

The Changing Demographics of WELS Schools

by

Nathan J. Reich

Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Science in Educational Administration -

Principal Emphasis

Graduate Studies

Martin Luther College

New Ulm, MN

July 2021

Signature Page

Date:

This thesis paper has been examined and approved.

Review Committee:

Dr. John Meyer, Chair

Dr. Jason Lowrey

Dr. Kari Munte

Approved:

Dr. John Meyer
Director of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Those who have been in the field of education for more than a few years recognize that students are changing. Diversity, cultural backgrounds, and learning challenges among students seem more prevalent in many classrooms. Diversity is a blessing, but it presents challenges to teachers. This study sought to find out if WELS schools are facing similar cultural changes that public schools are facing. Surveys were sent to all WELS school leaders in order to gather data on demographic information and to see how school leaders are responding to those changes. A response rate of 12.5% was received. The returned surveys indicate that while many WELS schools are experiencing some demographic changes, primarily in the area of culture and family background, these changes constitute a small percentage of the entire student population. With such a low response rate, this survey gives a glimpse into changes in WELS schools but is not a complete picture.

Acknowledgments

I am thankful for this opportunity to expand my knowledge in the area of educational administration. As a young principal, this program taught me many valuable skills as I serve a Lutheran school.

I am thankful to my thesis committee for their comments, suggestions, and support through this process. A special thanks to Dr. John Meyer for the quick responses to my numerous emails and questions as I figured out how to conduct this research. I would not have been able to complete this process without the support of my team.

Thank you to the faculty, Board of Christian Education, and council at St. Paul Lutheran, Green Bay, for their continual encouragement over the five years I worked on my degree.

I am grateful for all the support from my family and friends as I worked on my degree. I would not have been able to complete this degree without your support. Finally, a special thank you to two close friends, Justin Liepert and Newlin Schafer, for your proofreading and suggestions on this final project.

To God be the glory!

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
List of Figures	7
Chapter I: Introduction	8
Problem Statement	8
Purpose of the Study	9
Research Questions	10
Definition of Terms	10
Assumptions and Limitations of the Study	11
Overview	11
Chapter II: Literature Review	12
Racial Diversity	12
Race, Poverty, and Education	13
Religious Affiliation	16
Family Structure	17
Challenges in Education	20
Embracing Diversity	23
Conclusion	28
Chapter III: Methodology	30
Introduction	30
Research Question(s)	30
Research Design and Procedures	30
Population and Sample	32
Instrumentation and Data Analysis	35
Limitations	36
Summary	37
Chapter IV: Results	38
Introduction	38
Research Question 1	39
Research Question 2	50
Research Question 3	52
Summary	56
Chapter V: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations	59
Introduction	59
Summary of the Results	57
Conclusion	61
Recommendations	61
References	67

Appendix A: Introduction Letter	74
Appendix B: Principal and Director Survey	75
Appendix C: Open-Ended Question Response 1	80
Appendix D: Open-Ended Question Response 2	84
Appendix E: Open-Ended Question Response 3	88
Appendix F: Open-Ended Question Response 4	92
Appendix G: Open-Ended Question Response 5	97

List of Figures

Figure 1: 2020-2021 total school enrollment.	33
Figure 2: Grades offered at survey schools.	33
Figure 3: Age of responding schools.	34
Figure 4: Enrollment trends in responding schools.	34
Figure 5: Enrollment of responding schools and total enrollment of WELS schools in 2020.	36
Figure 6: Percent of total enrollment classified as ethnic minority.	40
Figure 7: Percent of school staff classified as ethnic minority.	40
Figure 8: Location of responding schools.	41
Figure 9: Population trends of responding schools' communities.	42
Figure 10: Racial makeup of the student body and the school's greater community.	43
Figure 11: Cross tabulation of racial ethnicity changes in schools and communities.	44
Figure 12: Church membership of students over twenty years.	45
Figure 13: Family structure of WELS students over twenty years.	46
Figure 14: Living arrangements for students not living in married Two-parent household.	47
Figure 15: Comparison of community educational attainment and poverty in WELS schools.	48
Figure 16: Percentage of students with an IEP.	51
Figure 17: Percentage of faculties participating in culturally relevant pedagogy training.	53
Figure 18: Average number of children of the families in WELS schools.	60

Chapter I: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The year 2020 A.D. was a year that will not soon be forgotten. Regardless of all the unforeseen events that occurred throughout the world that year, one event remained as scheduled, the decennial task known as the United States census. The census gives Americans an official picture of who we are as a nation. As details from the 2020 census are released, it will come as no surprise to most Americans that the demographics of this country are changing. One census statistic that is dramatically changing is the racial makeup of the United States. According to the United States Census Bureau, 1960, 88.6% of the United States population at that time was White (2018). By 2010, the White population fell to 72% (US Census Bureau Public Information Office, 2011). If this trend continues, within a few decades, there will be no single majority race in the United States.

Race is just one aspect of the changing demographics in the United States. Fewer people seem to be living the “traditional lifestyle” that was showcased and caricatured by classic TV shows such as *Father Knows Best*, and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*. More people than ever before are pushing off marriage to later in life, or not getting married at all (Barroso et. al. 2020). Cohabitation is gaining popularity among all different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds (Horowitz & Livingston, 2019). A greater percentage of households have two working parents, meaning that more children than ever are in child care centers or other day care facilities (Pew Research Center, 2015). Teachers and school staff see how children in 2020 have different backgrounds

than those growing up just a generation ago. These changing demographics mean that a greater percentage of students in schools have different childhood experiences than those most teachers experienced in youth (Maxwell, 2020). Since most people are able to relate better with people of similar backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs, the current changing reality presents a real and looming challenge for educators.

The makeup of people living in the United States is more diverse than any other time in history (Craig & Richeson, 2018). American schools are at the forefront of this change as the percent of students living in poverty is increasing and the percentage of White students is decreasing (Kaplin & Owings, 2013). While public schools as a whole in the country are changing, are Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) schools changing at a similar rate? Are the students in WELS schools a good representation of the changing racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographics of the United States? When Jesus ascended into heaven, he commanded all Christians to go into the whole world and preach the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28). Throughout the WELS, many congregations have established Lutheran schools in order to carry out this mission. In order to carry out this mission well, principals and teachers must be prepared to not only witness to students of different cultures and backgrounds, but they must also be able to provide a quality academic education in an environment that will best meet the needs of a variety of students.

Purpose of the Study

In order to effectively spread the gospel, it is important for Christians to understand with whom they are sharing the gospel. By understanding the racial, cultural,

and socio-economic backgrounds of the students in its schools, WELS teachers will be better equipped to share the gospel message. The goal of this research is to identify the backgrounds of the students attending WELS schools, compare the demographics of WELS school students to that of public school students, and discover the knowledge, implementation, and practice of culturally relevant pedagogy throughout WELS schools. Identifying the changing backgrounds of the students in WELS schools will allow teachers and school leaders to recognize the challenges faced by schools with a more diverse student population. As a result of this contextualization, teachers and school leaders will respond by better educating themselves on how to educate diverse student populations.

Research Questions

1. How does the racial, cultural, and socio-economic status of students in WELS schools compare to the national population?
2. What pedagogical challenges are WELS schools facing as student populations become more diverse?
3. How are WELS schools adapting to national racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographic changes?

Definition of Terms

Culturally Responsive - the importance of including students' cultural references in teaching.

Pedagogical - related to theory, methods, and practice of teaching. In this study, the term relates specifically to the education of non-traditional students.

WELS - refers to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

Emails to participate in this study were sent to all WELS school leaders from early childhood through high school. A low return rate means that the data might not be the most accurate reflection of the state of diversity in WELS schools.

Educating students of diverse backgrounds, both ethnically and socio-economically, is a topic with which not all school leaders will be familiar. Many might not understand how to best answer some of the questions. The multiple-choice questions will ask leaders to provide data about their student body and the community. This might be information that is not readily available to all participants.

Overview

Chapter two of this study is the literature review. This review examines statistical information about changing racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographics in the United States. Part of the review consists of educational challenges and changes in response to changing demographics. Chapter three is the description of how the study was designed and conducted. Chapter four is the results of the study, and chapter five consists of the summary of the study and recommendations.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Racial Diversity

The United States, as a whole, has seen dramatic social, economic, and, probably most visibly, racial and ethnic change over the last few decades (Cilluffo & Cohn, 2019). Except for people of Native American descent, most others in the United States came from different countries or had ancestors that did. For much of its first two-hundred years as a country, the majority of people living in the United States were of European descent (Georgetown Law Library, 2020). In the very first United States census in 1790, 80.1% of the total population was listed as White (Gibson, C., & Jung, K., 2002). As recently as the 1980 census, around the time that many of the longest tenured educators in the country first started teaching, 83% of the people living in the United States were classified as White (Gibson, C., & Jung, K., 2002). The report by Gibson and Jung show that during the first two centuries of the United States, the White population hovered around 80%. The 21st century, though, has ushered in new changes to population statistics. By the 2010 census, the White population had dropped to 72.4% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

At the time of this writing, the final counts have not yet been released, but, according to the non-profit Population Reference Bureau, for the decade after 2010, the Black population increased by about 10%, the Hispanic or Latino population increased by about 23%, the Asian population increased by about 32%, and the population classified as two or more races increased by about 36% (Population Reference Bureau, 2020). At the same time, the White population increased by about 1%.

The United States Census Bureau, which consistently tracks demographic changes, predicts that by 2060, the non-Hispanic White population will be less than 50 percent of the total United States population (Vespa et al., 2020). This change will occur because of an aging non-Hispanic White population, fewer non-Hispanic White births, and a steady continuation of international migration. Already, this change of fewer non-Hispanic Whites and an increase in minority ethnic groups is presenting itself in American classrooms with a change that will continue in future decades (Population Reference Bureau, 2020). Do WELS schools reflect these demographic changes? If not, why is that?

Race, Poverty, and Education

The relationship between income level and education achievement is frequently researched and tracked by those in higher education and government agencies. Education economist Helen Ladd (2012) detailed the correlation of lower-income households and lower test scores with the correlation of racial minority students and lower test scores. This study noted that as the poverty rate of a state increases, the reading and math standardized test scores of students in 4th and 8th grades decrease. Poverty is prevalent in many communities throughout the country. With over 50% of all students in American public schools participating in the federal free or reduced lunch program, there are many students at risk of academically struggling (Superville, 2019).

Years of research shows that there seems to be a continuous generational cycle of poverty and lower educational achievement. Hernandez (2011) concluded that 22% of children whose families have experienced poverty do not graduate from high school. A

University of California at Davis study found that when the head of a household does not have a high school diploma, slightly over 30% of said households live below the poverty line. In comparison, when the head of the household has at least a high school diploma, only around 9% of those homes live below the poverty line (Hoynes et al., 2006).

The correlation is strong between poverty and educational achievement.

Thankfully, the United States continues to see a decline in the number of high school dropouts. From 2000 to 2019, the percentage of adolescents living in the United States completing high school increased from 88% to 94% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). While this increase is not substantial, it shows that for the past generation, earning a high school diploma was part of the typical American experience. This is an even greater increase from a few generations ago when in 1950 only around 50% of people earned a high school diploma (Goldin, 1998). A similar trend can be seen in the number of people graduating from postsecondary educational institutions. In 1940, only around 5% of the American population graduated from postsecondary educational institutions (Ryan & Bauman, 2016). Today, postsecondary educational attainment for people living in America is around 41% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b). The trend of a greater percentage of Americans completing higher education will continue to positively impact the country and society.

Higher graduation rates from high school and postsecondary educational institutions is often viewed as a sign of progress for the United States. When digging deeper into graduation statistics, it is clear that there are differences in graduation attainment in the percentages of those in racial minority groups and non-Hispanic Whites.

In their report, Ryan and Bauman (2016) noted that the White, non-Hispanic population is similar to all the national averages with around 93% completing high school and 40% earning a bachelor's degree. Eighty-nine percent of the Asian population completes high school and around 50% earn a bachelor's degree. These percentages decrease for those classified as Black and Hispanic with 87% of Blacks earning a high school diploma and only 67% of Hispanics. Their numbers drop significantly when it comes to college as fewer than 20% of Blacks and Hispanics earn a bachelor's degree.

While there are still differences between the percentage of Whites and minorities who graduate from high school and higher education, the makeup of the children enrolled in American public schools, especially in the elementary grades, shows that those differences will likely change. In 2014, for the first time in history, the nation's public schools became 'majority-minority' schools, with minority race students outnumbering White students (Krogstad & Fry, 2014). The Department of Education predicts that by 2022, only 45.3% of students in public schools will be White, a noticeable decrease from 63.4% in 1997. Public schools are enrolling more minority students, but in the same Department of Education report, Krogstad and Fry (2014) reported that in private schools, 73% of the 4.7 million students enrolled are non-Hispanic White.

Lower educational attainment rates among ethnic minority students circle back to poverty. According to a report released by the Brookings Institution, the poverty rate in the United States in 2018 was at 11.8% (Bauer et al., 2019). While decreasing poverty is positive, 31% of those in poverty are those under the age of 18. Furthermore, children of a minority culture have a greater chance of being impoverished. Almost 31% of Black

children and 27% of Hispanic children grow up in poverty even though poverty rates for minority children have declined over the last 40 years (Wilson & Schieder, 2018).

Religious Affiliation

Debate continues over whether the United States was founded as a Christian nation or not (Fea, 2013). While the debate about the influence of Christianity in the formation of the government continues, most historians will agree that Christianity was a major influence in the lives of most citizens for many years. That, however, is quickly changing.

In a 2019 study, the Pew Research Center notes that the religious landscape of America continues to “change at a rapid clip.” (Pew Forum, 2019). From 2007 to 2018, the number of people who identified as Christian declined from 78% to 65%. At the same time, the number of people who identified as religiously unaffiliated, the so-called ‘nones’, increased from 16% to 26%. The percentage of adults who reported attending a religious service at least once a month decreased from 54% to 45%. Of those in the ‘nones’ group, around half were raised in religion (Lipka, 2016). Lack of belief, skepticism, is the number one reason these ‘nones’ have left religion, claiming a stronger belief in science, dissatisfaction with organized religion, political influence, and claiming to be spiritual but not religious and other factors for becoming non-religious (Lipka, 2016; Vargas 2012).

Further study about those leaving Christianity, the Pew Research Center (2019) found that only 49% of Millennials, the generation born between 1981 and 1996, claim to be Christian. Forty percent of Millennials claim to follow no religion. Additionally, almost

half of children today are being raised by at least one parent who is not religious.

Consequently, a fair share of this new generation will be raised without any religion in their life. Regardless of the debate of its founding, the United States is quickly becoming a more secular country and shedding any strong connection with Christianity.

Family Structure

Over the last few generations, family structure in America has seen substantial change. One of the most noticeable changes is in the percentage of young adults who are married. In a study about married couples, the United States Census Bureau found that in 1950, in the age category of 20-34 year olds, 54.8% of males were listed as married and 68.0% of females were listed as married, but by 2010, the percentages in that age range changed to 30.8% of males and 39.2% of females (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Fewer young adults entering marriage correlates to a significant rise in the average age for marriage. According to a 2019 report by the United States Census Bureau in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce, the average marrying age for males rose from around age 23 in 1950 to almost age 30 in 2019, while the average age of marriage for females in the same time period rose from age 20 to 28 (United States Census Bureau & U.S. Department of Commerce, 2019).

While younger adults might be pushing off marriage, it does not mean they are not in relationships and having children. The number of unmarried couples living together has risen dramatically over the last fifty years from 0.2% of couples, ages 25 to 34, in 1968 to 14.8% of couples in 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). This rise in the number of cohabiting couples means that the number of children born to unmarried

parents is on the rise. An independent study published by Yale University in 2017 found that from 1964 to 2014, the number of Black children born in America to unmarried mothers rose from about 25% to slightly over 70% (Chamie, 2017). This study also noted that in the same time period, the numbers of non-Hispanic White children born to unmarried mothers rose from below 5% to around 30%. Having children out of wedlock seems no longer to be taboo in many cultures and societies. Views on sexual activity outside of marriage are more liberal. Many consider it normal for couples to live together outside of marriage and have children before marriage. Some couples will spend decades in a relationship but will never legally marry (Musick, 2007).

As views about traditional marriage have changed and society has become more accepting of unwed and single parents, society has also become more accepting of LGBTQ relationships. Media, both news media and social media, is full of stories about the LGBTQ community. TV shows and movies are showcasing more same-sex couples (Griffin, 2016). There is a push in society to accept alternative lifestyles, and while homosexual relationships are more common today than in years past, these relationships still account for a small percentage of relationships in society. According to a study conducted by the United States Census Bureau and published in 2018, there were about a million same-sex couple households in the United States, or about 0.8% of all U.S. households (U.S. Census Bureau & Taylor, 2019). Though this statistic is not high, compared to previous generations, same-sex lifestyles is widely accepted.

Another significant change in the family dynamic deals with familial income. Within the family, having one working parent, often the father, and one parent staying at

home, often the mother, is no longer the norm. In 1948, just a few years after World War II and the beginning of the baby boom, women accounted for only 32.7% of the workforce (DeWolf, 2017). By 2020, 64.2% of households in the United States had both parents employed outside of the home (U.S. Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). More households having two incomes mean that more households rely on childcare. A report conducted for the Center for American Progress found that middle-class wages have struggled to keep up with the rate of inflation while housing, education, health care, and child care have risen faster than inflation. This results in low income families often spending about 35% of their income on child-care. Ideally, families would spend about 7% on childcare (Malik, 2019).

Finally, one of the most noticeable changes in the family structure is the size of the family. In a recent report published by the National Center for Health Statistics, data found that there were 3,745,540 births in the United States in 2019, down one percent from the previous year and the fifth year of decline (Hamilton et al., 2020). This decline shows the lowest number of births since 1985. Lower birth rates translate to smaller family sizes. Smaller family sizes equate to Lutheran schools needing to reach out and enroll more families in order to at least keep stable enrollment.

The change in family structure is one of the most significant cultural changes in this century. Biblical Christian school leaders understand how God designed marriage between a man and woman at the creation of the world (Genesis 2). As societal views and opinions about marriage and family change, there is the chance that a greater percentage of students in Christian schools will come from non-traditional family structures.

Christian schools must hold to their beliefs while sharing the Gospel with students and families who might not be following God's will for the family.

Challenges in Education

As the ethnic and cultural background of people in America continues to transform, changes must take place in education in order to reach a more diverse population. The struggle is, however, that humans are "creatures of habit" and often struggle with change. The United States is a multicultural and multiethnic nation and many schools are reflecting this fact, but institutional changes in the way a school operates and educates is a challenge (Krogstad & Fry, 2014). Failure to change will be a disadvantage to all students and cause minority students to continue falling further behind (Aronson & Laughter, 2016).

One of the most noticeable challenges is that while the student population is becoming more racially diverse, the demographics of teachers are not changing at the same rate (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Recent research reports that the percentage of non-Hispanic White students in American schools is around 50%, but non-Hispanic White teachers make up 79% of the teaching population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b). Having such differences between the culture and race of students and teachers are causing challenges in many schools. Similar studies show that non-Hispanic Whites make up around 80% of school administrators (Goldring et. al, 2013). Many school leaders feel unprepared to lead diverse schools, implement policies in order to respond to diversity issues, and even are unsure of how to start the needed conversations to address school diversity (Khalifa et. al, 2016). The higher

suspension rates and lower test scores among minority students has a strong connection to the lack of diversity education and understanding on behalf of teachers and school administrators (Khalifa et. al, 2016; Welch & Payne, 2010).

Another growing demographic in American schools is the number of students identified with a learning disability. Since the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, the number of students with diagnosed disabilities, such as learning disabilities (LD), has increased from 3.7 million in 1976 to 7.0 million in 2017 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). One of the most noticeable diagnosis increases is of children classified on the Autism spectrum. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnoses increased from about one in 2,500 children aged 8 in the 1970s to about one in 88 children aged 8 in 2010 (Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network Surveillance Year 2010 Principal Investigators, 2010). Another increase is in the number of children diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Once a somewhat rare occurrence, almost 10% of children are now being diagnosed with ADHD (Thomas, 2013).

As more children are being diagnosed with different special needs labels, many educators wonder why these needs are becoming so prevalent in the American school. Ample research has been made into finding background commonalities of children being diagnosed with disabilities and special needs. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has done extensive research into the statistical data of children with developmental disabilities and special needs. In one study on disability prevalence and trends between 2009 and 2017, led by AAP Dr. Benjamin Zablotzky, found that boys

were more likely than girls to be diagnosed with any developmental disability, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or learning disabled (LD) (Zablotsky et. al, 2019).

Growing research is showing that there are disproportionalities in learning disability diagnoses among students of different races and ethnic groups. Non-Hispanic White children are more likely than minority children to be diagnosed with ADHD (Moody, 2016; Pastor & Reuben, 2005). Minority students might be underdiagnosed with LD, ADHD, and other disabilities, but it does not mean that these disabilities are not present among minority children. Often, lack of awareness and understanding about disabilities among minority parents translates to underdiagnosis (Ahmann, 2013). There also seems to be racial profiling among minority students, where non-Hispanic White students who act out in class will be referred for ADHD evaluation while minority students will often be labeled as misbehaving children (Moody, 2016). Because of a history of racial profiling in schools, parents of minority students often have a greater mistrust of the educational system. These parents might believe that the school is just trying to control their child's personality and spirit, and thus not follow through when educators refer students for learning disability testing (Davison & Ford, 2001; Moody, 2016). While minority students are less likely to be diagnosed with ADHD, there is a disproportionately high percentage of minority students labeled as intellectually disabled and developmentally delayed (Howard, 2003).

Parental educational background and socio-economic status also has a strong connection to children being diagnosed with a disability or special need. Children with

mothers who have a college degree are less likely to have a learning disability (Zablotsky et. al, 2019). The prevalence of learning disabilities increases for children who grow up in families that make less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (Zablotsky et. al., 2019; Pastor & Reuben, 2005). There also is an increase in learning disabilities for children growing up in a rural setting compared to an urban setting (Zablotsky et. al., 2019).

The students in modern classrooms present challenges that previous generations of teachers did not face. Increases in the number of minority students, diverse student backgrounds, and learning disabilities creates new challenges in the classroom. Teachers, as commonalities with their students continue to diverge, will need to increase cultural awareness in order to still provide quality instruction (Irvin & Darling, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Embracing Diversity

“Schools must change - not because they are broken, but they are seeking to respond to demographic shifts in society that have caused major changes in the student populations and in the needs of the students’ families”(Nuri-Robins et al., 2005, p. 2). Students entering the classroom in the year 2020 are different from those just a decade or two ago. Racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural diversity are more prevalent than ever before. In order to properly reach a diverse classroom, teachers need to change.

One of the first steps in working toward embracing diversity is to recognize diversity. Teachers and school leaders must realize that “everything that humans do is embedded in culture. Unconsciously, culture determines how people think, believe,

behave, and ultimately how teaching and learning occur” (Irvin & Darling, 2005, p. 46). One’s racial, ethnic, religious, educational, and socio-economic background will determine how one views the world. But in order to be an effective teacher, one must be culturally responsive to the different backgrounds among the students (Cordova-Cobo et. al, 2016).

Recognizing cultural diversity is essential in order to provide culturally relevant pedagogy (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Cordova-Cobo et. al., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Culturally relevant pedagogy stresses the importance of teachers developing a strong understanding of the home and community environment of the students. In turn, they will use this contextualization to build connections between the home and community and instruction in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Cultural relevance is essential for teachers educating students of different backgrounds, but before one can work toward being a culturally relevant teacher, one must understand their own personal view about cultural differences (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). There are many well-researched and successful programs available for use in order to understand the cultural awareness and sensitivity of a person or a diversity group. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) is one of those programs. Developed by Milton J. Bennett, Ph. D. as part of the Intercultural Development Research Institute, the DMIS seeks to understand why some people are successful in cross-cultural communication and relationships while others are not (Bennett, 2004).

The DMIS begins by classifying people in two different groups based on their cross-cultural understanding of the world: ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism (Bennett,

2004). Ethnocentrism refers to the view that one's own culture is "central to reality", while ethnorelativism is the stance that one's own belief and behaviors is part of many systems of beliefs and behaviors. Those who are classified as ethnocentric can be a part of one of three stages: denial, defense, or minimization. Ethnorelativism's stages are: acceptance, adaptation, and integration. These six stages are a continuum where people, through education and experience, eventually move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.

Understanding where teachers are on the continuum of cultural awareness prepares school leaders on how to effectively introduce, educate, and incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy. Education is most impactful when students are able to connect instruction to their social and cultural realities and experiences (Howard, 2003). Extensive research has shown that when teachers are able to bring in aspects of a student's culture into classroom instruction, students will feel like education is a part of their own culture. This will lead to more student success and higher standardized test scores (Howard, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Numerous researchers and educators have adapted culturally relevant pedagogy and have conducted research on its impact on learning. While all researchers have similar principles behind culturally relevant pedagogy, Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper (2011) summed it up well in five themes of discipline: identity and achievement, equity and excellence, developmental appropriateness, teaching the whole child, and student teacher relationships. These five themes seek to understand the backgrounds, influences,

preferred learning styles, relationships, and beliefs of the whole child. These five themes are summarized as follows:

- **Identity and Achievement:** Who are the children you are teaching? What beliefs, language, behavioral expressions, interpretations of actions, gender, class, and societal expectations contribute to their identity? In order to understand the identities of the students in the classroom, teachers need to understand their own identities and how these identities align with educational practices. For example, some cultures are more aggressive and individualistic, which translates to students being encouraged to ask questions and offer opinions in school. Other cultures emphasize collectivism, where in a school setting, students are more passive and instructed to follow the lead of the educator (Ginsberg, 2015).
- **Equity and Excellence:** All students need to have access to the curriculum at their level and understanding. Differentiation is needed for some students, but not for everyone. The curriculum materials need to make connections to their lives by being inclusive of minority cultures (Irvin & Darling, 2005). Even though students come from different cultural backgrounds, teachers need to have the expectation that all students can and will achieve excellence (Howard, 2003). High standards and the belief that all will succeed will “create a classroom culture where students, regardless of their cultural and linguistic background, are welcomed and

supported and provided with the best opportunity to learn.” (Richards et. al., 2007).

- **Developmental Appropriateness:** How do students learn best? This goes beyond just educating students of minority cultures, but recognizing that each person learns in his or her own unique way. Understanding that students coming from different backgrounds will have different learning needs and preferred styles, teachers will benefit all students by focusing on teaching to all intelligences (Morgan, 2010).
- **Teaching Whole Child:** Teachers need to understand that the home and culture of children will greatly influence personal identity, while at the same time, each child has unique gifts and needs. Creating a strong relationship with the parents of each child will help.
- **Student-Teacher Relationships:** The way teachers and staff interact with students will impact the success students have in school. Students need to see that teachers and staff care about them as individuals and as members of a community. Learning the communication styles of the different cultural communities will help to avoid any misinterpretations of behavior, conflict, and disrespect. As teachers and staff build up the individual, strong emphasis should be placed on the community of learners, which will result in a strong school culture rooted in success. “The culturally relevant teachers encouraged a community of learners rather than competitive, individual achievement. By demanding a higher level of

academic success for the entire class, individual success did not suffer.”
(Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 480).

Understanding these cultural differences will allow principals and teachers to implement culturally relevant pedagogy which seeks to evaluate the student-teacher relationships, culture, and curriculum in a school (Ladson-Billings, 1995). A change of mindset and openness to adapting culturally relevant pedagogy begins with reflection of one’s preconceived notions on cultural differences and the willingness to change in order to effectively educate all students (Howard, 2013). Gaining understanding about cultural differences and connecting to those of different backgrounds is something that all Christian teachers should strive to do, as the Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians 9 that Christians need to become all things to all people.

Conclusion

It is obvious to many in education that student demographics have changed over the last few decades (Kaplan & Owings, 2013). School leaders need to institute institutional change and teachers need to implement culturally relevant pedagogy in order to connect with and provide a meaningful education to all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nuri-Robins, et al., 2005). It takes open-mindedness, education, and willingness to change on behalf of the school in order to change with changing demographics.

How are WELS schools adapting to a changing cultural demographics? Are traditional styles of teaching hindering optimal educational attainment among students? As communities change, are the churches and schools finding ways to connect with the people in their communities? By implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, individual

WELS schools have the opportunity to be seen as a model educational institution for a community. This will allow congregations to better use schools as a form of outreach while displaying Christ-like selflessness and humility. Are WELS schools embracing this change? What support needs to be implemented in order to embrace changing demographics?

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

As the racial, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds of American people continue to change, American schools will be at the forefront of that change. Teachers and school leaders need to be prepared to effectively educate a more diverse population of students. Schools need to embrace their communities and provide the best education for all students. As the United States continues to change demographically, are WELS schools living up to their mission and vision and reaching out to those of diverse demographics? The following questions examine the current state of demographics in WELS schools across the United States.

1. How does the racial, cultural, and socio-economic status of students in WELS schools compare to the national population?
2. What pedagogical challenges are WELS schools facing as student populations become more diverse?
3. How are WELS schools adapting to national racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographic changes?

Research Design and Procedures

Using Google Forms, qualitative and quantitative survey questions were given. These questions are listed at the end of the proposal in the Appendix A. There are five parts to the survey. The first four parts consist of multiple choice answers while part five consists of short open-ended questions.

Part One consists of four demographic questions about the school previously highlighted. Student and community information is addressed in part two. This section shows whether the demographics of local communities of WELS schools are changing at the same average rate of communities across the country. Comparing the enrollment data with the community data may reveal whether WELS schools are changing as respective communities are changing.

Family makeup, home-life, and religious background of students is analyzed in part three. Gathering data about the backgrounds of students in WELS schools investigates whether WELS schools are similar to national trends. While certain parts of the county might not be experiencing a rapid change in racial demographics, there seems to be changes among the family makeup and home-life of people across all races and cultures. Part three explores whether even those who appear to be “traditional” students in WELS schools might be experiencing different upbringings compared to previous generations. Answers from this section are compared to the responses in Part Five. If the family makeup and home-life of students in WELS schools are changing similarly to that of the country at large, more school leaders will likely report greater challenges facing classroom teachers.

Part four analyzes the educational attainment and economic backgrounds of the families in the school. A cross tabulation of educational attainment and economic standing will demonstrate the reality of the connection between those two demographics.

The final part of the survey consists of four open-ended questions. Open-ended questions will allow the researcher to understand school leaders' perspectives on how Lutheran schools are adapting to a changing culture.

The Google Forms survey was sent out via email. Part one of the email was an introduction by the researcher, followed by background information about the survey, and then an invitation to participate in the survey. This survey was conducted anonymously but participants had the option of leaving their name and email address.

Population and Sample

Surveys were sent to all WELS schools' personnel who receive leadership updates from the Commission on Lutheran Schools. The WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools was contacted and helped in distributing this survey to all WELS schools leaders. By contacting all WELS schools, this survey was able to collect data from a variety of different ministries across the country.

In total, this survey was sent out to 623 recipients. Four-hundred eight opened the email, 116 clicked on the link, and 78 responded. This is a response rate of 12.5%. Two personal emails were received from school leaders that did not know the best way to answer some of the questions, so instead of filling out the survey, they sent descriptive responses about the diversity in their individual schools.

Before asking specific questions related to the research questions, the survey asked for demographic information about each school. The first question asked participants to classify the enrollment in their school. Around 64% of the respondents come from schools with 100 students or fewer (figure 1). Over two thirds of the

respondents come from schools that offer a preschool through grade eight education (figure 2).

Figure 1
2020-2021 Total School Enrollment

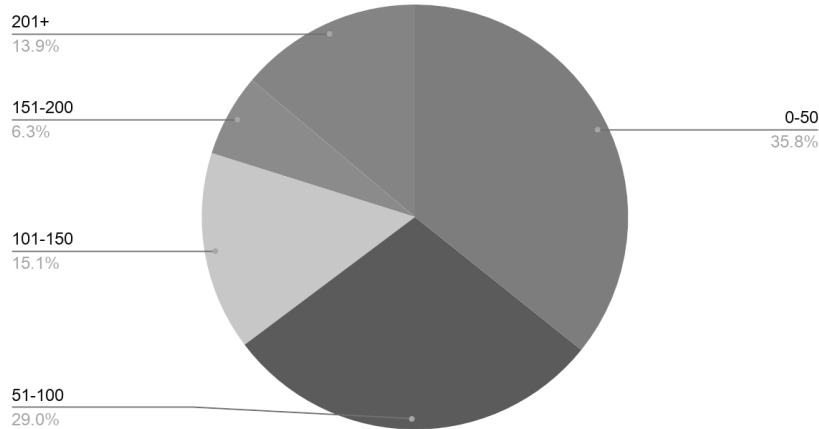
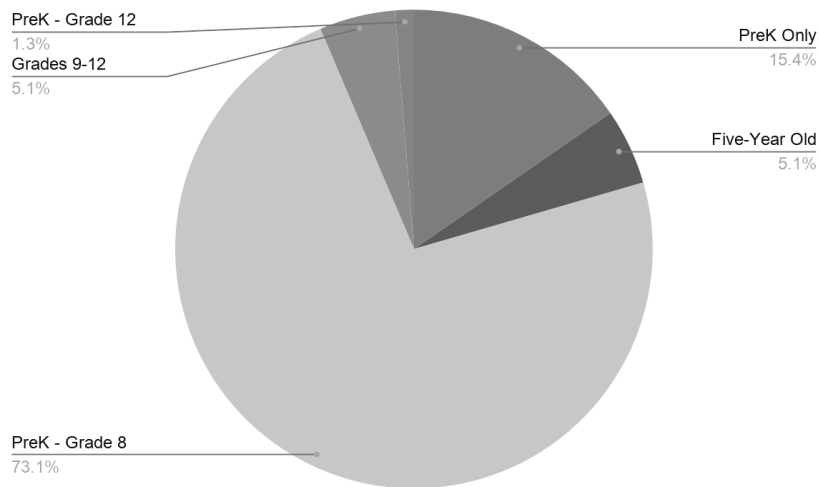
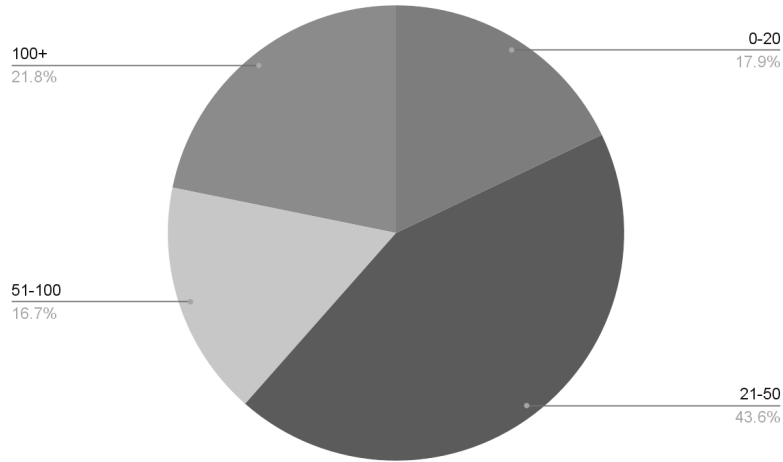


Figure 2
Grades Offered At Surveyed Schools



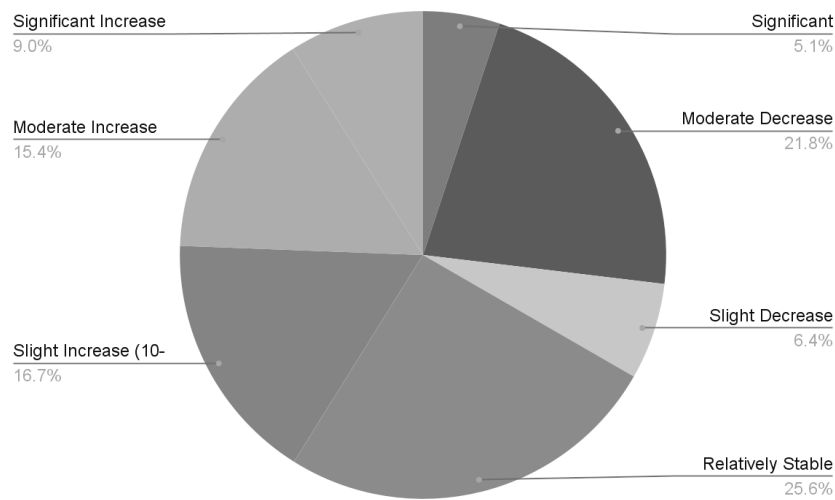
Respondents were also asked to list the age of their school. Slightly over 60% of respondents are from schools that are 50 years old or less. Around 18% of the schools were established this century (figure 3).

Figure 3
Age of Responding Schools



Connected to the previous question, the final background information questions focused on enrollment during the 21st century. Forty-one percent of respondents listed that their schools had enrollment increases over the last twenty years. Slightly over 25% have been relatively stable in their enrollment, and 22% of respondents come from schools with moderate decreases in enrollment.

Figure 4
Enrollment Trends in Responding Schools



Instrumentation and Data Analysis

Using Google Forms, all of the multiple choice question answers are automatically arranged in graphs and charts. The majority of the multiple choice questions require participants to rank a category as a percent of the total student population (i.e. “What percent of your students are being raised by someone other than the parents?”). By finding the average percent of a question for all responses, I can see how WELS schools statistics in general compare to national statistics. Data analysis shows if WELS schools are similar to many national averages. Data collected in part one, School Information, was cross tabulated with the data collected in the other sections to see if there is a correlation between school enrollment and changing student demographics.

The open ended questions in part five allowed school leaders to express any challenges their schools are facing as the backgrounds of students in our schools are changing. The responses were coded in order to find any trends or themes that school leaders are facing. I compared this to the information provided in parts one through four to see if school leaders feel there are more challenges and struggles with higher changes in student background.

The statistical data in parts one through four will show if demographics in WELS schools are changing as the nation changes. Part five seeks to find out if WELS schools are struggling with changes or if leaders feel prepared. In order to continue the strong tradition of Lutheran education, it is important to know the challenges schools are facing with changing student bodies in order to address steps needed for improvement.

Limitations

Six-hundred twenty-three people received this survey, 408 opened the email, 116 clicked on the survey, but only 78 completed it. This is a response rate of 12.5%. With a low response rate, there is concern that this is not a strong cross-section of WELS schools. The enrollment of the responding schools was compared to the enrollment of WELS Early Childhood Education (ECE), Lutheran Elementary Schools (LES), and Lutheran High Schools (LHS) according to the 2020 WELS Statistical Data (figure 5). The distribution of responding schools by size somewhat mirrors that of Lutheran elementary schools in the WELS, which make up over two-thirds of the survey respondents. Despite a low response rate, the results may be representative of Lutheran elementary school but not early childhood and high schools.

Figure 5
Enrollment of Responding Schools and Total Enrollment of WELS Schools in 2020.

Enrollment	Survey Percent	WELS Percent of ECE	WELS Percent of LES	WELS Percent of LHS
0-50	36.40%	89.00%	32.30%	33%
51-100	29.50%	9.20%	40.10%	
101-150	15.40%	1.60%	14.90%	20.80%
151-200	6.40%	0.3%	6.40%	
201+	14.10%	0.00%	6.30%	45.90%

Even though this is a strong cross-representation of WELS schools, because the response rate was low, the reader needs to be careful not to generalize the data across all WELS schools. School leaders experiencing demographic changes might have been more inclined to complete this survey than schools not experiencing such changes. This information is useful for school leaders and representatives of some common changes

among WELS schools, but it does not summarize changes across the entire WELS school system.

The open ended questions on the second part of the survey are subjective and have biases in the responses. While bias might skew the reality of the challenges with this topic, it does allow for a good understanding of how school leaders perceive and feel about changing demographics in WELS schools.

Summary

Though the response rate was low, the participants that did respond represent a strong cross-section of WELS schools. This data gives a picture of changes happening in WELS schools, but does not necessarily represent changes happening or not happening in a majority of WELS schools.

Chapter IV: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine if demographics in WELS schools are changing at a rate similar to that of the United States. Is the makeup of students in WELS schools changing at a similar rate as that of the country? If a school does not reflect their greater community, school leadership needs to examine why that is the case. As racial, cultural, and socio-economic diversity increases across the country, WELS schools will need to be prepared to educate students of different backgrounds. Providing continuing education opportunities to teachers about culturally responsive pedagogy will allow a staff and organization to be better prepared to reach out to a diverse population. In addition, examining the current curriculum at MLC and enhancing opportunities to gain a stronger grasp of culturally responsive pedagogy will benefit preservice teachers. The end result of being equipped to educate diverse students will be connecting the Gospel with more families.

In order to understand the current climate of diversity in WELS schools and the knowledge of culturally responsive pedagogy, the following questions guided all survey questions:

1. How does the racial, cultural, and socio-economic status of students in WELS schools compare to the national population?
2. What pedagogical challenges are WELS schools facing as student populations become more diverse?

3. How are WELS schools adapting to national racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographic changes?

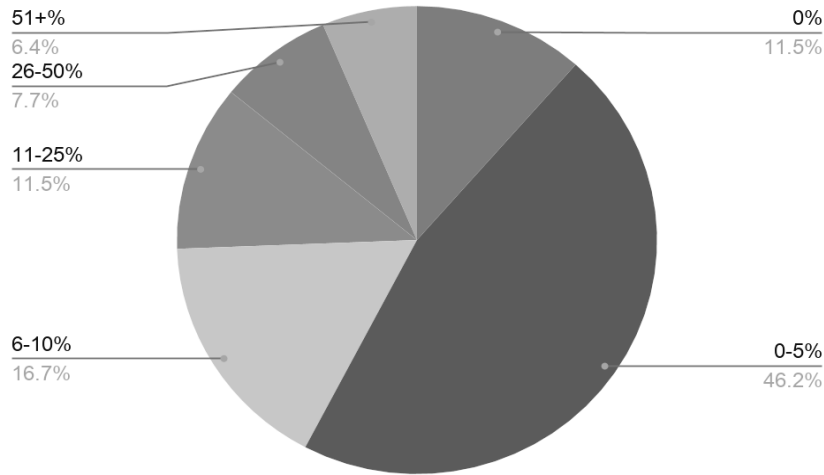
Data Analysis

- 1. How does the racial, cultural, and socio-economic status of students in WELS schools compare to the national population?**

The survey asked a variety of demographic questions in order to gain an understanding of the makeup of students and families in the individual WELS schools. After the initial section where statistical information was collected, the next section asked questions about the racial makeup of individual schools.

School leaders were asked to identify the percentage of minority students in their schools. The percentage of people living in the United States who are classified as White continues to decline (reported at 72.4% according to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010), but survey results show that WELS schools are not similar to national trends. Over 83% of respondents listed that racial minorities make up 25% or less of their student population. Only slightly more than 6% of WELS schools surveyed have more than 50% of their student population listed as a minority race (figure 6).

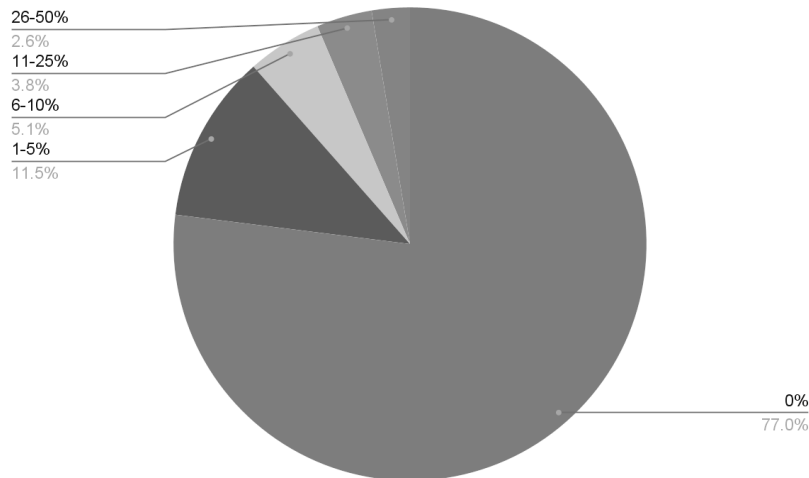
Figure 6
Percent of Total Enrollment Classified as Ethnic Minority



Note. The top numbers are the percent range of ethnic minority students in a school while the bottom number is the percentage of schools that fall into the specified range.

Students classified as White are the predominant race in WELS schools, but in the majority of WELS schools that completed the survey, there are racial minorities. That is not the same when it comes to staff. Sixty of the 78 respondents reported that there are no racial minorities among their staff. For staffs that do have members listed as racial minorities, it is still a small percentage of the entire staff (figure 7).

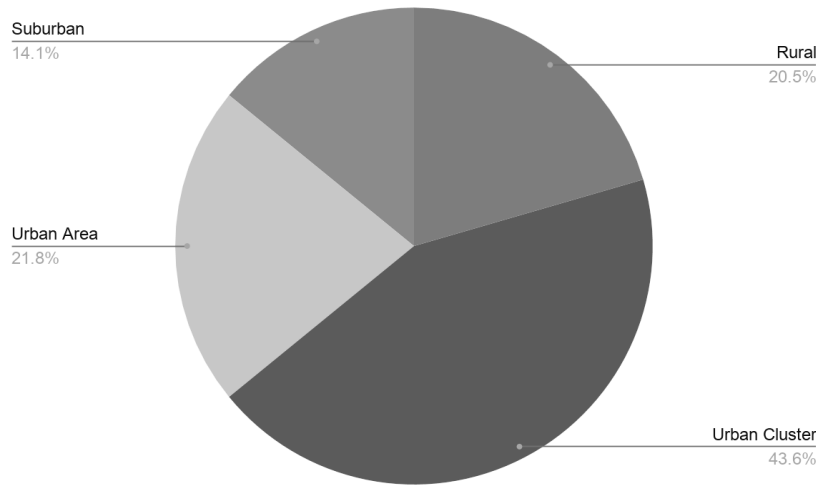
Figure 7
Percent of School Staff Classified as Ethnic Minority



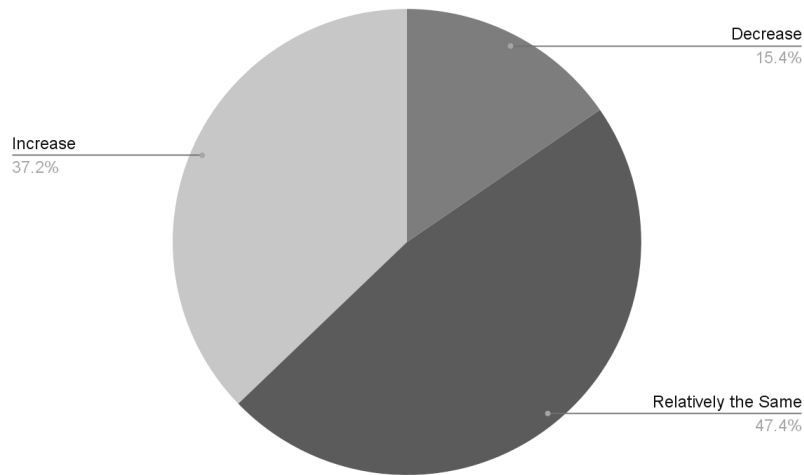
Note. The top numbers are the percent range of ethnic minority staff members in a school while the bottom number is the percentage of schools that falls into the specified range.

Since racial demographics vary among communities throughout the United States, a question was asked about the size of the school’s community. This seeks to understand if WELS schools’ locations statistics are similar to nationwide community statistics. The answers to the first question shows that WELS schools that participated in this survey tend to be in smaller communities (figure 8). Fifty of the respondents stated that their school is in a community of 50,000 people or fewer, with sixteen of them saying that their community has fewer than 2,500 people. A noteworthy statistic is that only twelve respondents stated that their school is in a community with declining population while twenty-nine have schools in growing communities (figure 9).

Figure 8
Location of Responding Schools



Note. Rural is classified as a community with fewer than 2,500 residents. Urban Cluster is classified as a community with a population between 2,500 and 50,000 residents. Urban Area is classified as a community with greater than 50,000 residents. Suburban is classified as a community located inside an urban area with less than 100,000 residents.

Figure 9*Population Trends of Responding Schools' Communities*

The next two questions compared the school ethnic population to the ethnic population of the school's community. While many of the responding schools have few racial minorities, if the school's community has a low percentage of racial minorities, then the school is an accurate representation of the community. Respondents were asked "What is the predominant racial ethnicity in your school? (over 50% of the student population)" and "What is the most predominant racial ethnicity of the community where your school is located?" Figure 10 shows the cross tabulated results of these two questions. Sixty-four of the respondents, or 82%, reported that the racial makeup of the student body in their school aligns with the racial makeup of the greater community. While a substantial percentage of responding schools represent their local community, it is significant that of the few schools that are located within a majority-minority community, 68% of the respondents reported that White is the most represented racial demographic in their school

Figure 10

Racial Makeup of the Student Body and the School’s Greater Community

<i>What is the predominant racial ethnicity in your school? (over 50% of the student population)</i>	<i>What is the most predominant racial ethnicity of the community where your school is located?</i>					
	American Indian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Other	There is no predominant racial ethnicity.	White
American Indian	1					
Black or African American		1				
Hispanic or Latino						1
There is no predominant racial ethnicity.		1	1		1	
White		3	4	1	3	61
Grand Total	1	5	5	1	4	62

After identifying the racial ethnicity of the individual school and the greater community, respondents were asked to identify change over the last twenty years. The responses from these two questions were cross-tabulated to see if schools changed at a rate similar to that of the greater community (figure 11). The data shows that the majority of surveyed WELS schools are located in communities that have been predominantly White in past generations and continue to be so to this day. Fifteen percent of the schools in the survey have remained predominantly White while the demographics of their local community have changed.

Figure 11
Cross Tabulation of Racial Ethnicity Changes in Schools and Communities

	<i>How has the racial ethnicity of your school's community changed over the last twenty years?</i>				
<i>How has the racial ethnicity of your school changed over the last twenty years?</i>	Little to no change - the school's community has been predominantly a minority race(s) for the last twenty years.	Little to no change - the school's community has been predominantly white for the last twenty years.	The school's community has changed from predominantly one race to no predominant race.	The school's community has changed from predominantly white to predominately a minority race(s).	There is more racial diversity in the school's community but minority races still account for a small percentage of the total population (25% or less).
Little to no change - the school has been predominantly a minority race for the last twenty years.	2	1			
Little to no change - the school has been predominantly white for the last twenty years.		42	1		11
The racial ethnicity of the students has changed from predominantly one race to no predominant race.	1		3	1	
The racial ethnicity of the students in the school has changed from being predominantly white to being predominantly a minority race.	1		2		
There is more racial diversity in the school but minority students still make up a small percentage of the total population (25% or less).		2		1	10
Total	4	45	6	2	21

Racial ethnicity is just one part of culture. The third section of questions sought to see if there is a cultural shift among schools beyond racial ethnicity. Questions in this

section focused on the family, home, and religious background of the students and families in the school.

Two questions evaluated the church membership of students. The cross tabulated chart shows that the percentage of students who belong to a WELS church has changed over time (figure 12). Twenty-five percent of respondents reported that the makeup of their student body has gone from predominantly WELS students to a mix of WELS and those of other church bodies or not belonging to a church. Almost 13% reported that the makeup has gone from predominantly WELS students to predominantly non-WELS. The remaining responses indicate that the student population has not changed and that the majority has always been non-WELS or WELS. Twenty-two percent reported that their school has always been predominantly non-WELS. Three responses for predominantly WELS might not be accurate because those three responses have 25% or less of the student body belonging to a WELS church.

Figure 12
Church Membership of Students Over Twenty Years

<i>How has the church membership of your students changed over the last twenty years?</i>				
<i>What percent of your students are members of your congregation or another WELS congregation?</i>	<i>Little to no change - the majority of the students are non-WELS.</i>	<i>Little to no change - the majority of the students belong to a WELS church.</i>	<i>The school has changed from predominantly WELS students to a fairly even mix of WELS students and others (other Christian, non-Christian, and unchurched).</i>	<i>The school has changed from predominantly WELS students to predominantly non-WELS students (other Christian, non-Christian, unchurched).</i>
0-10%	8	1	1	3
11-25%	6	2		5
26-50%	3		11	2
51-75%		5	7	
76-90%		14	2	
91-100%		8		
Grand Total	17	30	21	10

It is well documented that many family structures are changing. Surveyed WELS schools have a higher percentage of students being raised by married parents, but there is a noticeable portion that do not have married parents. Figure 13 compares the current percentage of married families in the school to that of previous generations. Fifty of the 78 respondents noted that while the number of non-traditional families are rising, a majority of students still come from a married two-parent home. The percentage of unmarried families in surveyed WELS schools is below the national average of unmarried families (Chamie, 2017). Four of those responses to that question do not seem to be accurate as less than 50% of their students come from a married two-parent household yet the respondents listed that it is a majority of the students.

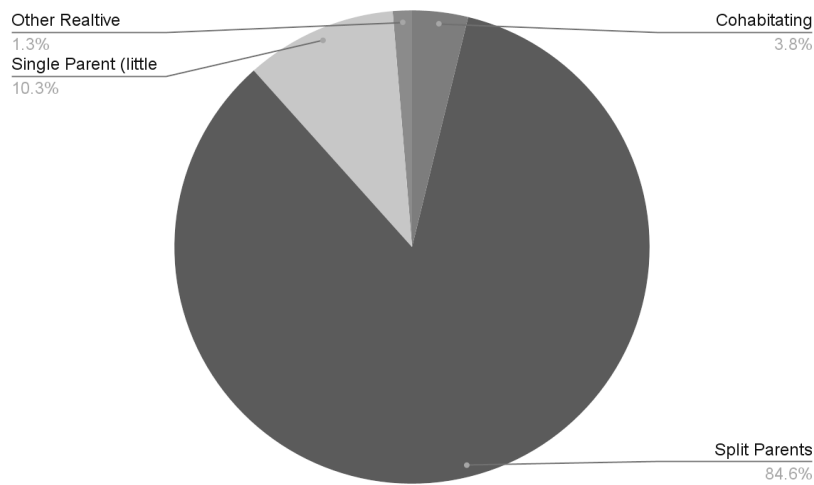
Figure 13
Family Structure of WELS Students Over Twenty Years

What percent of your students are being raised by married parents?	How has the family structure of the students in your school changed over the last twenty years?			
	As in previous generations, the majority of students are still being raised by married parents.	Only a small percentage of the families have married parents.	There are more non-traditional families in the school, but married parents still make up the majority of the families in the school	
0-10%				1
11-25%			3	1
26-50%			1	2
51-75%		1		24
76-90%		13		21
91-100%		10		1
Grand Total		24	4	50

When working with families, it is important for teachers to understand the home-life and living arrangements of the students. For students in surveyed WELS schools that do not have married parents, the most common living arrangement is having split parents that are both still directly involved in raising their children (figure 14).

Sixty-six of the respondents reported this to be the case for their students in non-traditional homes. About 10% of the respondents reported that having only one parent involved in the life of the child is the most common non-traditional homelife. Slightly under 4% is listed as living with cohabiting parents, which is in stark contrast to the national average of 35% (Livingston, 2018).

Figure 14
Living Arrangements for Students Not Living in Married Two-Parent Household



Seventy percent of respondents indicated that the majority of the people living in their immediate community have some level of higher education attainment (figure 15). This correlates to the number of families living below the poverty line in WELS schools. According to the survey results, fifty of the seventy-eight respondents indicated that less than 10% of their families are living below the poverty line. While all schools have students living in poverty, there does not seem to be a high percentage of students living in poverty, at least according to the surveyed WELS schools.

Figure 15

Comparison of Community Educational Attainment and Poverty in WELS Schools

How would you classify the educational attainment of the majority of the members in your school's community?	What percentage of your students come from a home below the poverty line?				
	0-10%	11-25%	26-50%	76-90%	91-100%
Advanced Degrees (Master's and Doctorate)	1				
Community College (Associate's Degree or Trade School)	13	5	4	1	
Four Year College (Bachelor's Degree)	24	6	1		
High School Diploma	12	5	4	1	1
Grand Total	50	16	9	2	1

The first open-ended question is a summary of the majority of multiple-choice questions. Respondents were asked “Over the tenure of your teaching ministry, how have the students in your school changed culturally and/or socio-economically?” (Appendix B). This question also allows respondents to think about how changes have been addressed, which is the basis of the next two thesis questions. For this and other open-ended questions, coding was used in order to find common trends. Responses were grouped into the following categories: race, economic, family, rural vs. urban, non-WELS, and little change.

Race, which is often the first category thought of when analyzing changing demographics, was specifically mentioned in eighteen of the seventy-eight responses. These respondents are seeing more racial minorities in their schools’ communities. The majority of these schools are working on ways to bring more minority students into their schools.

Some schools are seeing economic changes among their students. Of the eight responses that discuss changing economic conditions, only one states that economic

conditions overall are improving among students and their families; the rest state that there are more economic difficulties. A small percentage of these respondents go into detail about the poor backgrounds of students and the increased need for financial aid. Others state that there is a mix of lower-income and middle-income families in their schools.

These economic difficulties are closely related to the changes in the family, which is the category with the most responses. Respondents indicated that more students are coming from broken homes and one-parent families. Some indicated that there seems to be a connection with more unstable homelife and behavioral problems in school. The percentage of students who have divorced parents is also higher, even among families that belong to the church.

The last two categories, non-WELS and rural vs. urban, had the fewest responses. As the student body in schools is changing, a few respondents indicated that more students are coming from non-WELS families. This has an influence on school culture as many of those students are coming from families that do not have strong Christian homes. Responses placed in the rural vs. urban category state that in personal experience, rural schools have not seen as much demographic change as urban schools.

Thirty-two of the responses stated that there have not been noticeable cultural or socio-economic changes among students in their schools. Three respondents said that they have not been teaching long, so it was difficult to state whether there has been cultural or socio-economic changes in their school setting. Others said that there have been few changes in their communities.

Next, respondents were asked “Is your student body an accurate representation of your greater community? Why or why not might that be the case?” (Appendix D). Key words I looked for in each response were “yes” and “no”. Of the seventy-eight responses, fifty-nine of them said yes to this question or gave a description that can be summed up as a yes. One person did not know, and the rest of the respondents stated no.

For the respondents who said yes and/or wrote how their school is a representation of their greater community, I grouped together those that are similar to their ethnically White community and those that are similar to their ethnically diverse or racial minority community. Seven of the responses stated that the majority of their community is White and so is the student population. There are also seven responses who stated that their school is located in a more rural and/or lower-income community. These responses seem to apply to the majority of their student body is White.

Not all yes responses are because the community and the student body are primarily White. Eight responses indicate that the school has done work to reach out to the diverse community and is seeing positive results. Two of those responses mention that the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program is allowing their school to provide a Christian education for these families.

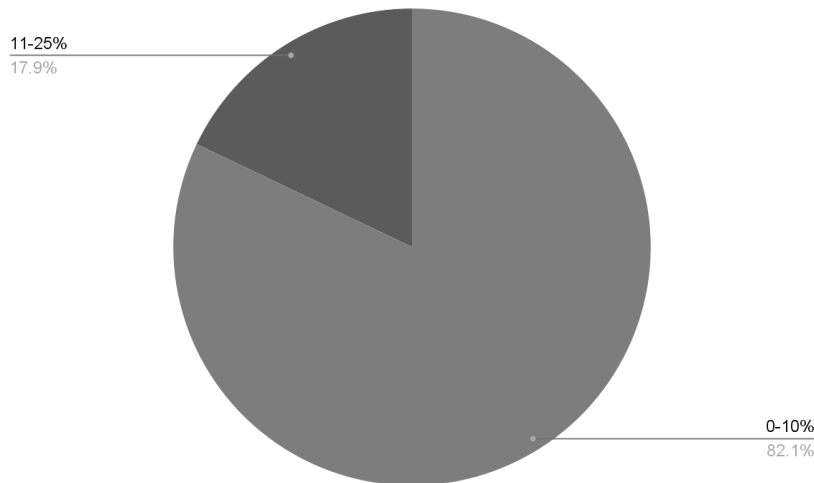
2. What pedagogical challenges are WELS schools facing as student populations become more diverse?

The literature review discussed how changing demographics are leading to more challenges in education. A few multiple choice and an open ended question were given in order to see if WELS teachers are facing similar challenges.

One multiple choice question allowed respondents to identify if there are students in their schools with diagnosed learning challenges. A common way to assess this is identifying students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). In order to understand the learning challenges facing students and the differentiated instruction that needs to happen in WELS schools, respondents were asked to list how many students in the school have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Sixty-four of the respondents reported that less than 10% of students have an IEP (figure 16). This statistic is slightly below the national average of around 14% of public school students having an IEP (Schaeffer, 2020). No respondent listed more than 25% of the students in the school with an IEP.

Figure 16

Percentage of Students with an IEP



In order to gain a deeper understanding of the pedagogical challenges schools are facing, questions about struggles and changes related to more student diversity were asked. The first related question is “What struggles do your teachers face as student populations change from ‘traditional’ WELS students to those with more diverse

backgrounds?” (Appendix E). Coding was used in order to find any common themes and obstacles that schools are facing. Key words in responses were coded into the following categories: culture, academics, WELS background, and home/family. Almost all of the responses can fit into at least one of these categories. The responses that do not fit into those categories did not provide much information.

The terms diversity or culture are found in eighteen of the responses. As the backgrounds of students change, school leaders are recognizing that understanding cultural differences is challenging yet essential. Many of the respondents who highlighted changing culture also discussed the challenges with language barriers among staff, students, and families.

As students change, school leaders see how academics are also changing. The most common response to changes in academics related to the need for more individualized instruction. School leaders are recognizing that more students have attention deficits, other learning impairments, behavioral issues, or professional diagnosed disabilities.

If the responding schools closely represent the majority of WELS schools, then students entering our WELS schools with little religious background is becoming more common. Having little to no Biblical knowledge means that schools are reassessing their religious instruction. Related to not having a religious background, the most common theme for this question is changes with the home and family. As more students come from non-WELS backgrounds, many are coming from homes with no religious background. That correlates to differences in behavior and discipline in the home, which

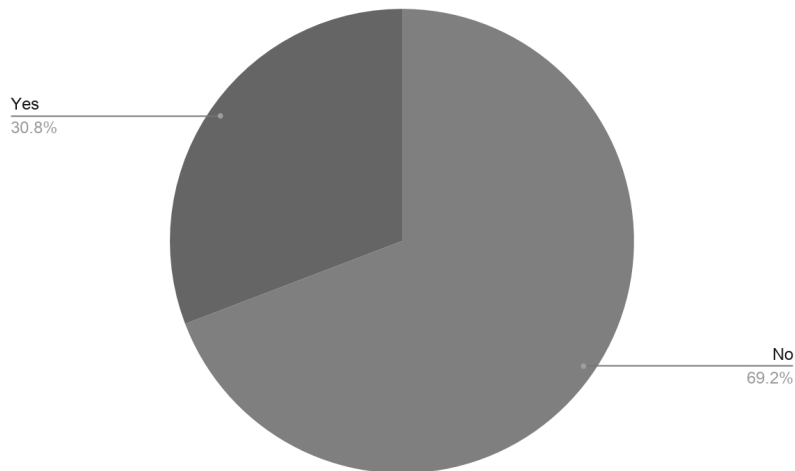
in turn, translates to behavioral challenges in the school. Over half of the responses that related to changes in the family list split parents as a major challenge. Poverty is also another issue facing some school families.

3. How are WELS schools adapting to national racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographic changes?

The final multiple choice question and two open-ended questions were written in order to find out how WELS schools are responding to demographic changes.

The final multiple choice question asked the “Has your faculty participated in any formal training/continuing education on the topic of educating diverse learners and/or creating and implementing culturally relevant pedagogy?” Almost 70% of the respondents indicated that the faculty has not participated in any sort of professional development in regards to educating diverse learners (figure 17).

Figure 17
Percentage of Faculties Participating in Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Training



Open-ended question four asked respondents “How has instruction, classroom management, and school culture changed in response to changing student demographics?” (Appendix F). This question was coded with the three nouns listed in the question.

Instruction is an area that is receiving significant attention with changing demographics. Twenty-nine of the respondents indicated increased attention in the area of instruction because of changing demographics. A greater variety in academic needs, more students with diagnosed learning disabilities, and students coming from non-English speaking households mean more intentional instruction is needed.

Discipline and school culture are related in many of the responses. Schools that are noting changes in student demographics see the need to have a conscientious review of how discipline is carried out. Higher percentages of diversity means having students that do not all come from the same kind of home and family. As the homelife is less structured and more students come from non-WELS backgrounds, school leaders seem to be more intentional in creating a strong school culture.

Twenty-one respondents indicated that little change has taken place because of few demographic changes in their schools. This is consistent with the demographic overview in the multiple-choice questions.

The final survey question asked “As a school leader, what have you done in order to prepare or train your staff to properly and effectively educate diverse students? Please discuss any professional development, classes, or training that you and/or your staff have

participated in.” (Appendix G). For these responses, the following codes were used: none, instruction, culture and diversity, management, and other.

Thirty-two of the responses indicated that no professional development in this area has been conducted as a whole staff. Four of the responses that indicated no formal training about diverse students did recognize the need for this sort of training. Based on the data collected in the multiple-choice questions about schools not experiencing changing demographics, this response is not surprising.

Analyzing the responses in previous questions, school leaders recognize the changing learning needs of students. A few responded that professional development in the area of instruction and educating diverse needs is something their faculty has done. One indicated that his faculty attends the CESE’s (Christian Educators for Special Education) annual conference and his school is joining Wisconsin’s Special Needs Scholarship Program in order to better address diverse learning needs.

Responses to previous questions indicated that school leaders are seeing a change in classroom management and school culture based on changing homelives and demographics of the students. Surprisingly, there were no responses to this question that indicates schools have participated in professional development about school management and have made building wide changes to management policies. For culture and diversity, eight responded that workshops, classes, and trainings have been conducted in order for teachers to better understand this topic. Professional speakers have been brought into schools in order to lead staff through diversity training.

The section that received the most information is “other”. The majority of responses in this category write that training about diverse students has taken place, but not as specific as to what those trainings are. Many indicate that the main source of professional development for this topic happens at teachers’ conferences. Workshops and classes through Martin Luther College are also mentioned. A few stated that faculty book studies have taken place.

After analyzing the response to this question, it is evident that many school leaders see the need to educate teachers about changing student demographics, but very few have conducted in-depth formal training.

Summary

Demographic changes in WELS schools vary from school to school. Though the response rate was only 12.5%, the background information of the schools show that a good cross-sample of WELS schools is represented in this survey. No size or community type (rural vs. urban) is dominant in the results. Based on the feedback from this survey, it is clear that WELS schools are facing demographic changes. The location and size of the school seems to impact the amount and the type of change individual schools are experiencing.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The makeup of the people in the United States is changing. Schools are a noticeable place for changing racial, social, and ethnic demographic changes. Properly educating students from diverse backgrounds takes special training for teachers and support from administration. Different communities across the country are experiencing this change in different ways and at different rates. That equates to schools, both public and private, experiencing change at different rates as well. As a system of schools, synodical leaders, individual school administrators, and teachers need to be aware of demographic changes and how to best educate diverse students.

Summary of the Results

Demographics of WELS schools are changing, but are not completely in-line with national trends. The racial diversity in the majority of WELS schools, indicated by 83% of the responses to this survey, is less than 25% of the total student population. Even a smaller percentage, less than 25% of respondents, have racial minority staff members. Part of this lack of diversity seems to be related to the location of WELS schools. In 2017, only 19.3% of Americans lived in an area considered rural (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Twenty and a half percent of survey respondents indicated that their school is located in a rural area, similar to the rural population in America, but, another 43.6% indicated that their school is located in an urban cluster (a community less than 50,000 people). Almost two-thirds of WELS schools are located in communities with populations less than 50,000. A U.S. Department of Agriculture (2018) report found that

racial and ethnic minorities make up 22% of the rural population compared to 43% of the population in urban areas. This seems to correlate with the reason why some WELS schools have a low percentage of racial and ethnic diversity among the student population.

Racial diversity is not strong in the WELS schools represented in this survey, but a large percentage of schools reflect the community where the school is located. Based on the cross-tabulation in Figure 9, the racial makeup of the school closely reflects the racial makeup of the community. Sixty-two respondents indicated that the school's community is majority White. It then makes sense, then, that sixty-one respondents stated that the majority of the students in their school are classified as White. Only fourteen of the respondents had a different racial makeup in the school compared to the greater community. This data shows that, based on the responses to this survey, that a majority of WELS schools are located in communities that are more homogeneous and have not experienced demographic changes similar to many areas of the country.

White might be the most prominent race in many WELS schools and WELS communities, as a higher percentage of respondents did indicate that the racial makeup of the greater community has changed over the last twenty years. This change might not be dramatic, but is noticeable. Based on the information provided in this survey, the majority of WELS schools are still located in traditionally White communities and are serving racially White students.

Racial diversity in many WELS schools has not changed dramatically, but that does not mean there is not a change among the students and families being served in

WELS schools. The percentage of the student body belonging to a WELS church has declined. Only thirty of the seventy-eight respondents stated that the majority of the students in the school continue to be majority WELS. Twenty-one respondents stated that there is more of a mix of WELS and non-WELS students in their school, and ten respondents are in schools that have gone from predominantly WELS students to non-WELS students.

Another noteworthy demographic change is in the makeup of the family. WELS schools in this survey do not seem to be completely in-line with national trends of unwed parents (Musick, 2007), since there are more students coming from non two-parent married families. This is increasing at a similar rate of non-WELS students attending WELS schools. More unchurched families in a school means there is a greater likelihood of students coming from non-traditional families. The most common form of non-traditional family is having separated parents still raising children together. A small percentage of respondents stated that more students are coming from backgrounds where only one parent is present or no parent. Sexual orientation of the parents was not specifically asked in any of the questions, but as that statistic increases in the United States, it likely will be a background that more WELS schools will encounter.

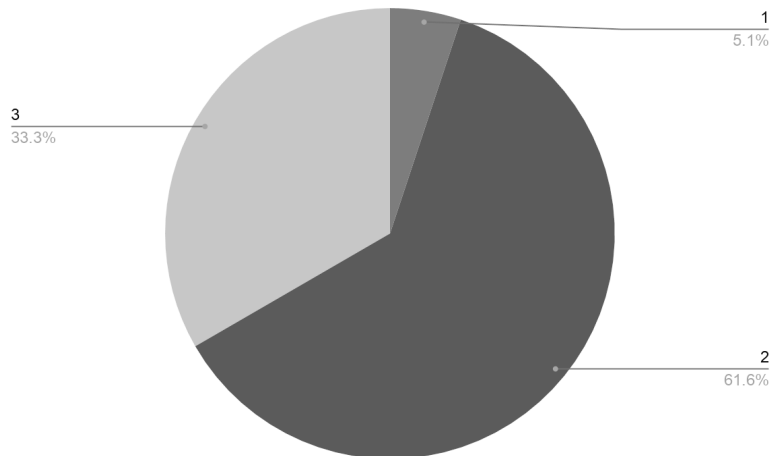
Based on the responses in open-ended questions, this change in the family structure is a change that many school leaders recognize. As the family structure changes, school leaders see that the percentage of low-income families in their individual schools is also increasing. Some of the respondents imply that these changes seem to be a factor

in more behavioral issues and less respect among students in the school. Less stability in the home is a cause for more struggles in the classroom.

One trend where WELS schools are similar to national averages is the average number of children in a family. Based on feedback from the survey, the greatest percentage of families in WELS schools have two children (figure 18). Respondents were given the option of selecting four and five or more as an option, but those two categories received zero responses.

Figure 18

Average Number of Children of the Families in WELS Schools



The family structure of families in WELS Schools is not entirely similar to national trends, but there are many similarities. The most noticeable observation is that WELS schools are experiencing changes within family units. The traditional family, the one that has been a cornerstone of the Church for centuries, is still prominent, but non-traditional families are more common. This change in the background and homelife of students will impact the success of students in school. It is also having an impact on school culture and discipline.

Increases in learning deficits and diagnosed educational labels are on the rise in WELS schools. The majority of schools have 10% or fewer of their students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), but school leaders are seeing more academic challenges even among students without an IEP.

School leaders recognize that students attending WELS schools today are coming from more diverse backgrounds and have different academic and behavioral needs, yet there seems to be little training in order to provide a strong education that fits the needs of the students. Over two-thirds of respondents have not participated in any sort of culturally relevant pedagogy training.

Conclusion

Based on the responses to this survey, it appears that these specific WELS schools have unique challenges and are facing challenging demographics in a variety of ways. Racial diversity does not seem as prominent in many WELS schools as compared to the nation's public schools as a whole, but it is a demographic that is changing. More noticeable are the changes in the homelife of the students. School leaders recognize that this change is occurring,

Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the information collected from the responding schools, which was only 12.5% of WELS schools. School leaders need to determine if these recommendations are applicable to their own school based on their school's demographics.

1. Be aware of demographic changes.

Location of a WELS school will impact the amount of demographic change a school potentially will experience, but all schools should be prepared for changes. The survey results reveal that even if WELS schools are not seeing racial demographic changes in their greater community, the backgrounds of the people are changing. More children are coming from homes that are not actively involved in a church community. With the rise of unmarried parents, the structure of many homes are different from just a generation before.

School leaders need to prioritize the importance of understanding the demographic makeup of the local community. I believe that one reason some school leaders opened this email but did not complete the survey is that they do not know who exactly lives in their local community. If a ministry has the mission to reach out to those in the local community, it is essential to understand to whom you are reaching out.

As a member of the WELS, schools have the opportunity to receive community demographic information through MissionInsite (missioninsite.com). Schools are able to receive statistical information about the religious, racial, and economic backgrounds of the people living in their community.

2. Prepare educators and school culture for demographic changes.

The majority of schools across the country are experiencing some sort of change among the student population. Even if it is not a significant change, most school leaders recognize that the makeup of students in current classrooms is different from just a generation ago. Changes in racial, cultural, and socio-economic demographics are only

going to continue to increase over the next few decades. All school leaders need to personally be prepared for changes and work with teaching and support staff in order to prepare for changes among students and families.

First, school leaders need to lead the faculty and school board through a school cultural audit. A school cultural audit is a tool designed to assess the organizational structure and be a strategic planning guide for diversity and global competence (Bustamante, 2006). Any organization needs to first understand where they currently stand in order to implement any needed change and growth. Many education departments at major universities have materials to help lead a cultural assessment. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) will help create cultural awareness among a staff.

After conducting a cultural assessment, school leaders should spend time educating the staff on educating racially and culturally diverse students. This is a monumental task that is daunting to many leaders. The survey results show that many leaders understand the need to lead such training, but it is difficult to know where to begin. That is why school leaders first need to understand the cultural demographics of their local community. Topics that are related to the local demographics are where professional development begins. For example, if a community is experiencing population growth of middle to upper-middle class Hispanics, then that is the cultural group a faculty needs to get to understand. Seek training that lets the participants learn about the culture of a specific group and how education is viewed in that group.

As diversity grows in a school, it becomes more important to be cognizant of the school culture and intentionally build a strong community. Creating a strong positive school culture will help assimilate students of all different backgrounds into the school family. One such method in creating a strong school culture is implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a proactive, multilevel approach to teaching and behaviors that places all students into three different tiers of behavioral support (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016). A proactive approach, whether it is PBIS or another similar program, will help foster strong communication among staff members and between staff and students, reinforce the beliefs of a school, and create a welcoming community (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). WELS schools have an advantage that public schools do not in that whatever school behavior management system is implemented, it can be rooted in the Gospel. Integrating God's Word in PBIS makes it an even stronger program that benefits all students.

Based on the results of the survey, many WELS schools are not experiencing significant racial demographic changes, nonetheless, school leaders are seeing changes in the backgrounds of students in many schools. No matter the makeup of the school community and the greater community, it is important for school leaders to work with teachers on how to properly educate students from a variety of different backgrounds. Being able to properly connect with the students and families coming to the school will create stronger relationships, which, in turn, will allow teachers more opportunities to share the Gospel.

3. Implement culturally relevant pedagogy in the school's curriculum.

Educators in the 21st century must understand that students from different backgrounds, whether it is racial, cultural, and/or socio-economic, have different educational needs. School leaders need to work with teachers in providing culturally relevant pedagogy to all students.

Research in culturally relevant pedagogy has increased over the last few decades. After doing a cultural assessment of a school and its culture, a faculty needs to evaluate the curriculum and work on implementing culturally relevant pedagogy in order to educate all students. As highlighted in the literature review, Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper (2011) lay out five concepts of focus in order to implement culturally relevant pedagogy. Numerous other educational researchers have studied this concept as well and have similar areas of focus in order to create a culturally relevant curriculum.

Understanding demographic changes among students is essential. It takes time and effort on the part of faculty to educate themselves on how to teach racially, culturally, and socio-economically diverse students. The more diversity in a school means more varied learning needs among students. Time and energy must be spent on how to best reach these students. Through dedicated work among school leaders and teachers in understanding these differences, WELS schools will be better prepared to educate the students of our changing country and share the gospel.

4. More research about changing demographics in WELS schools is needed.

This survey gives an indication that demographics are changing in WELS schools, but it is not a complete and entirely accurate picture of the state of WELS schools. The

low response rate from WELS schools, especially among WELS early childhood centers and high schools, does not give a complete understanding if demographic changes are prominent in many WELS schools, and if so, how those schools are responding to the changes.

After conducting more research and receiving more specific information about the racial, cultural, and socio-economic status in WELS schools, in-depth case studies about schools that are experiencing changing demographics needs to be conducted. As the demographics of the United States continues to change and more WELS schools might experience such change, it is important for school leaders, teachers, and boards of education to know how to work with more diverse students and families. Schools that are successfully addressing this change can be models throughout the synod as to how to properly educate students from more diverse backgrounds.

References

- Ahmann, E. (2013). ADHD among African-Americans. *Psych Central*. Retrieved December 11, 2020 from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/adhd-among-african-americans/>
- Aronson, B., & Laughter, J. (2016). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of Educational Research*, 86 (1). 163-203.
- Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network Surveillance Year 2010 Principal Investigators (2010). Prevalence of autism spectrum disorder among children aged 8 years - Autism and developmental disabilities monitoring network, 11 sites, United States, 2010. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Surveillance Summaries*, 63 (2). 1-21.
- Bauer, L., Moss, E., & Shambaugh, J. (2019). Who was poor in the US in 2018. *Brookings Institute*. Retrieved August 30, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2019/12/05/who-was-poor-in-the-u-s-in-2018/>
- Barroso, A., Parker, K., & Bennett, J. (2020). As millennials near 40, they're approaching family life differently than previous generations. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2020/05/27/as-millennials-near-40-theyre-approaching-family-life-differently-than-previous-generations/>
- Bennett, M.J. Ph.D. (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. *Toward Multiculturalism: A Reader in Multicultural Education*. Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation.
- Brown-Jeffy, S., & Cooper, J.E. (2011). Toward a conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy: An overview of the conceptual and theoretical literature. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 38 (1), 65-84.
- Bustamante, R.M. (2006). The culture audit: A leadership tool for assessment and strategic planning in diverse schools and colleges. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 1 (2), 1-5.
- Chamie, J. (2017). Out-of-wedlock births rise worldwide. Retrieved August 31, 2020, from <https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/out-wedlock-births-rise-worldwide>
- Cilluffo, A., & Cohn, D. (2019). 6 demographic trends shaping the U.S. and the world in 2019. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved December 1, 2020, from

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/11/6-demographic-trends-shaping-the-u-s-and-the-world-in-2019/>

- Cordova-Cobo, D., Fox, L., & Stuart Wells, A. (2016). How racially diverse schools and classrooms can benefit all students. *The Century Foundation*. Retrieved December 13, 2020 from <https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/?agreed=1>
- Craig, M.A., & Richeson, J.A. (2018). Majority no more? The influence of neighborhood racial diversity and salient population changes on whites' perceptions of racial discrimination. *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 4 (5). 141-157.
- Cramer, E.D., & Bennett, K.D. (2015). Implementing culturally responsive positive behavior interventions and supports in middle school classrooms. *Middle School Journal*, 46 (3), 18-24.
- Davison, J.C., & Ford, D. Y. (2001). Perceptions of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in one African American community. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 70 (4), 264-274.
- DeWolf, M. (2017). 12 stats about working women. *U.S. Department of Labor Blog*. Retrieved September 8, 2020 from <https://blog.dol.gov/2017/03/01/12-stats-about-working-women>
- Fea, J. (2013). Using the past to “save” our nation: The debate over Christian America. *OAH Magazine of History*, 27 (1). 7-11.
- Gay, G., & Kirkland, K. (2003). Developing cultural consciousness and self-reflection in preservice teacher education. *Theory Into Practice*, 42 (3), 181-187.
- Georgetown Law Library. (2020). A brief history of civil rights in the United States. Retrieved December 4, 2020 from <https://guides.ll.georgetown.edu/c.php?g=592919&p=4171684>.
- Gibson, C., & Jung, K. (2002). Historical census statistics on population totals by race, 1970 to 1990, and by hispanic origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, regions, divisions, and states. *U.S. Census Bureau*.
- Ginsberg, M.B. (2015). Making diverse classrooms safer for learning. *Educational Leadership*, 72(6).

- Goldin, C. (1998). America's graduation from high school: The evolution and spread of secondary schooling in the twentieth century. *Journal of economic history* 58(2): 345-374.
- Goldring, R., Gray, L., & Bitterman, A. (2013). Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States: Results from the 2011-12 schools and staffing survey. *U.S. Department of Education*. Retrieved December 7, 2020 from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>
- Griffin, P. (2016). Lgbt inclusion. *Contexts*, 15 (3), 17-19.
- Hamilton, B. E. P., Martin, J. A. M. P. H., & Osterman, M. J. K. M. H. S. (2020). Births: Provisional data for 2019. *National center for health statistics*. Retrieved September 9, 2020 from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr-8-508.pdf>
- Hernandez, D. J. (2011). Double jeopardy - How third grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation. *The Annie E. Casey Foundation*.
- Horowitz, J. M., & Livingston, G. (2019). Marriage and cohabitation in the U.S. *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*. Retrieved September 14, 2020. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/11/06/marriage-and-cohabitation-in-the-u-s/>
- Howard, T.C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory Into Practice* 42 (3), 195-202.
- Hoynes, H.W., Page, M.E., & Stevens, A.H. (2006). Poverty in America: Trends and explanations. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20 (1), 47-68.
- Irvin, J.L. & Darling, D. (2005). What research says: Improving minority student achievement by making cultural connections. *Middle School Journal*, 36 (5), 46-50.
- Kaplan, L.S., & Owings, W.A. (2013). The unaddressed costs of changing student demographics. *Journal of Education Finance*, 39(1), 15-46.
- Khalifa, M.A., Gooden, M.A., & Davis, J.E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86 (4), 1272-1311.
- Krogstad, J. M., & Fry, R. (2014). Dept. of ed. projects public schools will be 'majority-minority' this fall. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved September 6, 2020.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/08/18/u-s-public-schools-expected-to-be-majority-minority-starting-this-fall/>

- Ladd, H.F. (2012). Presidential address: Education and poverty: Confronting the evidence. *The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 31 (2), 203-227.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32 (3), 465-491.
- Lipka, M. (2016). Why America's 'nones' left religion behind. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved December 5, 2020 from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/24/why-americas-nones-left-religion-behind/>
- Livingston, G. (2018). The changing profile of unmarried parents. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved May 11, 2021. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2018/04/25/the-changing-profile-of-unmarried-parents/>
- Malik, R. (2019). Working families are spending big money on child care. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved September 30, 2020 from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2019/06/20/471141/working-families-spending-big-money-child-care/>
- Maxwell, L. A. (2020). U.S. school enrollment hits majority-minority milestone. Retrieved September 24, 2020, from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/08/20/01demographics.h34.html>
- Moody, M. (2016). From under-diagnoses to over-representation: Black children, ADHD, and the school-to-prison pipeline. *Journal of African American Studies*, 20 (2), 152-163.
- Morgan, H. (2010). Improving schooling for cultural minorities: The right teaching styles can make a big difference. *Educational Horizons*.
- Musick, K. (2007). Cohabitation, nonmarital childbearing, and the marriage process. *Demographic Research*, 16, 249-286.
- National Center of Educational Statistics. (2019) Students with disabilities. Retrieved October 09, 2020, from <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). Fast facts: Educational attainment (27). <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=27>

- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *The Condition of Education - Postsecondary Education - Postsecondary Students - College Enrollment Rates - Indicator May (2020)*. Nces.Ed.Gov.
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cpb.asp#:~:text=Over%20a%20more%20recent%20time,31%20percent%20during%20this%20period
- Nuri-Robins, K., Lindsey, D. B., Terrell, R. D., & Lindsey, R. B. (2005). *Cultural Proficiency: Tools for School Leaders*. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Pastor, P.N., & Reuben, C.A. (2005). Racial and ethnic differences in ADHD and LD in young school-age children: Parental reports in the national health interview survey. *Public Health Reports (1974-), 120 (4)*, 383-392.
- Pew Forum. (2019). In U.S., Decline of christianity continues at rapid pace. *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. Retrieved September 6, 2020.
<https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>
- Pew Research Center. (2015). *The rise in dual income households*. Retrieved September 1, 2020, from
https://www.pewresearch.org/ft_dual-income-households-1960-2012-2/
- Population Reference Bureau (2020). *Children are at the forefront of U.S. racial and ethnic change*. Retrieved September 2, 2020, from
<https://www.prb.org/children-are-at-the-forefront-of-u-s-racial-and-ethnic-change/>
- Richards, H. V., Brown, A. F., & Forde, T. B. (2007). Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy. *Council for Exceptional Children*, (Jan / Feb), 64-68.
- Ryan, C. L., & Bauman, K. (2016). Educational attainment in the United States: 2015. *United States Census Bureau*. Retrieved September 5, 2020.
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p20-578.pdf>
- Schaeffer, K. (2020). As schools shift to online learning amid pandemic, here's what we know about disabled students in the U.S. *Fact Tank*. Retrieved May 11, 2021 from
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/04/23/as-schools-shift-to-online-learning-amid-pandemic-heres-what-we-know-about-disabled-students-in-the-u-s/>
- Seeshing Yeung, A., Craven, R.G., Mooney, M., Tracey, D., Barker, K., Power, A., Dobia, B., Zhu, C., Schofield, J., Whitefield, P., & Lewis, T.J. (2016)

Positive behavior interventions: the issue of sustainability of positive effects. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28 (1), 145-170.

- Superville, D. R. (2019). Many white principals feel ill-equipped to support students of color, poor children. *Education Week - District Dossier*. Retrieved September 5, 2020 from https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2019/07/what_principal_s_and_teachers_think_about_prep_programs.html#:~:text=Nearly%2040%20percent%20of%20white,from%20a%20survey%20of%20principals
- Thomas, R. (2013). Attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder: Are we helping or harming? *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, 347 (7932), 18-20.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). 1940-2010: How has America changed? Retrieved September 4, 2020 from https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/visualizations/2012/comm/1940_census_change.pdf
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). What is rural America? Retrieved May 2, 2021 from <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2017/08/rural-america.html>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). 1960 Census: Race of the population of the U.S. by states. The United States Census Bureau. Retrieved September 4, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1961/dec/pc-s1-10.html#:~:text=The%20white%20population%20of%20the.and%2089.3%20percent%20in%201950>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). For young adults, cohabitation is up, marriage is down. The United States Census Bureau. Retrieved September 4, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2018/11/cohabitation-is-up-marriage-is-down-for-young-adults.html>
- US Census Bureau Public Information Office. (2011). 2010 census shows America's diversity - 2010 Census - Newsroom - U.S. Census Bureau. Census.Gov. Retrieved September 2, 2020. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb11-cn125.html
- U.S. Census Bureau, & Taylor, D. (2019). Where same-sex couples live. *The United States Census Bureau*. Retrieved September 2, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/09/where-same-sex-couples-live.html>
- U.S. Census Bureau & U.S. Department of Commerce. (2019). Median age at first marriage: 1890 to present. Census.Gov. Retrieved September 4, 2020.

<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/visualizations/time-series/demo/families-and-households/ms-2.pdf>

- U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2018) Racial and ethnic minorities made up about 22 percent of the rural population in 2018, compared to 43 percent in urban areas. Retrieved May 11, 2021.
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=99538#:~:text=Rural%20America%20is%20less%20racially,57.3%20percent%20of%20urban%20areas.&text=Blacks%20made%20up%207.8%20percent,percent%20of%20the%20urban%20population>.
- U.S. Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). Employment characteristics of families - 2019.
<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/famee.pdf>
- Vargas, N. (2012). Retrospective accounts of religious disaffiliation in the United States: Stressors, skepticism, and political factors. *Sociology of Religions*, 73 (2), 200-223.
- Vespa, J., Medina, L., & Armstrong, D.M. (2020). Demographic turning points for the United States: Population projections for 2020 to 2060. *U.S. Census Bureau*.
- Welch, K., & Payne, A.A. (2010). Racial threat and punitive school discipline. *Social Problems*, 57 (1), 25-48.
- WELS School Statistics 2020-2021. Retrieved May 14, 2021 from
<https://cls.welsrc.net/download-cls/general-documents/?wpdmdl=3106&inid=1606226657714>
- Wilson, V., & Schieder, J. (2018). The rise in child poverty reveals racial inequality, more than a failed War on Poverty. Retrieved September 3, 2020, from
<https://www.epi.org/publication/the-rise-in-child-poverty-reveals-racial-in-equality-more-than-a-failed-war-on-poverty/>
- Zablotsky, B., Black, L., Maenner, M., Schieve, L., Danielson, M., Bitsko, R., Blumberg, S., Kogan, M., Boyle, C. (2019). Prevalence and trends of developmental disabilities among children in the United States. *Pediatrics: Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, 144(4), 1-11. www.aappublications.org/news.

Appendix A: Introduction Letter

Dear WELS Early Childhood Director or Principal,

My name is Nate Reich and I am serving as principal at Saint Paul Lutheran School in Green Bay, Wisconsin. How have the students in your classroom seats changed over your ministry? Are the families you are ministering to today similar to those of just ten or twenty years ago? Is your school an accurate reflection of your greater community? The demographics of people in our country are changing. This change is highly evident among children in American schools. As part of my thesis for my Master in Science in Educational Administration degree through Martin Luther College, I am sending out a survey in order to find out exactly how the demographics of WELS schools are changing and how those changes are impacting individual ministries and the school's ministry as a whole. Please consider taking this 20 minutes survey in order to gather more data about the students our Lutheran schools are serving. Those of us in Lutheran education know the wonderful blessings students receive daily in our schools. As the country changes, it is important for individual school leaders and our Lutheran schools system as a whole to fully understand the backgrounds of the people in our communities. Understanding the background of those around us will allow school leaders to better equip teachers, governing boards, and congregations to live the Great Commission and meet the needs of those we are called to serve.

If you have any questions about this project or the survey, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your participation.

In Christ,

Nate Reich
nate.reich@stpaulgreenbay.com

Appendix B: Principal and Director Survey**Part 1 - School Information**

1. What is the 2020-2021 enrollment in your school (all grades from PreK - grade 12)?
 - a. 0-50
 - b. 51-100
 - c. 101-150
 - d. 151-200
 - e. 200+
2. What grades are offered at your school?
 - a. PreK Only
 - b. Five-Year Old Kindergarten - Grade 8
 - c. PreK - Grade 8
 - d. Grades 9-12
 - e. PreK - Grade 12
3. How long has your school been in operation?
 - a. 0-20 years
 - b. 21-50 years
 - c. 51-100 years
 - d. 100+ years
4. How has your enrollment changed from 2000-2020?
 - a. Significant Decrease (more than 50%)
 - b. Moderate Decrease (26 - 50%)
 - c. Slight Decrease (10 - 25%)
 - d. Relatively Stable (9% Decrease - 9% Increase)
 - e. Slight Increase (10 - 25%)
 - f. Moderate Increase (26 - 50%)

Part 2 - Student and Community Information

1. What percentage of your students are classified as part of a minority race?
 - a. 0%
 - b. 1-5%
 - c. 6-10%
 - d. 10-25%
 - e. 26-50%
 - f. More than 50%
2. What percent of your faculty (called and non-called staff) is classified as part of a minority race?
 - a. 0%
 - b. 1-5%
 - c. 6-10%
 - d. 11-25%
 - e. 26-50%
 - f. More than 50%

3. What is the classification of the community where your school is located?
 - a. Rural (fewer than 2,500 people)
 - b. Urban Cluster (2,500 - 50,000 people)
 - c. Urban Area (greater than 50,000)
 - d. Suburban (community inside an urban area with a population less than 100,000)
4. How has the population of your community changed over the last 20 years?
 - a. Decreased
 - b. Relatively the Same
 - c. Increased
5. What is the predominant racial ethnicity in your school?
 - a. American Indian
 - b. Asian American
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. non-Hispanic White
 - f. Other
 - g. There is no predominant racial ethnicity.
6. What is the predominant racial ethnicity of the community where your school is located?
 - a. American Indian
 - b. Asian American
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic or Latino
 - e. non-Hispanic White
 - f. Other
 - g. There is no predominant racial ethnicity.
7. How has the racial ethnicity of your school changed over the last twenty years?
 - a. Little to no change - the school has been predominantly non-Hispanic White for the last twenty years.
 - b. Little to no change - the school has been predominantly a minority race for the last twenty years.
 - c. There is more racial diversity in the school but minority students still make up a small percentage of the total population (25% or less).
 - d. The racial ethnicity of the students in the school has changed from being predominantly non-Hispanic White to predominantly a minority race.
 - e. The racial ethnicity of the school has changed from predominantly one race to no predominate race.
8. How has the racial ethnicity of your school's community changed over the last twenty years?
 - a. Little to no change - the school's community has been predominantly non-Hispanic White for the last twenty years.
 - b. Little to no change - the school's community has been predominantly a minority race(s) for the last twenty years.

- c. There is more racial diversity in the school's community but minority races still account for a small percentage of the total population (25% or less).
- d. The school's community has changed from predominantly white to a predominately minority race.
- e. The school's community has changed from predominantly one race to no predominant race.

Part 3 - Family, Home & Religious Background

1. What percent of your students are members of your congregation or another WELS congregation?
 - a. 0-10%
 - b. 11-25%
 - c. 26-50%
 - d. 51-75%
 - e. 56-90%
 - f. 91-100%
2. Has the church membership of your students changed over the last twenty years?
 - a. Little to no change - the majority of students belong to a WELS church.
 - b. Little to no change - the majority of the students are non-WELS.
 - c. The school has changed from predominantly WELS students to a fairly even mix of WELS students and others (other Christian, non-Christian, and unchurched).
 - d. The school has changed from predominantly WELS students to predominantly non-WELS (other Christians, non-Christians, and unchurched).
3. On average each year, how many non-member families end up joining your church or another WELS church.
 - a. 0
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3
 - e. 4
 - f. 5+
4. What percent of your students are being raised by married parents?
 - a. 01-10%
 - b. 11-25%
 - c. 26-50%
 - d. 51-75%
 - e. 76-90%
 - f. 91-100%
5. For students not living with married parents, what is the most common living arrangement for those students?
 - a. Cohabiting Parents (not legally married)
 - b. Split Parents (both parents still directly involved in raising children)

- c. Single Parent (little to no contact with one parent)
 - d. Other Relative
6. How has the family structure of the students in your school changed over the last twenty years?
- a. As in previous generations, the majority of students are still being raised by married parents.
 - b. There are more non-traditional families in the school, but married parents still make up the majority of the families in the school.
 - c. Only a small percentage of the families have married parents.
7. What is the average number of children of the families in your school?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5+

Part 4 - Education & Economic Background

1. How would you classify the educational attainment of the majority of the members in your school's community?
- a. High School Drop-out
 - b. High School Diploma
 - c. Community College (Associate's Degree or Trade School)
 - d. Four Year College (Bachelor's Degree)
 - e. Advanced Degrees (Master's or Doctorate)
2. What percent of your students have an Individualized Education Plan?
- a. 0-10%
 - b. 11-25%
 - c. 26-50%
 - d. 51-75%
 - e. 76-90%
 - f. 91-100%
3. What percentage of your students come from a home below the poverty line? (For a family of 4, poverty is classified at an income of \$26,200 or below)
- a. 0-10%
 - b. 11-25%
 - c. 26-50%
 - d. 51-75%
 - e. 76-90%
 - f. 91-100%
4. Does your school participate in the Federal and Reduced Lunch Program?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

5. If your school does participate in the Federal and Reduced Lunch Program, what percentage of your students qualify for this program? (Do not answer if you answered no to the previous question)
 - a. 0-10%
 - b. 11-25%
 - c. 26-50%
 - d. 51-75%
 - e. 76-90%
 - f. 91-100%
6. Has your faculty participated in any formal training / continuing education on the topic of educating diverse learners and / or creating and implementing culturally relevant pedagogy?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Part 5 - Open-ended Questions

1. Over the tenure of your teaching ministry, how have the students in your classroom changed racially, culturally, and socio-economically?
2. Is your student body an accurate representation of your greater community? Why or why not might that be the case?
3. What struggles do your teachers face as student populations change from “traditional” WELS students to those of more diverse backgrounds?
4. How has instruction, classroom management, and school culture changed in response to changing student demographics?
5. As a school leader, what have you done in order to prepare and train your staff to properly and effectively educate diverse students? Please discuss any professional development, classes, or training that you and / or your staff have participated in.

Appendix C: Open-Ended Question Response 1

Open-Ended Question 1: Over the tenure of your teaching ministry, how have the students in your school changed culturally, and / or socio-economically?	
1	We have seen more families come to us from poorer backgrounds due mostly to government support programs like Wisconsin Parental Choice.
2	I have served in extremely different circumstances, from the middle of the second largest metro area in the country, and a small suburb in the middle of the midwest. Those changes have much more affected the students I have served than any changes over time.
3	They haven't changed that much, except we are drawing more community (nonmember) families.
4	Mostly the same. A huge increase of divorced families since I was in school 20 years ago.
5	There's a slight increase in diversity across race and economics.
6	More racially diverse, more poor students, more 1 parent homes
7	video games, internet, broken families
8	We have had a slight increase in minority students. We have also seen a slight increase in families using tuition assistance from outside sources.
9	We have seen an increase in hispanic students.
10	No.
11	It has stayed relatively the same
12	In this community it seems that things have remained rather steady.
13	We have become more diverse in all areas as we have increased the number of non-member families in the school
14	I think that depends on the area you are serving. A former school that I served at changed pretty drastically from mostly church families to unchurched or churched from another denomination. Other schools that I have served at have remained relatively stable.
15	More entitlement -- less respect for authority
16	We have more outreach toward African families.
17	It depends on the part of the country where I have served. I have served in suburban settings throughout the country - Wisconsin was predominantly white and stable marriages. Virginia DC was culturally diverse and more broken homes - in all areas middle class
18	A 50% increase. In this area, primarily transitioning from Puerto Rico, Jamaica or New York.
19	We are more diverse racially. Our school is viewed as a safe, positive alternative with a Christian setting. We are now nearly 50% school choice.
20	We have gone from a predominately African-American student body to a very diverse one. We are now slightly more Hispanic than African American with a growing African Immigrant population.

21	We have a wide range of children from all socio-economic groups. Some from very affluent families, some from a single parent family seeking financial aid. We have a Spanish Ministry at our Grace Lutheran Church, so we are able to capture a lot of Hispanic families (some parents barely speak English) and often they seek financial aid. Living close to the DC metro brings in a wonderful melting pot of people. Also, our demographics can change a lot, being we take in a lot of military transfers in and transfers out -- they are from all racial groups. We even have a boy from Japan this year (parents are Japanese civil servant workers here for a two year term). We've had children from Greece, children from Germany, it's awesome!
22	When our church and school were started in the 1960's families were more average. Our socio-economic characteristics have improved/increased as our community is attracting people with more education, finances, and education.
23	More families qualify for school choice at our Lutheran high school. This tells us that our economic base is lower than it used to be.
24	More racial minorities, greater racial diversity, still middle-class
25	Very little.
26	little change in my ministry. I have only been teaching 6 years.
27	Racially hasn't changed much; more split families and more economically disadvantaged now
28	The family mores have diminished the most
29	I've moved from less diverse school to a more diverse school. This school has become more diverse by every measure over time.
30	Culturally - more acceptance of alternate lifestyles, more broken marriages
31	The families of our children are less manufacturing and farming and more service job oriented.
32	radially and culturally
33	About the same
34	At the same location? Students are the same.
35	Stayed the same for the most part.
36	This is largely dependent on the locations where I've served, but I would say that my current location lends itself to increasing racial diversity.
37	Not much, but I have only been teaching 11 years
38	I have experienced little to no change in the two locations I shared my ministry.
39	Remained relatively the same-community as well
40	NA: first year here
41	Many more split families
42	Little to no change within my time at the school.

43	There has been little change.
44	They have been primarily white.
45	about the same
46	Yes. The diversity had increased to a tipping point. We need to carefully make efforts to maintain a balanced, ethnically-balanced enrollment
47	The four schools I have served in each have their own unique history and pattern of change or no change. The most common denominator is the decreasing number of strong, long-standing member school families, and the higher number of non-member families and minority children.
48	More and more children are raised in non-traditional families.
49	More multicultural students whose parents are each from a different ethnic background.
50	The students and parents are more concerned with entertainment than educational.
51	The students have changed very little.
52	Our number of non-members in our school has increased.
53	I've been here since '98 (SAHM for many of those years). Our students have changed both racially and culturally. We now have many students who are first year immigrant children, largely from west African countries. We went from one African American student in '98 to now serving culturally diverse. Our tuition is expensive based on WELS standards for preschool/elementary (\$5300/7800) but is inexpensive for our area. Socio-economics haven't changed.
54	The students have not changed a whole lot. I think the community as a whole is stable and not changing much.
55	.
56	N/A
57	No change
58	Hard to say since I have not been in one area more than 6 years...little time to comment on significant change.
59	In my 10 years the students have remained static.
60	Not at my current call
61	I have been teaching for 13 years but only 6 years are my current school. I see a rise in split families and in smaller sizes of families, but the race and socio-economic status remains stable.
62	Parenting is worse
63	Over my 25 years, my school families have remained of the same make up. Low educated parents with children mainly without goals. The difference now is that more parents are involved in drugs.
64	I have served in several different places over the last 30 years and have been in different school settings, but I would have to say that currently we are ministering to more varied racial groups than in the past.

65	I have not been at the school long enough to answer this.
66	I think the biggest change is more families with financial difficulty.
67	I suppose we are becoming a bit more diverse in all three areas. There seem to be more extremes.
68	No change to report
69	Children are surrounded with technology at home, but don't know how to entertain themselves. Children don't know how to use puzzles, blocks, and other toys. More children have homes where both parents work, making before and aftercare essential for more families.
70	Our enrollment has increase greatly so I have seen more non-members, non-traditional families, and Native Americans. However, the majority of our students are white from a traditional married family.
71	they have not
72	They have not really changed, other than going from farm kids to small city kids
73	We are serving a higher number of unchurched families. They are coming to us through our Child Care and Preschool ministries. We are seeing more divorces in general, but more concerning are the increase in divorces in the church membership.
74	Culturally, the student population has remained the same, 1 or two students of a minority ethnicity. Socio-economically, students families are closer to the poverty level than in years past.
75	Not a lot of change. We do have some Asian-American students in our school just within the last 5 years.
76	My experience is that there has been little change in my ministry
77	none
78	In my current school, which I have been at for less than two years, not much has changed. My previous schools were in a large urban city. There the make-up of the school changed greatly. Both schools were very diverse racially, but did not start out that way. The income level of the parents was also dropping.

Appendix D: Open-Ended Question Response 2

Open-Ended Question 2: Is your student body an accurate representation of your greater community? Why or why not might that be the case?	
1	Yes. Culturally we are primarily white as is the community. We also reflect the socioeconomic background.
2	Yes. We intentionally reach out to our community to provide them with an excellent, Christ-centered education. Because the financial barriers for entry are removed through WI Choice Programs, parents are able to choose our school because they want to, not only because they are financially able to, or are already members of our church family.
3	Yes, quite accurate.
4	Yes. School is mostly white mid-lower class just like the school community.
5	There could be more diversity in our students body for Hispanic students.
6	Yes
7	yes
8	Yes. We are in a very large neighborhood that has always had a large number of families with young children.
9	No, the community is more diverse than our school community.
10	Not really. Many of the students of our school come from surrounding communities, so they really don't have a direct connection to this community.
11	Yes. People tend to choose child care close to home
12	Yes, because of the small community the representation is quite accurate.
13	Yes, we are a neighborhood school with the majority of our students coming from within two miles of the school
14	No. There are more Asian and African American groups around our school, but the majority don't come. This could be because there is more of a diverse population in a public school and they feel more comfortable there. It could also be the lack of a racially diverse staff. While our school is in an urban area, our church is in more of a suburban white neighborhood which is where most of our students come from.
15	Yes -- farming community, close families, but not much desire for higher education
16	It is very close.
17	Yes
18	Yes, After hurricane Irma devastated Puerto Rico many moved to the greater Tampa areas.
19	Yes. We have Hispanic, African-American, and white students in the mix.

20	We have more Hispanic students than is representative in our community, although that could be because illegal immigrants aren't reported in demographic data. I believe we have a higher representation because of our Hispanic congregation, ministry and pastor.
21	Yes, most likely. Being we live in an area where people come and go (military, government workers, etc.)
22	Yes
23	Yes- we could interchange our students with our local public schools and no noticeable difference of socio-economic would be seen.
24	Yes. In fact, we may be a bit more racially diverse than the community. Why? Interest in having smaller classes, a safer environment, and most importantly - the Word of God.
25	I would say mostly yes. There has been a greater influx of hispanic and hmong in the community but not in my school.
26	Yes.
27	I would say as a general statement our school body is rather representative of the community
28	yes- but more married situations
29	Our school is diverse and our community is diverse, but the demographics don't exactly match up. Our school is less white and Hispanic and more black than our community.
30	No; tuition excludes some families
31	Our students attend church more regularly than the community as a whole. They have a higher achievement level.
32	Yes, our community is predominately white.
33	Yes
34	Yes. The population is almost universally white, lower-middle class
35	Yes, I believe it is just our location.
36	Pretty much. There is greater diversity in the community adjacent to us.
37	For the most part. If we had a couple more Hispanic students it would be right on.
38	I feel like we are an accurate representation of the greater community. I believe that is true because there are mostly Caucasian people in our community.
39	Yes since the families represent the majority of the community
40	Mostly yes, however I think our minority percentage is less. We have more Southeast Asians in the community but only seem to have those children in our preschool.
41	Not really. More married, better educated parents.
42	Most of the students in our school are white, which is similar to also our community.
43	Yes, they are an accurate representation. I think it is the case because they are growing up in a rural

	setting, and the students are taught very specific values by their parents.
44	Yes, it is.
45	Yes; not a very wealthy area
46	Our student body does reflect the diversity of our community, The ability to accept vouchers has allowed that possibility.
47	Our enrollment mirrors the ethnicity and socio-economic grou[s of our community pretty well.
48	No, we have less minority than our community and I believe less non-traditional families than the community.
49	Yes. Our area splits pretty evenly between Hispanic, Caucasian, and Asian. All of whom are represented in our student body.
50	Pretty close
51	Yes, the city attracts middle or upper middle class families.
52	Yes, our city is predominately white, which is the race of families that come to our school.
53	Our community has many sub-culture pockets of many different immigrant groups. Somehow we made connections into the west African group, but with Covid in the last year we've seen an influx of caucasian.
54	Yes, I believe the age of our community is getting older, as more young families want to be nearer the city life. Our enrollment has increased in the past 4 year, but I believe that is because the cost of care is so much higher in the larger areas of the state.
55	No.
56	Yes, We are a small rural community and our students are all from our community.
57	Yes, that is the only feeder for the school
58	Mostly, but slightly less diverse.
59	Yes. It seems we have a cross section of the community because Emanuel is a big part of the community.
60	most definitely
61	Yes. We joined the Choice program a couple years ago, so we have families that represent the community at the lower socio-economic end of the spectrum and also tuition paying parents at the higher end.
62	yes
63	Yes. That is where we get our kids from.
64	I believe that our students are an accurate representation of our greater community.
65	I have not been at the school long enough to answer this.
66	In general our school is an accurate cross section of our community. We live in a small town with few minorities and what we see in our school is similar to what we see in the grocery stores or on the streets.

67	Yes - we reflect the community - many people living relatively comfortably
68	In both of my school settings the school was overall representative of the community at large.
69	The student body represents the community because it reflects the mostly blue collar community.
70	I think it is close. We only have us and HeadStart for preschool in our program. However, I think our families are more traditional and have more degrees than the HeadStart program because we charge tuition.
71	maybe, there is more diversity in the community than our school
72	yes, the majority of the people are white middle class families
73	Yes. We are a mostly white community with a small minority presence.
74	The student body is not a good representation of the more affluent, tourist community.
75	No. We are predominately white and there are other racial cultures within the community.
76	It is not a good representation. The community is quite diverse. We are mostly white.
77	No. There are a large number of single parents, low income and special needs in our community. When you get on the state site for group homes - you also find a huge number of foster care homes in the area. We get many calls to see if we take state assistance.
78	Yes, our student body is an accurate representation of our community. Our community is basically white, blue-collared families. The same is true of our school.

Appendix E: Open-Ended Question Response 3

Open-Ended Question 3: What struggles do your teachers face as student populations change from "traditional" WELS students to those of more diverse backgrounds?	
1	Diversity in cultural has not been an issue. However, we have seen more students enroll with academic needs. Meeting those needs becomes increasingly challenging.
2	The biggest struggles not in serving the students, kids are kids. The biggest struggles come in relating to their backgrounds and their families backgrounds and finding ways to connect them with Jesus and with a high quality education relevant to them.
3	n/a
4	The absence of Law and Gospel in discipline at home.
5	Being aware of stereotypes and how to properly teach about different cultures without causing offense.
6	Understanding diverse family situations and diversity among students
7	individualized and personal
8	There are very few struggles due to this factor.
9	Biblical truths not being taught in the home.
10	The only real struggle our faculty has had with the change in our student population is that many of our new students have very little background in Bible stories or Bible use even.
11	We have next to none WELS background students and a majority of our staff is the same.
12	Understanding of diversity.
13	We have to be intentional about our school culture, we need to challenge all traditional activities and practices to see it from the view of an unchurched student/family, we have to be more willing to meet people where they are at in life rather than where we expect them to be.
14	Understanding other cultures and their background knowledge.
15	Dealing with less respect
16	Helping students with special needs.
17	Broken homes have presented more challenges with parental support/involvement. Culture has not been a big challenge as much as the break up of the two parent household
18	Language barriers due to the lack of Spanish speaking staff.
19	Our audience is not all WELS. Our audience is Christian. Our goal is to lead students and families to Christ. We still struggle with totally integrating all races socially. However, our student body is more accepting of people of all backgrounds than ever before.
20	We have never been a traditional WELS school. I think that more than the ethnic diversity, the impact of poverty on our students causes challenges in the classroom.

21	Our biggest struggle might be that it is difficult to communicate with some parents who speak little English. Some of our Hispanic families do not use the internet and it is not a priority to stay connected to what is events going on at our school. The emphasis on asking the parent to communicate with us as needed, or bringing their child to school on time can be an issue. We try to do our best to reach out by using all technology - weekly newsletters, emails, Facebook, texts, the teachers put out their own emails each week with information (they have a "teacher talk" email blast each week), Pastor Satorius helps greatly by reaching out as needed with Hispanic families. He translates tuition/Financial Aid issues for me so I can reach out to a parent who speaks little English.
22	More highly educated professional parents have high expectations for teachers.
23	We experience less support from families in the sense that they have not been tarined in a service mentality. However, we are working hard to change that.
24	The racial diversity does not create 'struggles.' However, behavior challenges (mostly from white children) do.
25	I don't have much change.
26	Understanding the lack of religious knowledge that new students have.
27	less parental involvement on those students who struggle; more students with "baggage" (split families, lower abilities, ADHD/ADD or ODD or allergies or something)
28	connection with Biblical assumptions
29	Communication is sometimes difficult with parents whose first language isn't English. Many of our parents don't hold to our religious beliefs, which sometimes causes tension.
30	Addressing Biblical standards without driving people away
31	Creating a greater sense of responsibility in parents so they feel they are majrity holder in their child's education.
32	We need develop strategies to educate as we have more non-wels students in our classrooms.
33	Ministering to broken families,
34	As this statement isn't true at this place, no struggles are here.
35	We haven't seen this change at our school.
36	Agreement on the authority of scripture and doctrine. Increasing number of students that have experienced significant trauma.
37	The big change is with split families. It is hard for our teachers emotionally knowing what a few of our students have to put up with in their home life.
38	We have not experienced any true challenges due to students of diverse backgrounds.
39	Reaching the families with the Gospel-not all open to hearing the Word but rather want a safe place for their child to learn
40	I think the largest struggles come from less parenting skills.

41	Communication with parents, commitment by parents to participate in their child's education
42	We have not had many struggles, but sometimes have more challenging interaction and culture differences with parents.
43	This has not been our case.
44	We deal with many worldly no churched children and families that has not
45	family struggles
46	The teachers required more resources and professional development. We add more staff. We have had several special presentations on race.
47	Dealing with more students who do not have good English language skills. Getting kids to attend our congregation's Sunday worship service. Understanding specific cultural expectations i.e. child expected to excel and be in advanced classes
48	Contact and support of both parents. Children getting help on school work from parents.
49	Keeping up with all of the different family structures of the students.
50	Our students are white . We struggle keeping students focused on learning
51	Different or no religious beliefs.
52	Some families like our school because it's small, safe, and doesn't push the agendas of the public school has in their agenda. While we're thankful these students are in our school hearing about Jesus everyday. Christian education is not their first priority. Helping these students learn what it means to live as a Christian when they weren't raised with Christian values is a challenge at times.
53	As a faculty we are acutely aware how our biases we are not aware of can play a role in our system. However, we have a group of African Americans for whom their heritage is understandably important (we are in the south, I think location in America plays a significant role), but it is not the heritage of our families from Africa. It's more of an opportunity to get to know our families and build relationships--especially because our primary mission is to connect these families to Jesus.
54	Dealing with the family dynamics and the change in the family structure- specifically with parents that are not living together and maybe don't even get along.
55	The diversity of religious backgrounds and family structures has challenged the teachers to break out of repeating routines and practices based on the traditions of the past.
56	Communicating with parents
57	Support
58	Not dealing with this change. Never been "traditional" WELS.
59	We are in need of more tools to assess learning needs and how to assist children with those needs.
60	Parenting issues are our number 1 priority
61	Teachers mention that they struggle with how to approach talking about families when the "traditional" family unit is changing so much.

62	our student body is not diverse
63	Teachers have always had to fight sin in their students and parents. I see no difference in teacher struggles. Parents have always been irrationally on their children's side and against the teacher's opinion.
64	Sometimes we have non-English speaking students where communication is most difficult with the parents because they speak less English than the students.
65	I don't necessarily think the teachers have struggles with this change. I do wonder if the congregation has struggled with this which could impact some students that we could potentially receive.
66	I think the need for special education services is our biggest struggle. We have more children with learning and behavioral issues than ever before and often are not equipped to deal with the behaviors presented.
67	Understanding non-WELS and even non-Christian students is essential for our ministry.
68	God's word does not change, but we need to adapt it to fit the situations that our students are in.
69	Students and parents have no idea about God. Students don't know how to obey, use polite words to talk to others, and entertain themselves. Some don't know what a book is. Church attendance is extremely poor for all families.
70	I have not seen any challenges.
71	general cultural knowledge
72	n/a
73	The biggest struggle would lack of parent involvement at all levels.
74	Understanding cultural nuances, understanding a wide range of religious backgrounds
75	Language barriers
76	Lack of understanding
77	Divorced or seperated parents trying to pull teachers into their personal lives. Dealing with children thathave behavior issues because of the different parenting types of divorced couples.
78	Most of my faculty have always taught in traditional WELS schools were nearly all families were WELS members and have been for generations. They are not used to having students who are not as familiar with the Bible and do not have a strong knowledge of Scriptures.

Appendix F: Open-Ended Question Response 4

Open-Ended Question 4: How has instruction, classroom management, and school culture changed in response to changing student demographics?	
1	Not much.
2	This is a question better left for books to be written and speak about, not a short answer on a Google for:)
3	Our demographic has stayed relatively the same.
4	I think we try to be more individualized and meet the students where they are academically.
5	Nothing much has changed.
6	Dress, speech, and addressing racial topics
7	very little
8	There has not been a significant change other than trying to be more sensitive to varying family dynamics.
9	Discipline has increased. Creating a school culture of "family" is harder when non-church members are not as involved in the school.
10	Our classroom instruction has had to change slightly since we now have more variations of academic students in our grades. The biggest change is in students who have never had memory work before.
11	We have only had to adapt to new protocols but our demographic has stayed pretty much the same
12	Students are more vocal, into themselves, and not willing to put the effort into their work.
13	We have become more academically focused, have had to be more intentional about our classroom management and school culture because we are not just "preaching to the choir" anymore, there is very little common ground to build on with unchurch families when it comes to the reason for behavior correction and intentional school culture.
14	We have had to be more consistent with our classroom management as we have gotten more students from our community.
15	Try to create a family atmosphere in school.
16	We are purposely looking for ways to connect with the new families in our community and school.
17	Not a big change
18	Everything with the classroom and the center changes when you have language and cultural differences. So we use great patience, translation apps, posters and any type of print is labeled in both English and Spanish. We teach children basic Spanish words and phrases, counting to 20 , colors, and the alphabet in both Spanish and English. We also teach sign language.
19	A focus on a solid Christian foundation has not changed, however, WELS only has.
20	I think our shift to a more balanced ethnic make-up has actually helped our student body and school. Our school culture is rich with all of the different kinds of students and families. As I said above, I believe the

	impact of poverty has caused our teachers to have to learn a slightly new way of teaching and managing to deal with management and instruction.
21	A difficult year with the pandemic... hard to answer this question. Children have more time to use the internet at home or on their phones... and what is out there online is not always good. (such as Political issues, BLM, misinformation, cancel-culture issues). Some kids bring up topics that do warrant a good discussion, but they have formed opinions that are not always correct or very one-sided and concerning. Teachers do their best to offer a good dialogue - but fair and honest - and making sure that Godly principals still rule ("what does the Bible teach about this?"). On a different note, our instruction/curriculum is changing, so teachers are also searching new resources for our students (Math especially). We want our children to stay competitive and challenged. We have a lot more tutoring this year, because of online learning last year when we had to shut our in-person learning last March. Praise God, we have been in the classroom, in-person this year since school started again in August!
22	A rigorous curriculum with high expectations for successful transition to high schools require us to be aware of educational trends and innovations.
23	None of these have changed IN school. We are a family of believers. Outside of school, we see less involvement at school by parents. That is changing now with a newer group of dedicated 30-something parents who all attended our school and have moved back to have their children attend here. They are reaching out through word-of-mouth and through community events in a way we were not able to do before.
24	Instruction, classroom management, and school culture have not changed because of student demographics.
25	I don't have much change.
26	Little change.
27	It hasn't changed too drastically except for students with lower ability adding to the teachers' workloads and adjusting how they teach
28	none- the students conform
29	Our students are very comfortable being with students from other cultures. Instruction and classroom management haven't changed as much as parent relations with teachers. We don't see many of our students and their families at church on Sunday or have much interaction with them outside of the school setting. We have to be intentional and proactive about communicating and building relationships.
30	More permissive classroom management due to parents not wanting punitive discipline
31	providing more structure in the school day. Students are less likely to have a parent present at the start of their day. Depending on their age, they are either in daycare or on their own to start the day.
32	Not much, but it will have to.
33	Same
34	They haven't changed, so there is no need to change in regard to this circumstance.
35	I feel as a teacher I have had to teach a lot more socialization skills as these seem to not be taught like they were in the past.

36	More collaborative, teaching social skills
37	Because of the shift in home life, there is more of a need for special education teaching on staff. We have a lot more students that need additional support at school.
38	We have not had much change, so I don't have a good response for this question.
39	Smaller class sizes-except for the ECM which is growing
40	I think we are more culturally aware when picking out books and recognizing cultures in various holidays and celebrations.
41	Not really in our situation
42	Always working on Christian love and patience in all conversations and interactions.
43	Instruction has changed to a degree due to technology. Management and culture have stayed stabilized.
44	There is much more challenging student than when I first started teaching. More and more families have been having more changes in their families and have become more worldly. Children are allowed to do more things on their own and own students have constant use of technology.
45	students needs have changed
46	There has been a large shift.
47	adding ESL instruction
48	Again less support from parents.
49	It hasn't needed to change because we have always been culturally diverse.
50	We keep encouraging regular school attendance
51	Religious instruction has been simplified and starts at the basic truths.
52	We've had to increase our number of aides to provide extra assistance for students with learning challenges, 504 plans, and IEPs. We have also had to revise our policy handbook to help provide more structure for classroom management.
53	We've learned to keep communication lines open with parents in order not to bump into people's feelings of which we might be unaware. It's difficult to distinguish between culture because of diversity and culture because of where we live. Students do not obey simply because they've been told to do so, and it is not an expectation that has been set by parents. Discipline and management requires a lot of nuance, which can be a struggle for teachers coming straight from a WI classroom. We are big advocates of MLK Day and Black History Month. It wouldn't surprise me if we spend 10x the amount of time on those topics as we do on Reformation Day. We've also built into our school culture many opportunities for families to gather whether it's playing games, talent show, International Fair (a big one on our calendar), etc. Last week I saw an LCMS pastor having some kind of deep discussion with a Jewish man.
54	I havent personally noticed much change, but before I came here, I worked in a very culturally diverse area with many different family structures. I do think that families are putting less importance on Religious upbringing and just letting the "school" do that.

55	Communications with the family and establishing relationships for school and school related activities has had to become more active than passive.
56	No
57	No change
58	See above
59	Instruction has slowly evolved with the changing students. PD has been helpful in the change. Management is adjusted according to the needs of the students. The culture has changed but not in response to changing demographics, but changes in teaching staff.
60	Technology has become much more of a focus
61	We haven't changed too much.
62	more special needs
63	It hasn't. Teaching as a whole has changed with the popularity of computers and tablets.
64	I have not seen this change much because we have so few students of different races. Most are coming to us to learn English and our customs.
65	I have not been at the school long enough to answer this.
66	We spend much more teaching time on social emotional skills. Although we only have preschool students full time and that is a part of their curriculum, we are working harder to help children work with each other and function as part of a group.
67	We have become more intentional with trainings, but it certainly has become more individualized and less of an "industrial model"
68	God's word is still the guide in this category.
69	Need to spend more time ensuring students are in smaller groups during free play time to avoid arguments and challenging behaviors. Need to explain to parents how to discipline children at home.
70	I have not seen a big change here.
71	more inclusive
72	it really hasn't, we are still a very "traditional" WELS school, just like the one I grew up in.
73	The teachers seem to be taking on more traditionally parent responsibilities.
74	Instruction and management has not changed in response to changing demographics. Instruction has changed to help more learning challenged students with ISPs and based on testing data.
75	Pretty much the same
76	no, it has not
77	Not much change just sensitive to child's emotional/behavior state from being in the middle of sharing weeks with each parent.

78	Not much has changed. There seems to be an unwillingness to change. One example is taking off for holidays such as MLK Day. My staff feels we do not need to take those days off since the public schools do not and there are very few African Americans in our community.
----	---

Appendix G: Open-Ended Question Response 5

Open-Ended Question 5: As a school leader, what have you done in order to prepare or train your staff to properly and effectively educate diverse students? Please discuss any professional development, classes, or training that you and / or your staff have participated in.	
1	I haven't done anything.
2	Honestly, probably not as much as I should be doing.
3	We have not done any type of training.
4	Had numerous speakers talk to our faculty about racial situations
5	MLC webinar on brain learning
6	We participate in professional development classes each year. These classes help to educate us on a variety of topics that effect classroom instruction and culture. As the director, I provide continued support to teachers and staff members. This support comes through continued staff development, collaborative conversations and the sharing of professional resources. We also participate in weekly Bible studies led by our Pastor. We are able to address all types of topics that affect our school through the context of God's Word.
7	We have not done this, but it would be good for us to do.
8	The lower grade teacher in our school and I are both taking our Master's classes through MLC to try to prepare us for the future.
9	We continue to take classes and trainings provided by the state of North Carolina.
10	Nothing at this time.
11	We have participated in numerous PD opportunities including Grace in Action's Cultural Competency training.
12	We have all taken Trauma Sensitive School training through DPI. I have also listen to some seminars put on by Dr. Rhoda Walle
13	Just what is included in teachers' and leadership conferences
14	The Minnesota district focused on this topic for our conference this year. It was very helpful. We haven't taken any classes, we just spend a lot of time discussing it in faculty huddles and meetings.
15	Being in the Word and recognizing we are all made in the image of God - blood bought sinners in a broken world. As opposed to using critical race theory that divides people into groups and other programs like 1619 History.
16	Training in the use of translation Apps, Workshops and online courses on breaking the diversity divide.
17	We have had speakers this year come in to help us understand cultural understanding. More so in the black community than in the Hispanic world. We have had to make adjustments in educational planning due to COVID issues that also do stem into cultural ramifications as some racial groups tend to be more virtual than in person.

18	The professional development, in-services, reading, classes, etc... that my staff regularly participates in are too numerous to list. Each teacher's journey in educating diverse students has been different also from pre-service training (CfUT summer school, etc...) to classroom coaching and mentoring to professional development and advanced degrees. It is a necessity and must be constant in all you do.
19	Teachers meet each morning to discuss issues. We have half-day dismissals one Monday a month for staff meeting. Currently started a series offered through the WELS called "Six - Highly-Effective Teaching Strategies" that the entire staff is partaking in. We lack a school principal this year (Patrick Hurley left for Texas, Divine Savior), so it is a challenging year. Our Pastor Wattles is doing a great temporary job in the interim.
20	We completed our first self-study accreditation which resulted with recommendations for board, administration, and faculty. Supporting continuing education financially with more funding is in the works.
21	We have three teachers with ten grades. The tired excuse that we are simply over-worked holds somewhat true. Our faculty meetings address methods to reach students with diverse needs. Our teachers do most of this type of growth through online resources. We recently Called a teacher to replace a retiree. This new teacher has 28 years of experience in the public schools and will add another dimension of understanding.
22	We haven't addressed racially or culturally or economic diversity. we have addressed changing behavioral patterns, but not based on diversity.
23	We've received ACES training
24	We have participated in training at conferences.
25	No formal training, but we do discuss things to try that may work to help the lower ability students and how to better handle split homes and less parental involvement
26	maintain our mission statement and objectives to reach all families.
27	Nothing formal yet.
28	None yet; I've only been here 7 months.
29	Encourage them to take webinars sponsored by MLC.
30	We have not really done anything, but that is our plan for the future.
31	Not much
32	Is each student not a child of God? Do we not teach each student individually?
33	Nothing besides workshops that have been held a teacher conferences in the past.
34	We've read a few books and discussed as a faculty how best to serve our student body.
35	We do a conference each August as a faculty for CESE (Special Education). We are also joining the SNSP in Wisconsin that will help us hire additional trained helpers to deal with these issues.
36	We have not done any special training on diversity.
37	Continuing Education

38	reading, classes, sectionals at conference
39	Nothing
40	We have done no actual professional development within this area.
41	We have not taken any steps in this direction due to our stable setting.
42	I am very new to my position and have not do much to prepare my staff to this transition.
43	Continue to grow in faith as we show Christ-like love; PD
44	My wife and I took "Beyond Diversity" training with Courageous Conversations. Then our administrative team took the training. Finally, we brought that training to the entire faculty. My wife and I have attended the National Summit on Courageous Conversations.
45	My first year in this school so nothing yet.
46	We haven't done much training in this area.
47	Basically a teachers' conference presentation here or there.
48	No training
49	Workshops through MLC and other universities
50	Nothing specific. We love having any student in our school, regardless of race. I am blessed with a staff of excellent communicators that talk with their students' parents and really get to know them. Our school is a community. COVID has been a challenge, because it has severely limited the number of school events we can have to get together for fun, food, and fellowship.
51	My staff and I are still within our first years of full time education and feel like our professional development is focused in response to our general classroom needs at this point. This is not training, but following educators and podcasts who address bias issues is important to me and something we discuss as a team. I am aware that our head of school is also aware of these biases and reads/podcasts on the topic. A core value for my small team and school at large is building relationships with our families and getting to know their needs.
52	We have participated in cultural trainings. We also try to talk about the families (amongst our staff) to help each other with any challenges that we might be having with certain children and families. I feel that it is always best to make sure that everyone is informed and knows as much as needed about the home lives of the children and any challenges that the family may be having-- of course not everything, but the things that will show up through various behaviors in the classroom.
53	WELS Leadership workshops. Professional presentations internally. Cultural studies courses through MLC and WLC.
54	Continuing education
55	Faculty In-services & development
56	Little, but should be more on our radar.
57	I have given my EC staff social emotional PD from Simple K12. We have also had mini workshops on

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS of WELS SCHOOLS

100

	speech and language development.
58	Christian Life Resources is an outstanding reference
59	We haven't done any formal training on educating a more diverse population since our student body has mostly stayed the same, reflecting our community.
60	professional development
61	In my 25 years, we have always had a small number of minorities in our school, and we have always treated every student as a soul purchased by Christ. Our training has been in the Word of God.
62	We have not done anything.
63	I have not been at the school long enough to answer this.
64	We have taken many trainings on socio-emotional development and how to best teach children with challenging behaviors.
65	We are focusing on resiliency training for our staff currently, because serving a mission school requires it
66	N/A
67	Taken classes through The Registry, online, at local college, and MLC. Subscribe to professional literature through NAEYC. Take workshops offered by Department of Early Childhood.
68	N/A
69	take classes
70	n/a
71	We have not taken any official structured training. Some faculty members have taken seminars or presentations about understanding special needs better.
72	Sadly, I have not kept the faculty up-to-date on this aspect of education
73	I have participated in an ESL class
74	We have not done much just yet.
75	None other than attending area conference that have speakers talking about culture challenges.
76	This is an area I need to improve in. Prior to coming here I have always taught in diverse schools. I started and grew up teaching in those conditions. DMLC never really trained me for that. I learned it on the job. It is my second nature and have never looked for training resources. I most likely will be looking for resources over the next few years.
77	N/A
78	N/A