

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CHRONICLE

Summer 2025 | Vol.3 No.1

A quarterly newsletter provided by Catapult Learning, The *Superintendent's Chronicle* offers Catholic school leaders at the chancery-level current insights, ideas, and information about the landscape of Catholic schools and helpful tools for addressing emerging challenges.



Prayer for the Opening of a New School Year

For an outpouring of your grace, O Lord we pray. Upon our schools and families, send a spirit of protection and safety. Upon our faculty and staff, grant a spirit of energy, creativity, and patience. Upon our administrators, principals, and pastors, send a spirit of prudence and compassion. Make us all courageous in taking risks, thoughtful in our planning, unassuming in prosperity, and thankful in success. Let this new school year be filled with joy, for our gifts are many and our blessings abound. We praise you for calling us together in this community of faith which, with the help of your grace, we hope will lead us more deeply into that kingdom where Jesus is Lord forever and ever. Amen.

Recent Changes Among Superintendents and Central Office Leaders for Catholic Education

Congratulations and best wishes to the following recently appointed (arch)diocesan superintendents:

Pamela Lyons	Diocese of San Jose
Joseph Diskin	Diocese of Metuchen
Rebecca Hammel	Diocese of Corpus Christi
Jeanette Lambert	Diocese of Dallas
Mazie McCoy	Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

We honor and celebrate the years of service, witness, and formation provided by superintendents who recently left their positions, including:

Colleen Donohue	Diocese of Charleston
Rosemary Henry	Diocese of Corpus Christi

Readers are welcome to send any updates to Fr. Ron Nuzzi ron.nuzzi@catapultlearning.com or at 330.652.7944.

Previous issues of The Superintendent's Chronicle dating back to Summer 2023 can be found [here](#).

Surprise! An American Pope



What a surprise and what a blessing it was on May 8, 2025 when His Eminence Robert Cardinal Prevost was elected Pope, choosing the name Leo XIV. The first American ever to be elected Pope surprised the world, stunned many veteran Vatican observers, and immediately began a rapid process of learning everything about him from every imaginable source, including his family. Everyone seemed to claim him as their own from Chicago and Detroit to Villanova and Peru, and many places in between.

One Catholic source, attempting to break through the noise, published a verifiable list of ten things Pope Leo XIV has actually said. *Our Sunday Visitor* is to be congratulated for this inspirational and accurate collection, found [here](#).

Federal Tax Credit for Contributions to Scholarship Granting Organizations

A new federal tax credit program for contributions to scholarship granting organizations (SGOs) was included in the [One Big Beautiful Bill \(OB BB\)](#) that President Trump signed into law on July 4, 2025. Individual taxpayers can receive a federal tax credit up to \$1,700 per year for a donation to a qualified SGO in a State that chooses to participate in the program. In turn, SGOs make funds available in the form of scholarships for eligible students to pay for tuition and/or other allowable education expenses (see OB BB Section 70411 for specific details and statutory requirements). The U.S. Department of Treasury will administer the program, not the U.S. Department of Education. The tax credit program is applicable to taxable years ending after December 31, 2026.



The Nation's Report Card

NAEP 2026: Catholic School Participation is Essential

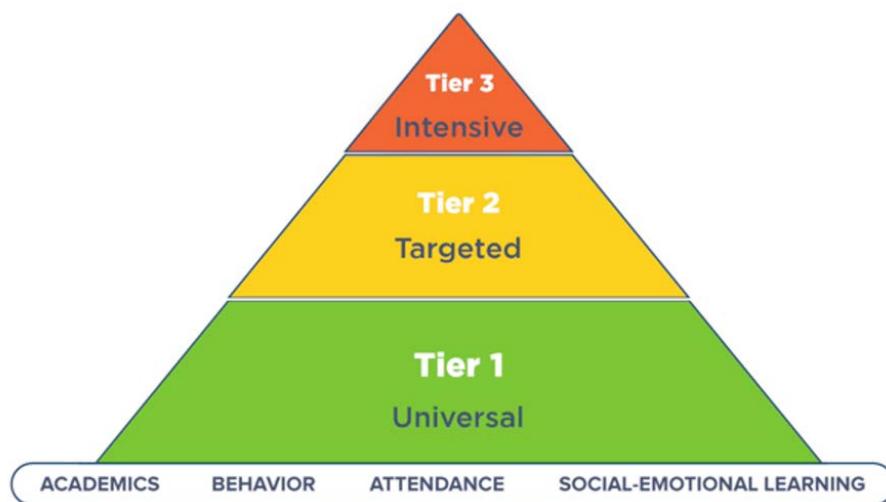
The [National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\)](#) is the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment of what students in public and private schools know and can do. [Participation of private schools is essential](#) to provide a complete and accurate picture of education in the United States. Private schools account for approximately 23 percent of all schools in the nation and educate approximately 9 percent of all students.

The NAEP 2026 program launched on June 23, 2025, with assessments in mathematics and reading at grades 4 and 8, and civics and U.S. history at grade 8 in public and private schools throughout the country. It is critical that all selected students participate to accurately capture private school student progress. Strong Catholic school participation can help make it possible again to report NAEP results for Catholic schools in 2026. NAEP data have historically shown, across subjects and over time, that Catholic schools have a good story to tell about their students' academic performance.

If your school is selected, please choose to participate and help give private schools a voice in the national education conversation. Be aware that only a small number of your students will only take a portion of the assessments. NAEP representatives administer the assessment at no cost to schools. Data collected from participating schools and students are combined for reporting at the national level as NAEP is not designed to report results at the individual school or student level. Visit the [private school section](#) of the NAEP website for more information about the NAEP program and the importance of private school participation.

Character Strong

Character Strong is a multi-tiered solution for whole child success. Focusing on essential like skills, attitudes, and values, *Character Strong* can be a vital intervention tool to address a variety of student needs, including a sense of belonging, improved well-being, and increased engagement. With targeted curricula addressing different tiers, *Character Strong* responds to emerging needs in compelling ways.



Tier 1 represents the foundation of school success. Tier 1 is universal and reflects what is best for all students delivered by every staff member. From social skills to emotion regulation to effective goal setting, research demonstrates that there are a few key competencies that all students should have to be successful in their community, in their academics, and their life beyond school.

Tier 2 is a system of support that is all about bringing early intervention to life. Tier 2 is targeted for some students with specific needs for support in addition to Tier 1. Tier 2 is a process that involves proactively detecting students with needs, selecting a precise intervention from among a menu of options that target the root cause that explains why a student's need exists, progress monitoring student response to intervention, and making decisions based on data.

Tier 3 support is about providing personalized interventions for students with the greatest need for support. Tier 3 is intensive for a few students experiencing the most robust need for personalized intervention. Tier 3 is a process of wrapping support around a student, personalizing intervention to their unique needs, and tracking progress in response to intervention.

An important aspect of the *Character Strong* curricula, in addition to it being evidence-based, is that it is secular in its content and absent any appeal to particular religious traditions. This creates an opportunity for federal funding possibilities, as well the latitude for experienced teachers to introduce congruent religious values and themes at appropriate times during instruction.

For more information about Character Strong, [here](#).

Nationwide Study Of Catholic Education Offices And The Superintendency

All Catholic school superintendents recently received an invitation to participate in an important nationwide study that aims to more fully understand the operations and responsibilities of central office departments and positions dedicated to Catholic schools.

Have you ever wondered if your office was appropriately staffed, or how your diocese compared to others of similar size? Do you know how salaries compare for similar positions, or benefits packages? Have you considered reorganizing office responsibilities, wanting input from other dioceses or superintendents? This is a great opportunity to answer these important questions by contributing to this study.

Under the leadership of our trusted colleagues at Boston College's Roche Center for Catholic Education, the study will be a vital resource for future planning and will deepen our understanding on the ongoing and ever-expanding needs of Catholic schools.

Two important enticements are available, rewarding your participation. First, you will have early access to the data and final report, and will be invited to private sessions to share the research findings prior to publication. Second, Amazon gift cards of \$25 will be given to every superintendent who completes the online survey.

To participate in the survey and provide the needed information for your diocese, click [here](#).

For any questions about the survey and upcoming study, be welcome to reach out to Melodie Wyttenbach, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education at Boston College, 617-552-1771 or wyttenba@bc.edu.

Research on Catholic Education: International Perspectives

In a recently published study, researchers from Australia examined the needs, challenges, and vision of an international group of Catholic educators, from the U.S., Ireland, New Zealand, England, and Australia. Though there are many cultural and operational differences between these countries, the Catholic faith and the presence of Catholic schools provides a helpful lens to frame the diverse set of challenges that Catholic schools confront as well as the manner in which leaders address them. Leveraging what we traditionally call the universality of Catholicism, the study provides a cross-cultural discussion of Catholic schooling from a leadership perspective.

See the article, *A Hopeful or Hopeless Future: Perspective on the Challenges and Opportunities in Catholic Education* by Christine Robinson and Linda Cranley [here](#).



New to Equitable Services?

Do you have a large number of new principals, or perhaps first-time principals? Getting up to speed about equitable services, proportionate share, meaningful and timely consultation, and delivery of services can be a challenge even for the most organized of leaders. *Equitable Education Services*, led by Henry Fortier, can be of great assistance in educating school leaders about their rights and responsibilities under the law. Henry is available for workshops, presentations, and webinars and provides a wealth of information for school leaders. For more information, click [here](#) or reach out directly to Henry at henry.fortier.essa@gmail.com.

4th Annual ACE Leadership Conference at the University of Notre Dame



The 4th Annual ACE Leadership Conference will be hosted on the campus of the University of Notre Dame on November 9-11, 2025.

The conference will provide an opportunity to learn from other Catholic school leaders from across the country, and gain insight into the challenges and issues you face in your work. The theme for the 2025 conference is Anchored in Hope: Forming Resilient Disciples and Strong Communities, and attendees will come away with tangible tools to bring back to their schools and dioceses for building spiritual leadership within four specific domains:

- Spiritual Formation
- Instructional Leadership
- Executive Management
- School Culture

Acclaimed author and Catholic educator Ann Garrido will deliver the keynote address.

For more conference information including registration, click [here](#).



The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) is hosting two fall conferences this year, one for superintendents and a second for principals and other school-based leaders.

[Catholic Leadership Summit \(CLS\) and New Superintendents Academy \(NSA\)](#)

Phoenix, AZ • October 19-22, 2025 (CLS) • October 18-19, 2025 (NSA)

CLS is the event of the year for leaders in Catholic education at the diocesan and network level and is being held at the Hilton Phoenix Tapatio Cliffs Resort.

[School Building Leader Summit](#)

Austin, TX • November 9-11, 2025 (SBL) • November 8-9, 2025 (New Principals and Presidents)

The inaugural NCEA School Building Leader Summit invites elementary and secondary principals and presidents to explore innovative leadership strategies, best practices and key challenges in Catholic school leadership.



Split Supreme Court Blocks Oklahoma's Catholic Charter School

In April 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments about whether the nation's first religious charter school could open in Oklahoma. The St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School would have been funded by taxpayer money, but operated by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Diocese of Tulsa.

On May 22, 2025, the court blocked St. Isidore. The one sentence, unsigned order did not indicate how individual justices had voted, nor why, simply declaring it was a split 4-4 decision that leaves in place the Oklahoma Supreme Court's ruling against the school. Justice Amy Coney Barrett recused herself from the case. Her former employer, the University of Notre Dame, runs a law clinic representing the school's supporters.

The Supreme Court's order applies only to Oklahoma, so similar cases attempting to open religious charter schools may emerge down the road.