

Thesis:

School Choice and Its Effects on the Spiritual and Academic Growth of Students

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Abstract

School choice and other types of public funding for private schools are becoming controversial topics in education. Within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), there can be much concern and debate as to whether a WELS school and congregation should participate in such a program. This study looks to investigate the impact, academically and spiritually, of Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) on the schools and congregations who participate in the program. A survey was sent to 20 WELS, LUMIN and Seton Catholic administrators and 20 pastors to gather information on MPCP impact on their ministries. This study also analyzes public testing data of the participating schools to examine growth over a four-year period. While school choice may not be the best choice for all WELS ministries, it is the goal of this study to uncover common principles and practices that can lead to success.

Acknowledgements

Completing a project of this magnitude, while very rewarding and interesting, is also very challenging and time-consuming. I am grateful for all the support that I have received along the journey to complete this project. Thank you to my wife, Rebecca, for her patience and assistance in this undertaking. Thank you to my children who gave up time with me so that I might work on this project. Thank you to my research committee for their insight and constructive criticism. A special thank you to all the school administrators and principals who took the time to respond to the survey and additionally sat down to further talk about the questions the study was investigating. Without their participation, this project would not have been possible.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

How do Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) schools continue to educate students while carrying out the great commission, “Go and make disciples of all nations” Matthew 28:19 (Holy Bible NIV, 1984)? WELS schools in their endeavor to educate the “whole child,” both academically and spiritually, have wrestled with this for generations. How do we best provide academic success for our students along with creating a Christian culture to spread the love of Jesus to all who enter the doors of our schools?

From the early years of the WELS, parish education was of a high priority. Churches strove to offer a quality Christian education to the children of their membership (Braun, 2011). Times have changed and the overall enrollment in WELS schools has been on a gradual decline over the last 20 years. Enrollment in WELS schools reached its peak in 1990 at 31,983 students but has since fallen to 24,485 students (WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools, 2017; WELS Commission on Parish Schools, 2009). The city of Milwaukee, with the high density of WELS churches and schools, experienced this decline at an alarming rate. Many researchers attribute this to a demographic change in the neighborhoods served by those churches and schools. The city neighborhoods became more highly inhabited by racial minorities.

In 1995, in an effort to revitalize education in Milwaukee, the Wisconsin State Department of Education introduced the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (WELS Commission on Parish Schools, 2001). The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program or MPCP, was the first school voucher system in the United States which paid a tuition

voucher to participating private schools for parents who fell within certain income limits. For example, the income limit for the 2018-2019 school year is not to exceed \$73,800 for a family of 4 (Wisconsin Department of Education, 2018). Three years after the start of the program, St. Marcus Lutheran School became the first WELS choice school and shortly thereafter other WELS schools in the Milwaukee area followed. As of 2017, thirteen WELS schools were participating in MPCP with 2,831 students enrolled (WELS Statistical Report, 2017).

When WELS schools first enrolled in the MPCP, they looked at it as an opportunity to carry out Matthew 28:19, “making disciples of all nations,” while continuing to offer a high-quality, academic, Christ-centered education. Not only does this education prepare students for this life, but also for eternal life. Mr. Benjamin Clemons (in Vik, 2008), former principal of Risen Savior Lutheran School, put it this way:

The largest blessing of school choice in my mind is that we were able to fund a school that otherwise would not have existed, which allowed us to share the Gospel daily with hundreds of children. . .The MPCP gives Lutheran schools the opportunity to reach out with the gospel to a large generation group and offer the same spiritual training that we had. (p. 12)

Through the MPCP program, WELS schools can continue to offer a Christ-centered education to families in their neighborhoods who otherwise may not be able to afford it. This study seeks evidence regarding the impact that WELS MPCP schools have had on the academic and spiritual growth of the students which they enroll.

Significance of the Proposed Study

Opponents of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program often look to test scores as a measure of educational quality. Those test scores are used to support claims that MPCP schools do not significantly outperform area public schools and that monies would be better spent on improving public education. These scores are not 100% inclusive due in part to the fact that students are not included in the published scores until a student has attended the school for two consecutive years (Wisconsin Department of Education, 2016b). Yet test scores are still an important measuring tool.

WELS schools in many areas of the country are struggling financially and with enrollment (WELS Commission on Lutheran School, 2017). WELS schools involved in the MPCP have continued to grow over the past 20 years and more schools continue to join the program. While this may be a controversial idea of school funding, the ministry goals of these schools remain unchanged. Leadership within the WELS has debated the facts of whether our schools should be involved in school choice based on the idea of separation of church and state (Brenner, 1992). The central point of contention is whether government funding should be used to carry out gospel ministry and what stipulations may be included with the money.

This study intends to gather information to show the effects that school choice has on the academic and spiritual growth of the students enrolled. Information gathered from this study can be used by schools who are evaluating their own programs or thinking about participating in school choice.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

Academic achievement

1. How do WELS MPCP schools, MPS (area public schools), LUMIN (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod choice schools) and Seton Catholic choice schools compare academically?
2. What common underlying practices and principles contribute to the success of WELS MPCP schools and their students?

Spiritual Growth

3. In what ways has the church associated with the MPCP school seen growth, be it by attendance or membership, from its relationship with the choice system?
4. What underlying practices and procedures does the church use which have enhanced specific areas of congregational growth?

Definition of Terms

Choice school- a school that receives state funds based on the parent's enrollment decision.

MPCP- Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the oldest school voucher system in the country.

MPS- Milwaukee Public Schools, local public-school district.

Income limits- the amount of income that a family can have and still qualify for the voucher.

WELS- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Limitations

1. The number of WELS schools who participate in MPCP is small.
2. The schools and churches involved in the study have varying lengths of participation in the program.
3. MPCP and MPS report testing data only for students who have been enrolled in their schools for two consecutive years.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The debate has been going on for nearly 20 years over whether WELS schools should be involved in the MPCP program. Would participation in the program bring unwanted stipulations on the school because they accepted government funding? Would the schools involved in the MPCP program be able to maintain their WELS identity? Would schools be able to show academic success without compromising their mission?

The stance that WELS churches and schools take on the issue of school choice is essential groundwork for the issue being investigated. Should church-run schools accept funding from the state government and if so, what stipulations would be attached to the acceptance of that money? This is the central point of contention on whether WELS schools should involve themselves in MPCP and other choice programs.

The premise of separation of church and state is a constitutional right that the citizens of the United States are guaranteed. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," (US Const. amend. III). While the church and state are separate in many respects, there are areas where both church and state have interests and responsibilities (Brenner, 1992). Brenner (1992) went on to quote synodical publications in explaining that church and state can operate together as long each entity understands the rights and limitations of the other. According to Brenner, the WELS in resolution in 1967 urged the following cautions: avoid state aid if it hinders us from carrying out our objectives; if it would lead to financial dependency; if it would bring improper government control; or finally if it would jeopardize our unified Christian education. While caution is to be exercised, it is difficult to deny the

opportunities that school choice could provide for congregations (Brenner, 1992; Hoogervorst, 2004). These cautions lay the groundwork for some congregations and their decisions for participation in or avoidance of choice programs.

Brenner cautions about the program hindering our objectives; the foremost of which would be Matthew 28:19. While many congregations chose to join the MPCP in order to grow ministry, the program, MPCP, in itself can be detrimental to the growth of ministry. “Religious Schools cannot require pupils to take religious classes. A pupil may elect to ‘opt out’ of religious activities,” (WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools, 2001; Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2016c). While the concern may be that parents will opt their child out of religious classes, it has been the experience of schools that are participating in MPCP that parents who are seeking religious schools desire to have their students enrolled in and participating in religious classes (WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools, 2001). The congregations involved with choice schools have embraced the opportunities that rise from eager hearts willing to learn the gospel message.

Would WELS schools that are participating in the MPCP program be able to maintain their ministry if they lost government funding? Brenner cautions schools against becoming financially dependent on government funding and to prepare if that funding would no longer be available. “We should exercise care so that resources from outside sources do not make our church dependent on outside income” (Hoogervorst, 2004, p. 21). Of the 13 WELS schools participating in the MPCP program in 2004, seven stated that their ministry would not be able to continue if government funding were to end (Hoogervorst, 2004). That number has only increased in the 14 years since

Hoogervorst did his research. The reliance of many schools on government funding could be a obstacle to people who are viewing WELS schools and their participation in the MPCP program.

The number of WELS schools who are participating in the MPCP is the same today as in 2004. Some WELS MPCP schools have closed. New ones have opened. Some have combined, while still others have grown and expanded. Leadership in those schools may see MPCP as an opportunity given from the hand of God to expand their ministries (Hoogervorst, 2004; Vik, 2008). It is significant to recognize that ministry carried out by these schools is unique and has many challenges. But the results have lasting implications on student's lives both temporarily and eternally (Vik, 2008).

Vik (2008) provides a case study focusing on Risen Savior Lutheran School and their journey through joining MPCP and the growth of their ministry. This study details the struggles that the congregation went through in order to reach a decision to join the program. Through the process of growing their school, the church grew closer to their community. Risen Savior grew from a church without a school in 2002 to a school of 208 students in 2017. Of the students enrolled, 93 identify themselves as unchurched. The fields are ripe for the harvest (WELS Statistical Report, 2017).

WELS involvement in school choice goes back almost 20 years and the participation at least initially was controversial (Hoogervorst, 2004; Vick, 2008). The view of school voucher programs within the WELS has been changing. Koeppel (2018) found that the impact of school vouchers on WELS schools was overall positive. Furthermore, accepting vouchers fit well into the mission of the large majority of WELS schools.

As stated earlier, the MPCP was the first school voucher program in the United States and therefore may have been used as a model for other voucher programs around the country. As a result of its longevity, the MPCP has been studied frequently to assess the success of the program (Witte et al, 2012).

A longitudinal study to analyze the effectiveness of the MPCP was authorized in 2006. This five-year study was carried out by Witte, Carlson, Cowen, Fleming, and Wolf. The primary purpose of this study was to: analyze the student achievement in MPCP as compared to MPS (Witte et al, 2012).

Witte (2012) identifies a number of important findings but also offers some caveats and cautions. One substantial caveat is that it was not until the fifth year of the study, 2010-2011, that MPCP was subject to test-based accountability for the first time (Witte et al, 2012). This meant that for the first-time, student test scores carried notable weight in evaluating the school's programs. A problem that arose during the study was tied to student mobility. Students would move from public to private school, from one MPCP to another MPCP school, from one MPS school to another MPS school. Student mobility can make it difficult to ascertain empirical results and should be analyzed carefully (Witte et al, 2012).

Witte et al (2012) found that there were no systematic differences in growth between MPCP and MPS schools for the first four years of the study, 2006 to 2010. However, MPCP students showed greater growth during the 2010-2011 school year, the last year of the study. This may be attributed to the testing accountability policy (Witte et al, 2012). Researchers concluded from analysis of students' data that the longer students spent in MPCP, the greater their growth. Additionally, students who spent the

entire five-year study in MPCP exhibited more growth than students who spent the entire five-year study in MPS (Witte et al, 2012).

There is quantitative data to support MPCP schools outperforming their MPS counterparts. What allows these choice schools to outperform their public counterparts? Educators in general can learn from choice schools in Milwaukee. Stewart, Jacob, and Jensen, (Stewart, Jensen, & Jensen; 2012) conducted a study which investigated common characteristics across a sampling of MPCP schools. This study identified areas of investigation for commonality: school culture and climate, student academic success, effective leadership, teacher recruitment, and religion.

When investigating the area of climate and culture, researchers found that addressing the student's social needs and forming relationships was paramount. "Coming to school on a consistent basis and engaging in the learning process is a huge sign of success," (Stewart et al. 2012, p. 6). Schools achieved this by providing extended learning support services, block scheduling, peer support and mentoring. Mentoring whether by a staff member, another student, or a community member was found to have significant success in improving school culture by promoting positive relationships and role models. An academic culture which emphasizes students going to college was a common practice among many of the schools studied (Stewart et al, 2012). Many students in school choice will be first generation college students. The preparation of that mindset starts as early as kindergarten.

Teachers and leaders can shape a school, its mission, culture, and direction. A recurring problem that MPCP schools have, which is common in many urban situations, is staffing. Finding, training and keeping quality leaders and teachers was and still is

difficult for many MPCP schools (Stewart et al, 2012). Recruitment of teachers who are seeking to teach in an urban setting has helped to strengthen schools' staffs and slow the exodus of urban educators. Henry Tyson, Superintendent of St. Marcus School, pointed out several reasons why the top 80/80 schools are succeeding. Student bodies of 80% African American students and 80% low-income students are defined as 80/80 schools. These schools work because they have strong leadership; clear mission, vision, and core values; no bussing, no excuses, a growth mindset, additional funding, exceptional teachers, and aggressive educational coaching (Tyson, 2017). Tyson (2017) goes on to point to the spiritual battle and how Christian teachers must be active in church and daily devotion.

How can urban schools, or any school for that matter be deemed as successful? The United States Accounting Office funded a study in 1997 to identify some of these characteristics (Mueller, 1997). Mueller identified five clusters of school-based characteristics that influence academic achievement. These clusters and some of their sub-categories are listed below.

1. Outcome goals, curriculum and assessment
 - a. Clearly defined academic outcomes
 - b. Curriculum is closely aligned with academic outcomes
 - c. Curriculum is rigorous and challenging
2. Classroom practices and instruction
 - a. Frequent assessment which drives learning
 - b. Instructional time is maximized throughout the regular day.
 - c. Instructional delivery is highly structured and interactive.

3. Classroom climate and orientation to student learning
 - a. School staff holds and demonstrates high expectations for all students.
 - b. School staff have the attitude,” Whatever it takes.”
 - c. All students are cared about and respected.
4. Teacher leadership and development
 - a. Teachers are strongly invested and engaged in efforts to improve student achievement.
 - b. There is an emphasis on professional development of teachers.
5. School environment and characteristics
 - a. School environment is orderly and safe.
 - b. Strong leadership for school improvement is provided by the principal.

(Mueller, 1997)

Religion was a significant area of investigation as a high percentage of MPCP schools are religious based (Stewart et al, 2012). One of the regulations of the MPCP program is: “Schools cannot require pupils to take religious classes. A pupil may elect to ‘opt out’ of religious activities,” (Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2016c, p.2). While opting out of religious classes may be an option for parents, it happens infrequently. The fear of many students opting out of religious classes seems to be unsubstantiated as nearly all students participated in and sought out religious instruction (Stewart et al, 2012; Vik, 2008).

These studies give supporting data to those who would argue that MPCP provides a higher quality of education than MPS but it is significant to note the warnings

presented. So what does that mean for WELS MPCP schools? The study focused on large samples which may or may not have included WELS schools, but WELS schools can learn from both of these studies.

More recent investigations have analyzed MPCP and MPS schools by religious affiliation. This is particularly important because it further focuses the analysis. Of the students enrolled in the MPCP, 58% are enrolled in Catholic or Lutheran schools (Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, 2015). Of those students, 40% are enrolled in Catholic Schools and 18% in Lutheran schools. Prior to the implementation of the MPCP program, enrollment in Catholic and Lutheran schools in Milwaukee was decreasing but the program has reversed that trend (School Choice Wisconsin, 2015). These numbers support the premise that quality MPCP education is often tied to a faith-based school. Enrollment in WELS schools participating in the program have grown from 1,088 students in 1997 to over 2,565 students in 2013 (School Choice Wisconsin, 2015). Most if not all of the WELS schools participating are 80/80 schools, 80% African American enrollment and 80% receiving free and reduced lunch. (Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, 2015).

While it is important to note that MPCP has helped grow school enrollment, the more important question is how do these schools perform and why do these school outperform their public counterparts? The Catholic and Lutheran 80/80 schools outperform MPS in Reading by 3% and Math by 6.8% (Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, 2015). Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty compiled data on the top ten scoring 80/80 schools in Milwaukee. Of the top 10 schools in Reading, 3 out of 10 are

WELS MPCP schools. In Math, 3 out of 10 are WELS MPCP schools (Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, 2015).

Even more recent data supports the argument that MPCP schools outperform MPS schools. MPCP students outscored MPS students by 6.5% in Reading and 3% in Math on the 2016 Badger Exam (Johnson, 2016). The Badger Exam is the statewide assessment that is taken by all students in grades 3-8 in public and choice schools (Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2015).

One of the purposes of this study is to identify common practices and principles for using school choice for spiritual benefits of the students being served. While little has been written on this specific aspect of school choice, several authors have some suggestions to those school leaders who are considering the option to begin a school choice program.

“My advice to somebody else would be just go for it. We have a structure and such a firm grasp of the Bible and God’s Word that our schools can be really beautiful places for people to come and hear the message and be transformed,” according to Kole Knueppel, former principal at St. Marcus Lutheran School (Winkel, 2003, p. 23). There are schools who are focused on reaching the lost with the gospel message. While there may be dangers and difficulties with choice, the motivation remains the gospel message.

Pastor Daniel Babinec (2013) conducted a study to examine how parental involvement with their child’s education, through the school choice program, has changed WELS schools. While the purpose of Babinec’s (2013) study was not to

examine considerations for involvement in school choice, he does suggest several considerations gathered through his work.

1. Be prepared to change your ministry plan of your LES. Is your Lutheran Elementary School focus on outreach or on just nurturing the church members?
 2. Know your setting. Be proactive with ministry choices rather than reactive. Not all areas are conducive to school choice.
 3. Beware of seeing a choice or charter program as a financial quick fix. Don't see becoming a choice school to save your school. If the school choice program were to cease to exist, would the school be forced to close its doors?
- (Babinec, 2013)

One of the most extensive examinations of the possibilities of gospel outreach through a WELS MPCP school was undertaken by Dr. Paul Steinberg. Steinberg (2013) notes that these practices were present in many, if not most, of the schools that he studied.

1. Learn and mark student's spiritual situation.
 2. One person drives school outreach.
 3. Students sing in worship services.
 4. Worship connects with school families.
 5. Teach beginning discipleship individually
 6. Visit families for spiritual orientation
 7. Pastors serve visibly in school
 8. An individual staff person focuses on alumni
 9. Celebrate baptism events
 10. Engage families with connecting events
 11. Staff members love the congregation
 12. Staff members personally target one family
 13. Prioritize space for families to gather informally
 14. Lay outreach team makes calls at designated times
 15. Designate a percentage of voucher money for ministry
 16. Physically connect church and school.
- (Steinberg, 2013)

Steinberg (2013) presents data which points to the effects that these practices can have on ministry. Each ministry needs to find their own balance of these practices for their unique ministry situation.

Chapter III: Design

Participants

A questionnaire was sent to the pastors and administrators of the churches and schools that participated fully within the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. These ministries are the ones which rely most heavily on MPCP funds for their schools. The participation rate has been reported. Participants have been offered the results of the completed study.

Instrumentation

Data was gathered using an electronic Google forms survey. Additional data was also gathered from publicly published test scores and WELS statistical reports. Survey questions and testing data categories are included in the appendix.

Procedures

An email was sent out to the WELS MPCP schools and connected churches requesting their participation in the study. The email introduced me, outlined the purpose of the study, and included the survey questions so that participants could begin collecting data before starting the survey. Details about the timeline to complete the survey were also included. A link to the electronic survey was sent in a subsequent email a couple of days later.

Google Forms automatically compiled the survey information once all surveys had been completed. Once the data had been compiled, it was transferred to an Excel spreadsheet for easier analysis.

Data Analysis

This study has multiple purposes: 1: To compare the WELS MPCP schools, MPS (area public schools), LUMIN (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod choice schools) and Seton Catholic choice schools academic scores using quantitative data, a comparative study. 2: To find underlying practices and procedures that contribute to the success of WELS MPCP schools and their students using qualitative data. 3: To determine ways in which the churches associated with the MPCP school have benefited from the relationships. 4: To identify underlying practices and procedures which have enhanced specific areas of congregational growth.

- I. Comparative study, the researcher will compare the schools on the following characteristics

Average standardized test scores over a four-year period in the areas of Math and Reading. The researcher will gather the publicly published data from the Wisconsin Department of Education. The specific data analyzed will be the schools average scores in Math and Reading. The researcher will compile the data in order to ascertain yearly averages for WELS MPCP schools, LUMIN schools, Seton Catholic schools, and Milwaukee Public Schools. These average test scores will then be compared.

- II. Surveys will be sent to the school administrators of WELS MPCP schools. The administrators will be asked to rate specific characteristics of successful urban schools (Mueller, 1997), and how those characteristics affect their specific ministry. The researcher will analyze the data to identify common practices and

procedures that successful, as defined by the Mueller 1997, that these school make use of.

III. Correlative study, the researcher will analyze the data to determine relationships between the following items:

A. Years of MPCP participation and growth of church attendance. These numbers will be described in numbers and percentages. The use of both types of data is important to identify the total numbers growth as well as percentages.

B. Years of MPCP participation and number of baptisms or confirmations, these numbers will be described in numbers and percentages. The use of both types of data is important to identify the total numbers growth as well as percentages.

Participants will be given the opportunity to give input through open-ended comments about their schools and the MPCP program. These comments will offer additional insights as to the participants' views of how MPCP has impacted their ministry.

Limitations

- This study is reliant on testing data that is reported to the Wisconsin Department of Instruction. This data is not always readily available, so data may not be completely up-to-date.

- Survey data is not empirical data; therefore, irregularities could impact the results.
- The number of WELS choices schools is small; therefore, a single school's results can significantly impact the results.
- School enrollment can impact the average school test scores. For example: smaller schools with high achieving classes would have higher average school test scores.

Chapter IV. Results

Introduction

The impact of voucher schools, both on the students that are being served as well as on the sponsoring institutions, could be viewed as a controversial topic. More specifically, is school choice a good thing for WELS schools? Does it aid them in carrying out their mission? While there are many differing opinions, this study seeks to provide statistical data as well as common principles and methods which these schools have in common. Since this study seeks to answer multiple questions, it is important to note that all of the questions are related and have impact on each other. The collected data and common principles attempt to answer the following questions:

Academic achievement

1. How do WELS MPCP schools compare with other MPCP schools and similar area public schools?
2. What are some common or underlying practices and principles implemented by these schools to enhance the quality of education that can be adapted to other educational institutions?

Spiritual Growth

3. In what ways has the church associated with the MPCP school seen growth, be it by attendance or membership from its relationship with the choice system?
4. How have other areas of the ministry of the congregation been enhanced, or hindered by school choice?

Over 85 % of school administrators (16 respondents), from WELS schools who participate in MPCP, were sent the survey and participated in the study. Additionally, 60% of pastor (9 respondents) from sponsoring WELS churches, completed a similar survey. Survey data was also collected from representatives of LUMIN and Seton Catholic schools.

Data Analysis

Question 1:

How do WELS MPCP schools compare with other MPCP schools, and similar area public schools?

When school vouchers, namely the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, started, the goal was to give parents educational options. The purpose behind being able to use a voucher to attend a private school was to provide a better educational experience for the students, but what if the education provided by the private school is not better?

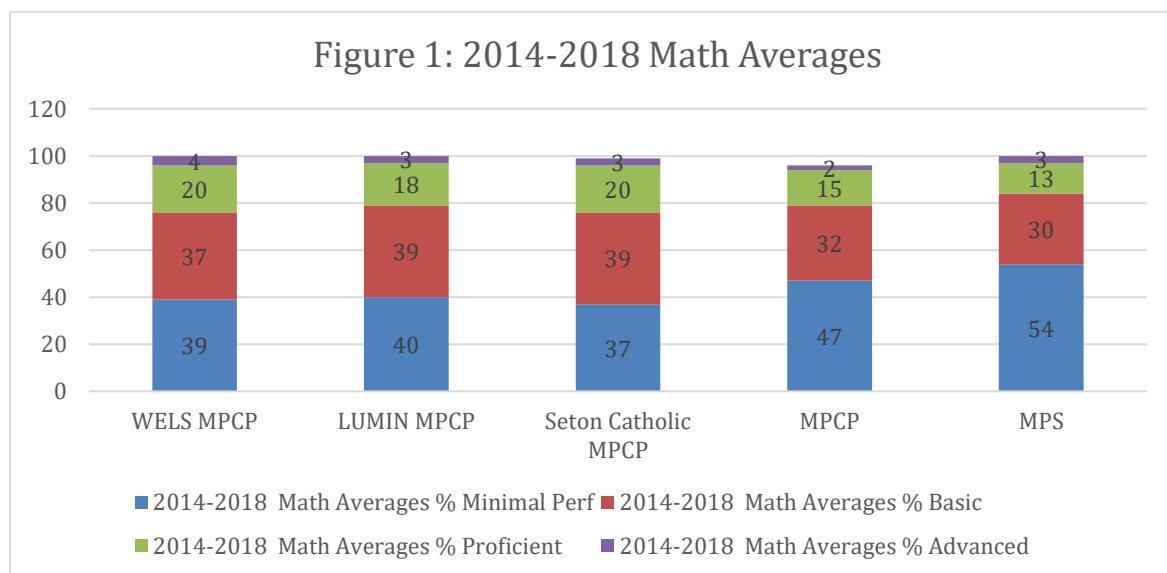


Figure 1: Average of Standardized Scores in Mathematics from 2014-2018. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. Number are reported as percentages.

Required testing of all students in MPCP schools started in 2014 in order to provide an accurate comparison between the students attending those schools and the

students attending the local public school. All students who attend a private school on a voucher are required to take the Forward Exam, Wisconsin's state assessment.

This study found that when analyzing Mathematics scores over the four-year period of 2014-2018, WELS MPCP schools tested better than their public counterparts, MPS and MPCP as a whole. Figure 1 shows that WELS MPCP schools had more students in the Basic and Proficient Performance areas and fewer students in the Minimal Performance area. While more students were scoring at the Basic and Proficient areas, it was also important to note that the number of students who scored Advanced was consistent across all groups whose data was analyzed. It is unclear as to why student achievement increased in the Basic and Proficient areas but those who scored Advanced stayed relatively the same. It is also important to note that some public-school proponents would argue that private schools do not serve the same number of special needs students, which could positively affect their test scores. It is also important to point out that the three faith-based school systems; WELS, LUMIN, and Seton Catholic all scored at relatively the same levels.

This study found that when analyzing English Language Arts scores over the four-year period of 2014-2018, WELS MPCP schools tested better than their public counterparts, MPS and MPCP as a whole. Figure 2 shows that WELS MPCP schools had more students scoring in the Basic and Proficient performance areas, while fewer students were scoring in the Minimal Performance area. WELS schools were outscored in English Language Arts by both LUMIN and Seton Catholic schools, particularly in

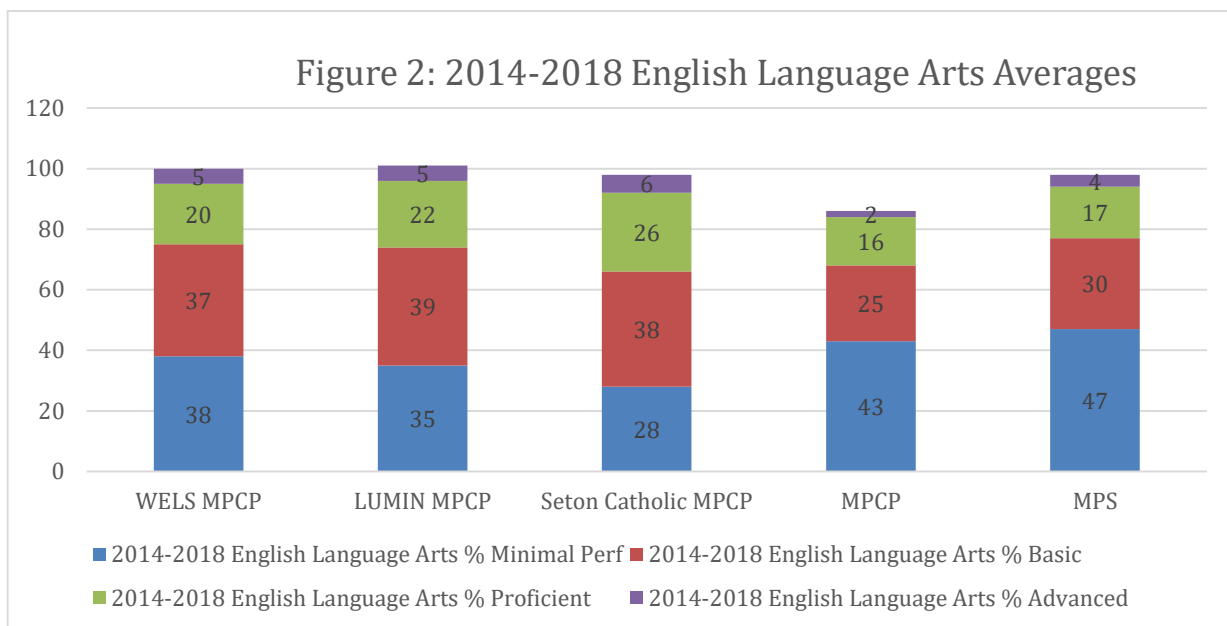


Figure 2: Average of Standardized Scores in English Language Arts from 2014-2018. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. Numbers are reported as percentages.

the Basic and Proficient testing areas. It is again important to note that the faith-based schools analyzed in this study all scored at relatively the same levels.

The averages over a four-year period, 2014-2018, show that a significant gap of 5-15% more students in WELS MPCP schools are scoring at the Basic and Proficient levels when compared with MPCP as a whole, or MPS. Is this gap narrowing or widening?

During the first year of required testing, 2014-2015, the differences of students' scores between WELS MPCP and MPCP, MPS schools were significant. Students in WELS MPCP schools scored in the Basic and Proficient performance bands at a rate of 17% higher in Math

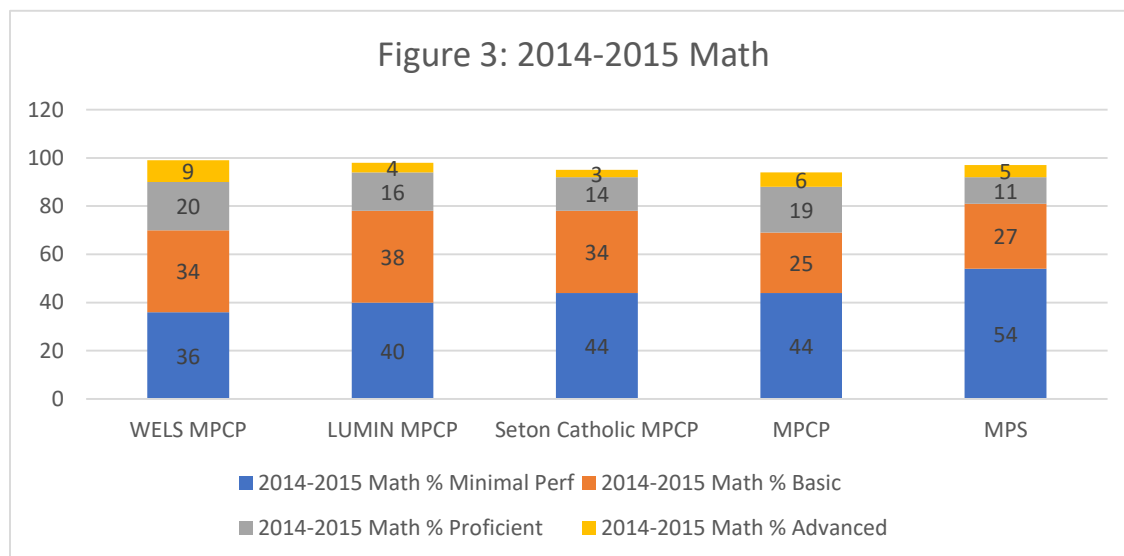


Figure 3: Average of Standardized Scores in Mathematics Arts from 2015. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. 2015 was the first year all schools were required to test. Data reported in percentages.

(Figure 3), and 8% higher in English Language Arts (Figure 4). It is important to note that across all groups examined in this study, a higher percentage of students scored in the Advanced band the first year of testing. So, does the achievement gap between

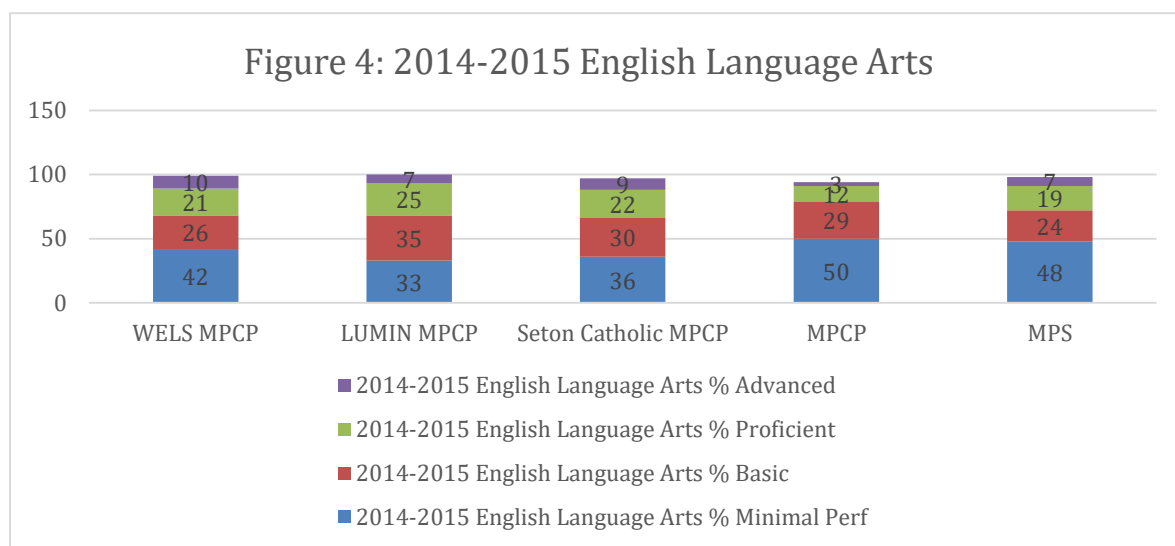


Figure 4: Average of Standardized Scores in English Language from 2015. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. 2015 was the first year all schools were required to test. Data reported in percentages.

WELS MPCP and by extension the other faith-based school systems, MPCP and MPS stay the same or continue to widen?

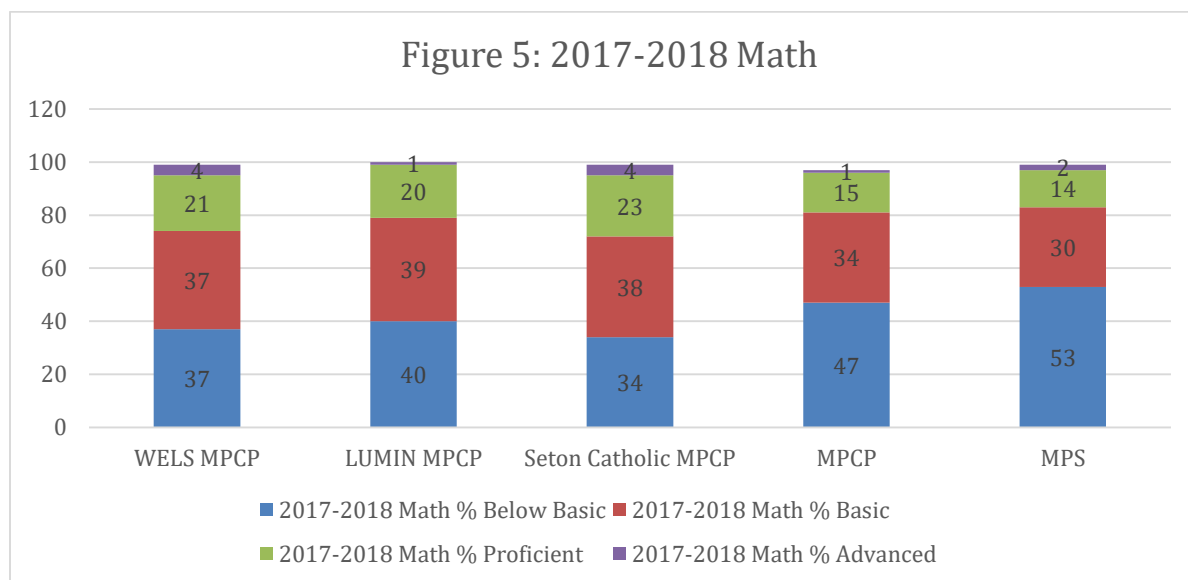


Figure 5: Average of Standardized Scores in Math from 2018. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. 2018 is the most recent data available. Data is reported as percentages.

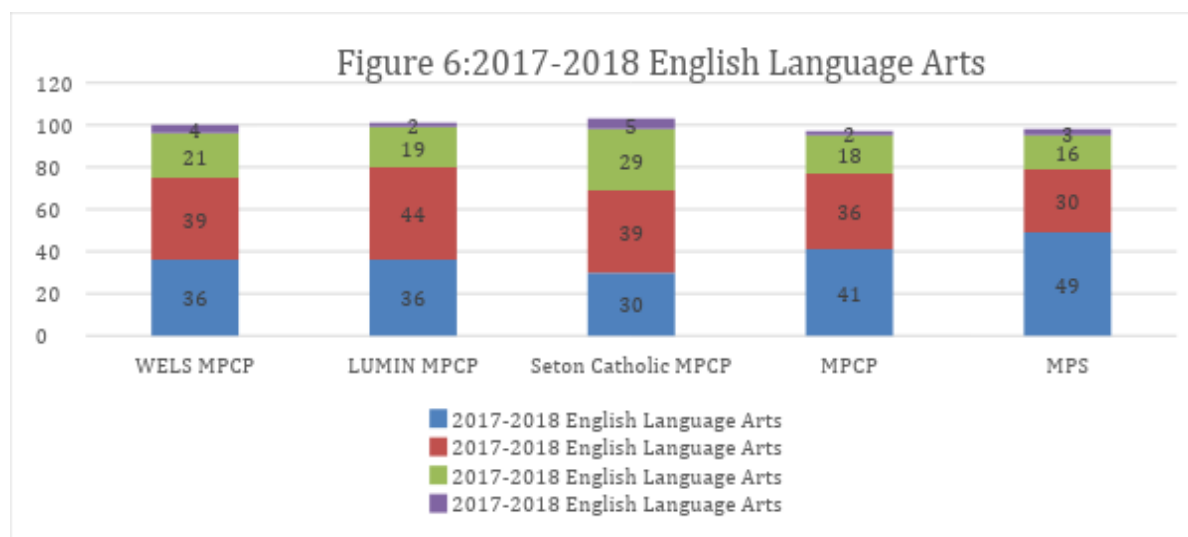


Figure 6: Average of Standardized Scores in English Language Arts from 2018. Test scores are reported by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, tests are a requirement of all students who attend a school receiving state funding. 2018 is the most recent data available. Data is reported as percentages.

In the most recently round of testing, spring of 2018, a sizeable difference is still evident. Students in WELS MPCP schools scored in the Basic and Proficient

performance bands at a rate of 13% higher in Math (Figure 5), and 14% higher in English Language Arts (Figure 6). The most recent testing shows that MPS and MPCP have closed the gap slightly in Math, but that the gap has widened in English Language Arts.

Question 2:

What are some common or underlying practices and principles implemented by these schools to enhance the quality of education that can be adapted to other educational institutions?

Are all schools that participate in MPCP successful? The data collected by this study shows that there is a wide range of success by MPCP participant schools. What makes some of these school more successful than others? Are there specific practices and principles that these schools have in common? Furthermore, could these practices and principles be adapted and implemented by other schools that are looking to begin participation in school choice programs?

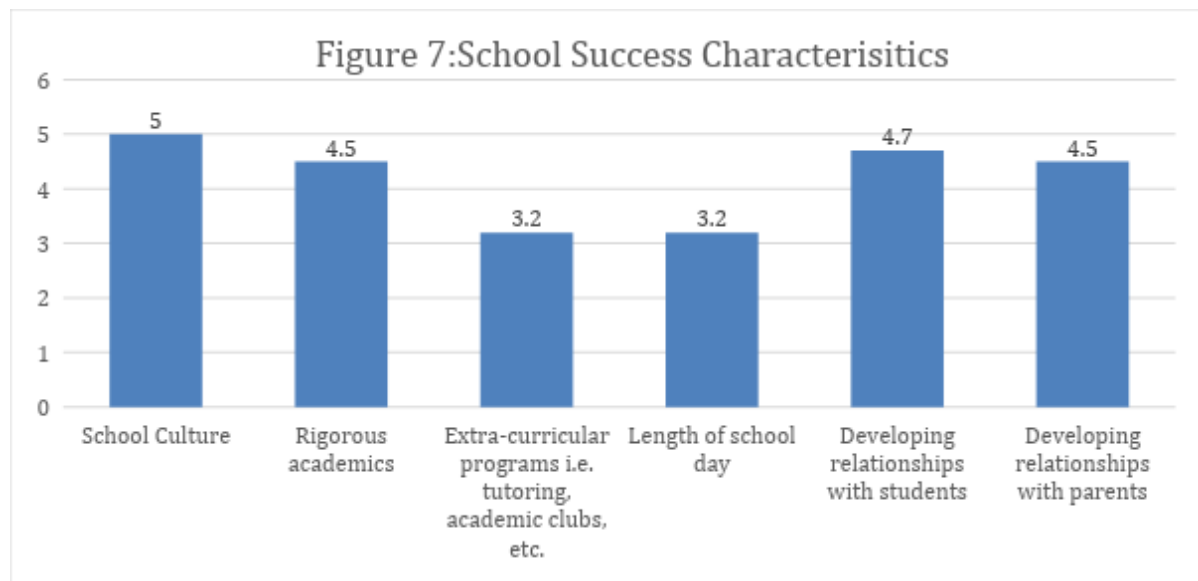


Figure 7: School Success Characteristics, adapted from Mueller (1997).

School administrators were asked to rate a number of school success characteristics based on Mueller's (1997) investigation of successful urban schools.

School administrators were also asked to provide anecdotal responses in regard to school success.

All school administrators responded that school culture was the most important characteristic to determining school success (Figure 7). What is meant by a successful school culture? How does a school go about changing their culture? Multiple school leaders specifically mentioned in their anecdotal responses the following items when related to school culture:

1. Set high expectations for both students and staff, behaviorally and academically. Hold both parties accountable for their actions.
2. Determine and teach school wide values. Initial teaching of culture at the beginning of the year, “Boot Camp”, retaught and stressed throughout the year.
3. Recognize and reward positive behavior and academics as an example to the entire body.
4. Model Christ-like love while working to achieve an appropriate balance between law and gospel.

Many of these principles align very closely with the characteristics that define a successful urban school as defined by Mueller (1997).

The second characteristic of school success that school administrators ranked most highly was rigorous academics (Figure 7). Mueller (1997) stated that for an urban school to be successful their curriculum must be rigorous and challenging, aligned to

desired academic outcomes. School leaders identified the common principles and practices:

1. Use data to drive instruction. Identify areas that students are lacking in and work to close the achievement gap.
2. Mandatory tutoring or interventions for students who fall significantly behind.
3. Align curriculum vertically with state and national standards. This allows for an improved curriculum and regular review.
4. Invest in professional development. In order to improve academic rigor, instructional time must be high quality and engaging, so teachers must be acquainted with best practices.

Further conversations by the researcher with school leaders highlighted the importance of professional development. Many of the schools involved in the study have adjusted their calendars and school day schedules to set aside additional time for professional development, diving into data, and curriculum work.

The third highly rated characteristic by school administrators was relationships with students. One of the primary ways to mitigate the effects of poverty for students is build relationships with the students (Jensen, 2009). School leaders, likewise, identified building relationships with students as a characteristic that was necessary to building school success (Figure 7). While it is always important to build relationships between teachers and students in urban settings where many home situations are troubled, the teacher may be the person that students always feel they can trust and turn to. In order to

build stronger relationships with students, school leaders identified the following practices and principles:

1. Narrate the positives. Many students hear nothing but negatives in their home lives so praising the positives is a must.
2. Retaining students within the school from year to year. When students remain in the school from year to year, it builds relationships with more than just one teacher.
3. Giving students a voice. When students feel that their opinions matter and are listened to, the relationships grow stronger.

The final characteristic that school administrators identified as being important to a successful urban school is to build relationships with parents (Figure 7). Parents are essential stakeholders in the educational process. Too often most interaction between parents and the school is negative. By strengthening the relationship between the parents and the school, we strengthen the family and improve the educational experience for all those involved. In order to improve the relationships with the parents, school leaders identified the following common practices and principles:

1. Regular communication with parents. Communicate constantly and in various ways.
2. Parent events. Regular events throughout the school year are important to educate parents in topics of interest.

3. Personal connections. Find opportunities and ways in which to make personal connections with parents and their lives. It is essential to get all faculty and staff involved, specifically school pastors.

Question 3:

In what ways has the church associated with the MPCP school seen growth; be it by attendance or membership from its relationship with the choice system?

One of the concerns when WELS churches enter into the MPCP program is how will being involved in the program affect the church? Will involvement in the program change the ministry of the church as well as the school? Many of the churches reported that their involvement with a school involved in MPCP was an extension of their mission. The mission field was walking through the door and sitting in the classrooms every day.

How has involvement in MPCP changed the church worship attendance? This study found that all the churches which responded to the survey reported an increase in attendance from 25-40% since their initial enrollment in the program. It is important to note that these increases in attendance took place over the course of many years.

How has the membership of the congregation changed as a result of involvement in MPCP? All churches who responded reported increases in membership over time when involved with MPCP. The three areas in which school choice affect membership the most was in baptisms, confirmations, and professions of faith or transfers.

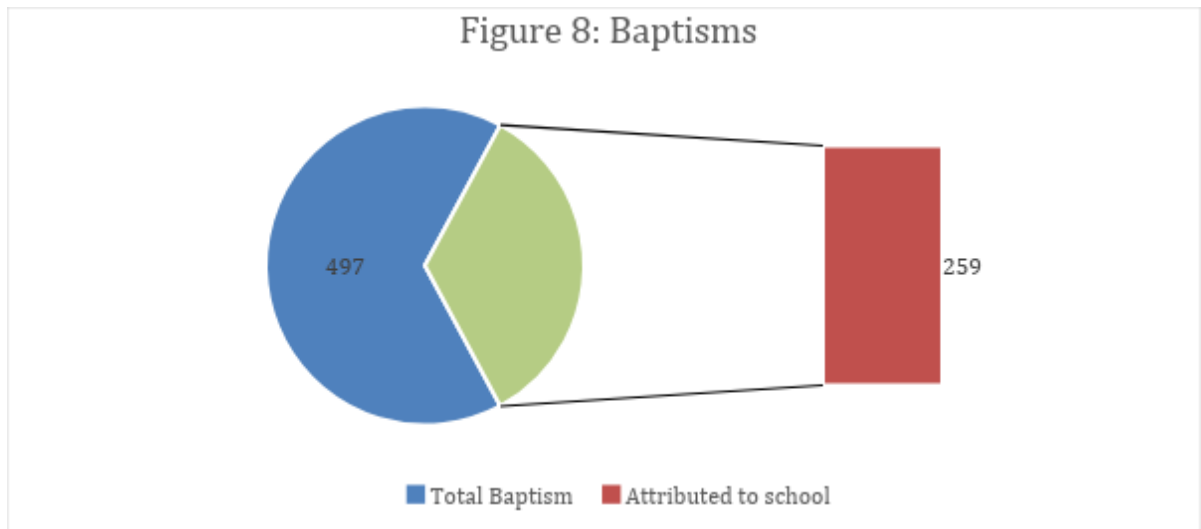


Figure 8: Total Baptisms and those attributed to the school. Data self-reported from 2015-2018.

Many children are welcomed into the family of Christ through Holy Baptism. This is the first area that has majorly impacted church membership. The percentage of total baptisms which are directly attributed to the school is 52% (Figure 8). This information does not include siblings of school children who may have also been baptized during that three-year period. Nearly 500 children were baptized. To God be the Glory!

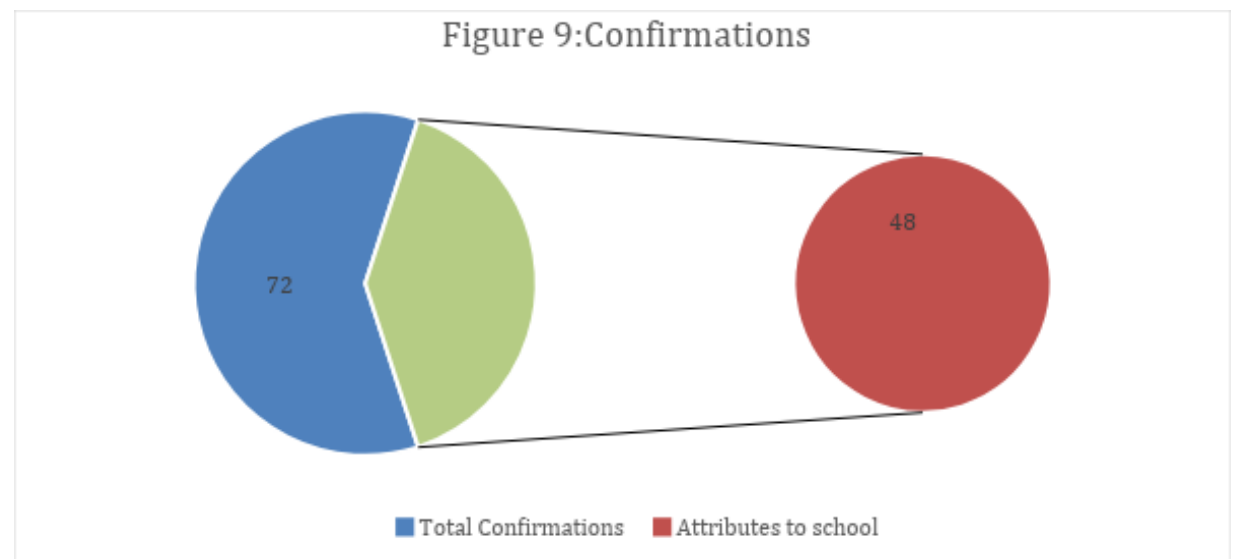


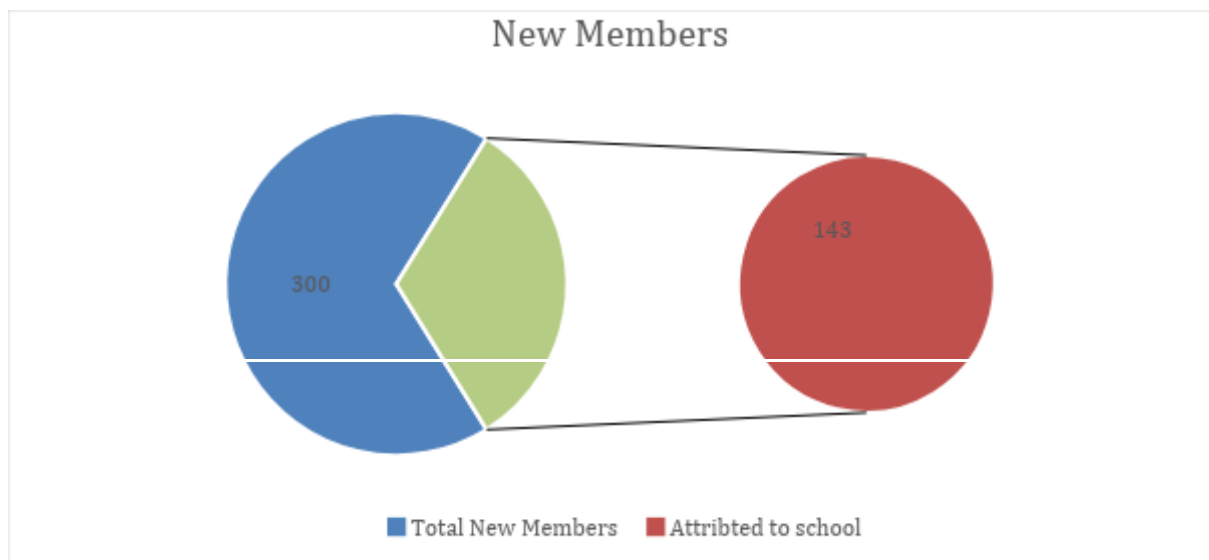
Figure 9: Total confirmations and those attributed to school. Self-reported from 2015-2018.

The second area which has impacted the growth in church membership is youth confirmation. Many of these students are choosing to go through confirmation on their own; their parents are not usually members.

This study found that 67% of all confirmations reported by the participating churches were attributed to the school (Figure 9). While this percentage of students confirmed to the total confirmation is very encouraging, the number of students who complete confirmation of those eligible was between 40-50%.

The final area which affects membership is professions of faith or transfers. Many of these professions of faith are school families who have gone through membership classes.

Of the new members who joined the participating congregations between 2015-2018 48% were attributed to the school (Figure 10).



Question 4:

How have other areas of the ministry of the congregation been enhanced, or hindered by school choice?

When a congregation and school chose to enroll in MPCP, there is an understanding that the ministry will change. The congregation prayerfully undertakes this ministry with hopes that it will enhance other areas of ministry.

The most significant area of ministry that has changed for many of the participating congregations is in wrap-around services. These are services which church provides to supplement the spiritual support that is offered. Some of these areas of ministry include counseling, food pantry, financial literacy and community engagement.

To support these new areas of ministry, many of the participating congregations have called school pastors. Seven of the nine churches that responded to the survey have added a school pastor. These pastors specifically minister to the spiritual and at times physical needs of the students and their families. The addition of staff to specifically serve the school demonstrates the congregation's desire to serve the spiritual needs of the community.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In the last 25 years, WELS schools and churches have had to prayerfully consider the decision of whether to embark on school choice. The prospect of a significant funding increase can be enticing but the limitations and ramifications that can accompany that funding may at times be unknown. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, being the oldest school choice program in the country, offers a study in the long-term effects of school choice. WELS schools have been involved in MPCP since its earliest years. The results of this study have uncovered several underlying principles and policies which congregations and schools considering school choice should carefully examine.

Summary

The impact of MPCP on WELS schools has overall been very positive. Although many of the schools and congregations may have entered into the program in order to provide financial stability and save a failing school, the mission of the congregations to reach out to the community remains the same, the means for doing so has become primarily focused on the school. This revitalized mission for many of the congregations has positively impacted the students being served both academically and spiritually.

Academic achievement

How do WELS MPCP schools compare with other MPCP schools, and similar area public schools?

This study has found that WELS MPCP schools academically score better than MPS, the area public school (Figures 1-2). The gap between WELS MPCP and MPS has been widening in Math and slightly narrowing in English Language Arts.

How do WELS MPCP schools compare with LUMIN and Seton Catholic schools? The researcher concluded that all three of the school systems score at approximately the same levels (Figures 1-2). It would seem to this researcher that having a spiritual component to the school's culture has a positive impact on the academic performance of the school's students.

Some people would argue that these scores are not in line with the rest of WELS schools. This study supports the premise that these schools do not carry out ministry in the same way as a traditional WELS school. As a result of this, WELS MPCP schools cannot be judged academically in same way as traditional WELS schools, who traditionally have smaller class sizes and are located in more affluent areas.

WELS MPCP schools are also having a positive impact on the students once they have graduated from the elementary school. The study found that 79% of all 8th grade graduates go on to attend Christian high schools. Additionally, approximately 25% of those graduates are attending Luther Preparatory School to prepare for future full-time ministry.

What are some common or underlying practices and principles implemented by these schools to enhance the quality of education that can be adapted to other educational institutions?

How are WELS, LUMIN, and Seton Catholic schools able to outperform MPS and MPCP? This study found that there were many underlying principles and practices which align to the principles of successful urban schools as laid out by Mueller (1997). It is important to note that not all of the principles were incorporated in the same ways by all schools, and that all of the practices carried different weights. This study found the following underlying principles as essential to successful urban education:

- Set high expectations for both students and staff, behaviorally and academically.
- Determine and teach school wide values.
- Recognize and reward positive behavior and academics as an example to the entire body.
- Model Christlike love while working to achieve an appropriate balance between law and gospel.
- Use data to drive instruction. Identify areas that students are lacking in and work to close the achievement gap.
- Mandatory tutoring or interventions for students who fall significantly behind.
- Alignment curriculum vertically and with state and national standards. This allows for an improved curriculum and regular review.
- Invest in professional development. In order to improve academic rigor, instructional time must be high quality and engaging. Teachers must be acquainted with the best practices.

- Narrate the positives. Many students hear nothing but negatives in their home lives so praising the positives is a must.
- Retaining students within the school from year to year. When students remain in the school from year to year, it builds relationships with more than just one teacher.
- Giving students a voice. When students feel that their opinions matter and are listen to, the relationships grow stronger.
- Regular communication with parents. Communicate constantly and in various ways.
- Parent events. Regular events throughout the school year educate parents on topics of interest.
- Personal connections. Find opportunities and ways in which to make personal connections with parents and their lives. It is essential to get all faculty and staff involved, specifically school pastors.

WELS MPCP, LUMIN, and Seton schools identified these practices taking place in their schools throughout the year and in various ways. These practices and principles can improve the culture and atmosphere of all schools, not just those in urban settings.

Spiritual Growth

In what ways has the church associated with the MPCP school seen growth; be it by attendance or membership from its relationship with the choice system?

All of the churches associated with an MPCP have seen growth in various ways. In all cases the attendance and membership have grown. The attendance growth for most of the churches is predicated on the number of years that church and school has been

conducting this type of ministry. The longer a church has been in the program, the more their attendance has grown.

Several pastors responded that involvement in MPCP has changed the diversity of their congregation. The communities around many of these congregations are changing and the demographics of the congregation have changed as well.

How have other areas of the ministry of the congregation been enhanced, or hindered by school choice?

Many of the partner congregations expressed that their ministry has changed as a result of school choice. When asked what that meant, one pastor explained that the way in which they focus their ministry has changed. They are now more mission focused, looking at the school children who are coming into the building as the primary mission field.

With the change in ministry focus to using the school as the primary outreach focus, many WELS MPCP schools have added additional staff to focus specifically on reaching these young souls and their families. Sixty percent of the congregations who responded to the survey have added staff, whether a school pastor or staff minister with a focus of working with the school children and their families.

Two other specific areas in which congregations have seen growth are in support or wrap-around services. These are areas in which the congregations can address the needs not only of the students but of the families as a whole. Examples of support services include food pantry, counseling, financial literacy and parenting classes.

Conclusions

The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program has been a great blessing for the WELS schools who have chosen to participate. While the reasons as to why schools have joined the program vary, the goal is the same, to provide high quality academic instruction to the children who enroll and reach out to those children and families with the saving message of Christ crucified.

While MPCP does bring some additional regulations, those regulations do not create significant problems or challenges for most schools. The end results for the students, parents, schools, and congregations has been largely positive.

Does MPCP positively benefit the students that are being served? In general, some would say that the academic benefits that the program provides are negligible. When taking MPCP schools as a whole, the academic difference from the local public schools is small. Yet WELS schools are making a difference.

WELS schools have been shown to provide a superior academic education to other choice schools and their public counterparts. But the reasons for providing this education is about so much more than just academics. The work of WELS schools has eternal ramifications. MCPc has open up the opportunities for reach more children and family with the gospel, to provide them Means of Grace, and give the Holy Spirit an avenue to work in the hearts of every child and family. WELS schools continue to prepare students and their families for this life and eternity. Thank God for the wonderful work of these schools.

Recommendations

Will MPCP continue to provide funding for schools into the future? With the changing political climate in Wisconsin, nothing is certain. If the funding were to cease, would these schools be able to continue to provide the exemplary education that they currently do? With the ever-changing arena of education, WELS schools should use every opportunity to improve the academic and spiritual lives of their students as long as opportunities are still available.

It is the hope of this study that other WELS school and congregation leaders can take some of the information within and use it to propel their ministry forward.

Recommendation #1

The hard work is worth the eternal results. Do not be afraid to take a leap of faith. When school and congregational leaders are debating whether they should enter into a school choice program, they need to understand two things. The first is that school choice, specifically in MPCP, makes ministry more difficult. It is hard work to undertake a change in ministry focus but remember that souls are at stake. It is hard work to undertake working with the difficult students but those are the students who need to hear the saving message of the Savior the most. Most importantly, WELS school and congregational leaders need to stay focused on their mission and purpose of their school to reach out to the lost.

Recommendation #2

It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. For WELS schools considering MPCP or other school choice programs, there are many resources out there. Successful urban schools, successful schools in general, are willing to open their doors, their classrooms,

and be a wealth of resources for their peers. Look not only within the WELS circles but outside of it as well. There are principles and practices which you can use and will be beneficial in other schools and classrooms. Most of these schools and congregations are ready and willing to share.

Learning from other successful schools does carry a warning. Principles and practices which work at one school cannot just be plugged in at another campus and change the school's culture. Each ministry is unique and has its own unique needs. There is no such thing as a one size-fits-all approach.

Recommendation #3

Set high but realistic expectations for students, staff, and parents. Successful WELS urban schools realize that they are not dealing with traditional WELS families and students. It is necessary to set expectations which will aid students in their academic and spiritual growth. Without these types of expectations failure is imminent.

Concluding Recommendation: The field is ripe for the harvest

This study has shown that school choice, specifically the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, has had very positive effects, both academically and spiritually, on the students being served. This researcher recommends that all WELS school and congregational leaders take the lessons learned from the 20 + years of WELS participation in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. Specifically, all schools should work to establish cultures of high accountability and high expectations. Public school systems in many situations are broken and parents are looking for other educational opportunities for their students. Parents are looking for high quality education which

WELS schools readily offer. These schools not only offer high quality academics but offer the message of Christ-crucified.

MPCP, and other school choice programs offer schools and congregations the opportunity to bring the mission field into their buildings every day. WELS schools offer those students high quality education and help them grow academically. WELS schools offer those students Christ-crucified and help them grow spiritually. Souls are at stake. The field is ripe for the harvest. Take every opportunity to reach that mission field.

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Appendix**Appendix A: School Administrator Survey Questions**

1. Name of School
2. Your Name
3. Position
4. How long has your school been involved in the MPCP program?
5. What percentage of your students are members?
6. What was your PRK-8 enrollment the year before you began the program?
7. What is your current PRK-8 enrollment?
8. How has your school's enrollment changed as a result of the MPCP program?
(categorical responses- increased, decreased, stayed the same)
9. How has MPCP changed your school?
10. How many of your graduates in the last 3 years have gone on to Christian high school?
11. What percentage of all graduates are attending Christian high schools?
12. Please rate the importance of the following items to your school's success
(1-5) 1=no importance 5=high importance
 - a. School culture
 - b. Rigorous academics
 - c. Extra-curricular programs i.e. tutoring, academic clubs, athletics, etc.
 - d. Length of school day
 - e. Developing relationships with students
 - f. Developing relationships with parents
10. Please explain 3 things your school does to strengthen school culture.

11. Please explain 3 things your school does to increase the rigor in academics.
12. Please explain 3 things your school does to develop relationships with students.
13. Please explain 3 things your school does to develop relationships with parents.
14. Please list and explain at least 3 characteristics which are important for the success of WELS schools in the MPCP.
15. Identify specific blessings in your school or congregation because of schools choice:
16. Please describe the process of transitioning to becoming an MPCP school, if known, this information is important ascertain the school's time spent in instituting tenants of successful urban education.
17. Would you be willing to sit down face to face if I would like to seek additional input or clarification? Is so, please provide contact name and email address.
18. Additional comments or insights.
19. Would you like to receive the results of this study?

Appendix B: Pastor Survey Questions

1. Name of Church
2. Your Name
3. When did your church and school start their partnership with MPCP?
4. Describe the process of transitioning to becoming a MPCP school, if known.
5. What was the congregation's initial response to participating in MPCP, if known?
6. What is the congregation's response to participating in MPCP now?
7. If there has been a change in the congregation's response to the program to what do you attribute that?
8. What was the average weekly church attendance prior to your church and school partnering with MPCP?
9. What is the average weekly church attendance currently?
10. How has your weekly church attendance changed as a result of the MPCP program? (categorical responses- increased, decreased, stayed the same)
11. How many baptisms has your church had in the last 3 years?
12. How many of those baptisms, students and families can be attributed directly to the school because of the MPCP program?
13. What percentage of your student body is baptized?
14. How many youth confirmations has your church had in the last 3 years?
15. How many of those youth confirmations can you attribute to students attending your school because of the MPCP program?
16. What percentage of eligible students were confirmed?

17. How many new members has your church welcomed in the past 3 years?
(adult confirmation, transfer, or profession of faith included)
18. How many of those members can be attributed directly to the school?
19. What other opportunities do you offer to minister to school families? ie.)
parenting classes, other events.
20. How many Means of Grace opportunities has your ministry had with school
families in the last year? (ie. visits, counseling, contacts, etc.)
21. Identify specific blessings in your congregation because of school choice
 - More ministry opportunities
 - Improved financial stability
 - Improved congregational culture and climate
 - More diverse membership
 - More outreach opportunities.
22. Please list and describe at least 3 ways in which your ministry has changed as a
result of partnership with MPCP.
23. Please explain how your congregation remains involved in school activities.
24. Would you be willing to sit down face to face if I would like to seek additional
input or clarification? Is so, please provide contact name and email address
25. Additional comments or insights
26. Would you like to receive the results of this study?

Appendix C: Testing Data Analysis Categories

The researcher will gather the publicly published testing data from the Wisconsin Department of Education. The Wisconsin Department of Education publishes a school-wide averages based on the testing data collected. The specific data analyzed will be the schools average scores in Math and Reading. The researched will compile the data in order to ascertain yearly averages for WELS MPCP schools, LUMIN schools, Seton Catholic schools, and Milwaukee Public Schools. These average test scores will then be compared.

1. Overall school wide average Reading test score
 - a. School Year 2014-2015
 - b. School Year 2015-2016
 - c. School Year 2016-2017
 - d. School Year 2017-2018
2. Overall School wide average Math Test scores
 - a. School Year 2014-2015
 - b. School Year 2015-2016
 - c. School Year 2016-2017
 - d. School Year 2017-2018
3. Comparative Average Math and Reading Test Scores
 - a. School Year 2014-2015
 - b. School Year 2015-2016
 - c. School Year 2016-2017
 - d. School Year 2017-2018

Appendix D: Letter of Invitation to School Administrators

Dear WELS School Leader,

My name and Daniel Johnson and I currently serve as middle school ELA teacher and technology director at Mt. Lebanon Lutheran School in Milwaukee, WI. I am completing my studies at Martin Luther College Master of Science in Instruction program and am in the process of completing the research for my thesis project. I am writing to you to seek your help and knowledge for a study that could benefit WELS schools.

I am researching the WELS schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and their effects on the students academic and spiritual growth. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program has been around for approximately 30 years and is continuing to shape the educational scene in Milwaukee. The practices and procedures of WELS schools participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program could be of great benefit to other WELS schools contemplating becoming involved in school choice programs.

I would greatly appreciate you taking 20-25 minutes to respond to the Google form survey in the link shown below. **Receiving your response is crucial to collecting sufficient data on the ministries involved.** All information will be reported anonymously, identifying information in the survey is only used to assure that specific ministries are accurately represented. I will be more than happy to share the results of my study with you when it is completed.

Thank you so very much for taking the time to help me and to provide important information for other WELS school leaders.

Link to Google Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/ua8S4pmytmpdGuRM2>

Continued blessings in your work,

Daniel Johnson

Appendix E: Letter of Invitation to Partner Churches

Dear WELS Church Leader,

My name and Daniel Johnson and I currently serve as middle school ELA teacher and technology director at Mt. Lebanon Lutheran School in Milwaukee, WI. I am completing my studies at Martin Luther College Master of Science in Instruction program and am in the process of completing the research for my thesis project. I am writing to you to seek your help and knowledge for a study that could benefit WELS schools.

I am researching the WELS schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and their effects on the students' academic and spiritual growth. Additionally I am investigating how school choice has affected the partner churches. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program has been around for approximately 30 years and is continuing to shape the educational scene in Milwaukee. The practices and procedures of WELS churches partnering with schools participating in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program could be of great benefit to other WELS ministries contemplating becoming involved in school choice programs.

I would greatly appreciate you taking 20-25 minutes to respond to the Google form survey in the link shown below. **Receiving your response is crucial to collecting sufficient data on the ministries involved.** All information will be reported anonymously, identifying information in the survey is only used to assure that specific ministries are accurately represented. I will be more than happy to share the results of my study with you when it is completed.

Thank you so very much for taking the time to help me and to provide important information for other WELS school leaders.

Link to Google Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/RMvSR81f4LkQhvBt1>

Continued blessings in your work,

Daniel Johnson