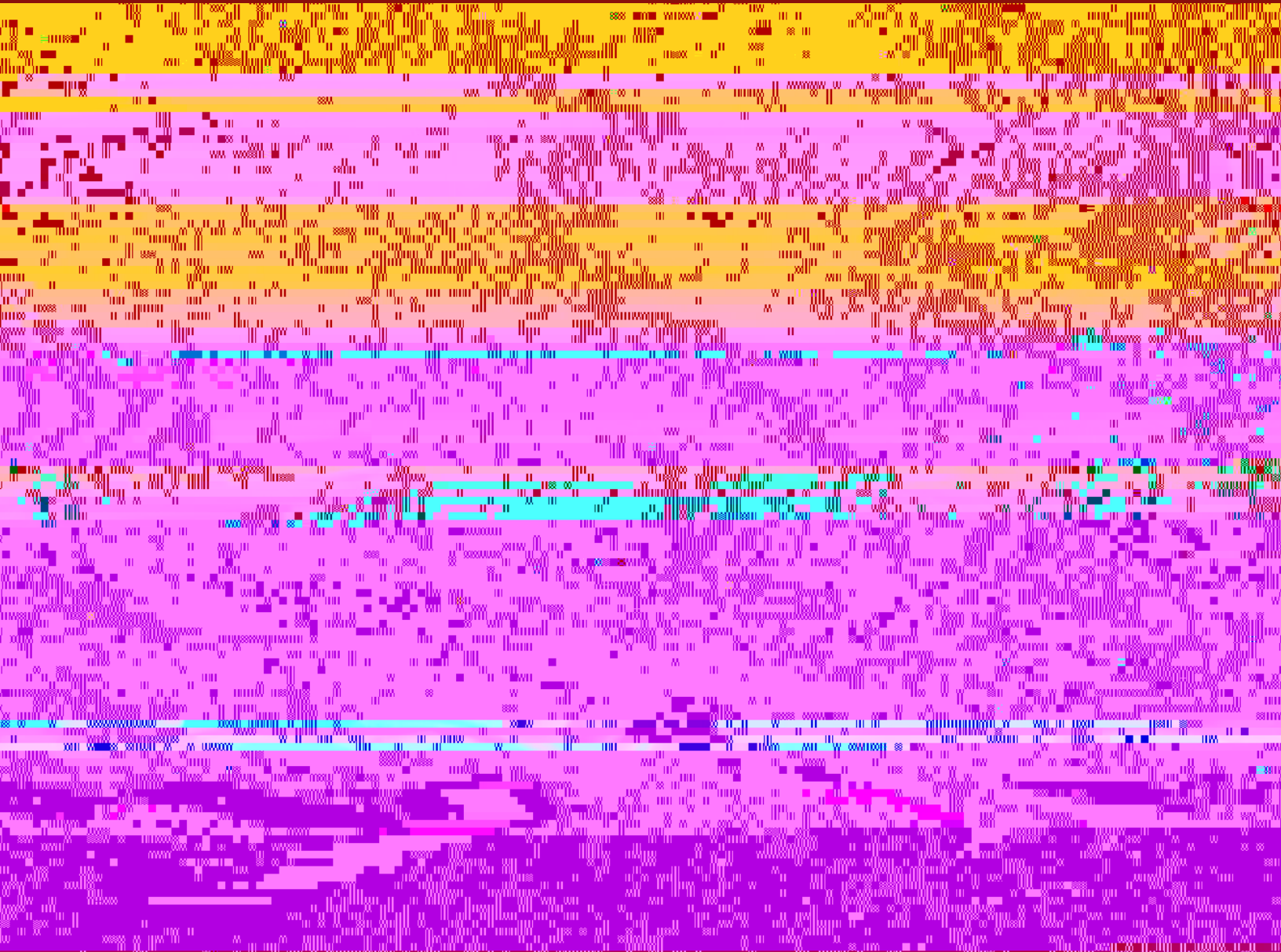
'Our single best tool for recruiting talent, particularly teach

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Section IV:

Hispanic Catholic School Leaders as Agents of Transformation for Church & Society



of high-quality Catholic school teachers and leaders. These are areas where integrating the language of vocation could enhance the work of Hispanic educators in Catholic schools. The majority of Catholic school leaders in this study reported that they received some formal training and support to assume leadership roles. When examining pathways for leadership development, 30% of responding Hispanic teachers indicated that there were specific programs for educators like them to move into leadership or administrative positions. However, the majority (70%) indicated that their schools did not have sufficient roles that cultivated leadership skills beyond regular teaching responsibilities. Schools need to engage in more concerted efforts to invite Hispanic teachers into leadership roles, including assistant principals and department chairs. Doing this will empower more Hispanic educators called to leadership to fulfill their vocations and signal a commitment to diversify leadership in Catholic schools.

Within Catholic schools identified as committed to cultivating educational leadership, 48% of study respondents indicated that they actively recruit Hispanic educators for leadership positions. This is promising.

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Doing this will empower more Hispanic educators called to leadership to fulfill their vocations and signal a commitment to diversify leadership in Catholic schools.

The Making of a Hispanic Principal

Step 1: Understanding the Context and Motivations

The Hispanic Catholic school leaders who participated in this study were less likely than their Catholic school teacher counterparts to have other Hispanic teachers or leaders as role models: 42% and 60%, respectively.

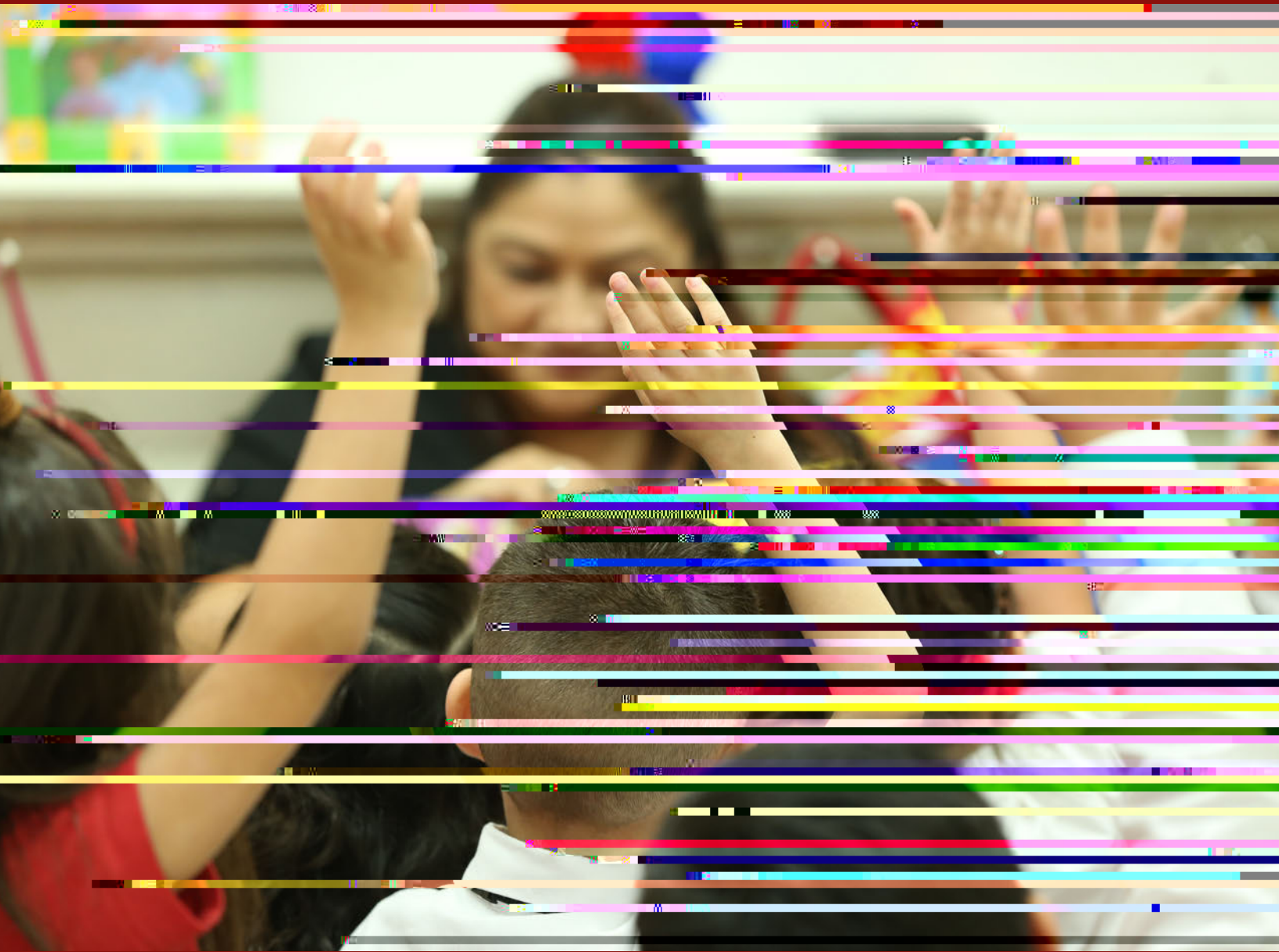
Why this matters: More research is needed to better understand how expanding the presence of Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools increases the likelihood of Hispanics, motivated by their own ethnic and cultural heritage, discerning a vocation to serve in Catholic education. Research on culturally-based models of teacher mentoring suggests that there are both relational and pedagogical benefits to be gained from support and formation within the context of shared heritage. Additionally, differentiating between role models and mentors in the formative pathways of Hispanic educational leaders in Catholic schools is crucial. It is common for female Hispanic educational leaders in public schools to have role models who tend to reflect their gender and ethnicity, while their mentors, who taught them a range of specific skills, tend not to reflect those same characteristics.

National Organizations and Conversations. There is a growing number of conversations in the US about how current Catholic ministerial and educational structures can better meet the needs of the Hispanic Catholic community. Such is the case of the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic Ministry, convoked by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and Raíces y Alas, convoked by the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM). The National Association of Catholic Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry (NACDDHM) has been consistently vocal about advocating for more presence and support of Hispanic children and youth in Catholic educational institutions. Yet, these efforts are led mainly by Hispanic Catholic leaders who do not always participate in larger conversations about Catholic life and Catholic education in the country. Also, while much emphasis is placed on the recruitment of Hispanic children and the support of their families in Catholic education research and practice, rarely does the conversation focus on the urgency of mentoring and supporting Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools. There is a need for more integrated conversations that involve the above efforts in closer collaboration with the NCEA, the USCCB Committee for Catholic Education, the work of Catholic colleges and universities, and the various other ministerial and educational organizations that advocate for a better experience in Catholic schools. Such conversations must bring to the center the cultivation of Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools.

Philanthropy. There is no doubt that Catholic education in the US thrives in large part thanks to the generosity of countless individuals, communities, and foundations. For the foreseeable future, philanthropy will continue to play a major role in sustaining the vitality of Catholic schools. Many philanthropic efforts have made it possible for Hispanic children and their families to join Catholic schools across the US. Others have ensured that Catholic schools remain open and vibrant in locations where Hispanics are highly concentrated. One area in which there is more room for philanthropic investment is the formation, support, and mentoring of Hispanic teachers and leaders who are already in Catholic schools or are discerning to serve in this role. Such investment can happen in various ways: scholarships for teacher and leader preparation, grants and programs to boost salaries and benefits to move to parity with other sectors, retention programs and other efforts including intentional professional learning and professional development opportunities. University and research institutes can also assist by undertaking further research on Hispanic teachers and leaders in Catholic schools. In addition, well-designed diocesan programs to recruit and retain Hispanic teachers and leaders can be very good.

Emerging Insights

Toward a Constructive Conversation



Signs of Hope Associated with the Presence of Hispanic Teachers and Leaders in Catholic Schools

1 During the 2021-22 academic year approximately 14,612 Hispanic teachers and leaders are serving in the 5,981 elementary and secondary Catholic schools in the US. They represent 9% of all teachers and leaders working in these educational institutions.

2 About 97% of Hispanic Catholic school teachers and 96% of Hispanic Catholic school leaders participating in the study self-identify as Roman Catholic. Eighty-five percent (85%) of study participants attend church regularly and are involved in church life. For 47% of participants, their religious identity is a motivation to work in a Catholic school. About 21% of Hispanic teachers and leaders in the study are considering further ecclesial service as priests or vowed religious.

3 Hispanic teachers and leaders generally share a deep sense of vocational calling to serve others and a sincere desire to make a difference in the world. While equitable financial compensation remains a concern (73% have considered this as a reason for a career change), especially since two thirds are married (67% of teachers and 68% of leaders) and are raising families, the vast majority named other values grounding their vocation: 98% of participants feel that being a Catholic educator allows them to contribute to the common good and 82% "absolutely agree" that what they do ultimately makes the world a better place. For these reasons, many stay in Catholic education.

4 About half (48%) of Hispanic teachers and leaders participating in the study indicate that they actively engage in advocacy on concerns related to the Hispanic community such as food security, access to education, immigration. About 40% also advocate for high quality education for public school students.

5 Hispanic teachers and leaders are highly diverse. About 40% of Hispanic teachers and 27% of Hispanic leaders in Catholic schools are immigrants, with a rich heritage from nearly every Spanish-speaking nation, mirroring the backgrounds of students and families in their communities. Their presence enriches the Catholic educational experience in the US with important global perspectives.

6 Perspectives of Hispanic

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Areas of Growth Necessary to Further Support and Retain Hispanic Teachers and Leaders in Catholic Schools

1 Hispanics constitute about 42% of the nearly 70 million US Catholics. Yet, barely 2.1% of all Hispanic school-age children attend Catholic schools. A total of 294,947 Hispanic students were enrolled in Catholic schools in 2020-2021 (1%) compared to 19,018 Hispanic

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6 Immigrant teachers account for 11% of all teachers in the US, accounting for nearly 400,000 teachers in the elementary or secondary level. In our study 40% of teachers, and 27% of leaders are foreign-born. When examining their education backgrounds, 9% of respondents received degrees outside of the US; 98% have bachelors degrees, 54% have master's degrees, and 12% have doctoral degrees. Respondents on average have worked for 12 years in the Catholic school system. The majority of immigrant Hispanic Catholic school educators come to their Catholic school communities well-educated, and are deeply committed. Often times pastors are not aware of the talent in their parish schools, especially immigrants who are teaching there. As pastors come to know immigrant Catholic school educators in their parish or neighboring schools, these individuals often have compelling life stories to share with parishioners. Highlighting these contributions extends the American history of centering the immigrant in our Catholic institutions, parishes, as well as schools.

7. Most Hispanic Catholic school educators (77%) reported few to no opportunities to connect with ecclesial structures of Hispanic ministry and other areas of church life—at the diocesan, parochial, or organizational level. We should always be reminded that it takes a village to ensure the cultivation, mentorship, and support of Hispanic teachers and leaders. In this village, we must build networks of collaboration that bring together ecclesial structures, such as parishes and dioceses, national and local teacher / leader formation programs, research centers, publications, national organizations, and philanthropic efforts.

8. Although increasing representation of Hispanic educators to reap the benefits of teacher-student race/ethnicity matching is critical to addressing achievement gaps within Catholic schools, those who direct the professional learning, preparation, and development of Catholic school educators must increase opportunities in an equitable manner for all. This includes professional learning prospects in areas such as culturally re

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The Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education (The Roche Center) forms educators to become agents of change who work to create excellent and equitable Pre-K-12 Catholic schools. The Roche Center accomplishes this mission through a strong commitment to research, leadership and teacher formation programs, professional development, and outreach.

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G f h a d e h e l d a f l a m e .
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