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Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

We are pleased to share with you the latest issue of the Journal of Catholic Education. This issue features a diverse array of articles focused on pedagogy and curriculum, the history of Catholic education, relationships between Catholic schools and public charter schools, and contemporary legal issues affecting Catholic schools, including laws governing the conversion of Catholic schools to public charter schools, school choice programs, and medical policies.

Two articles examining influences of Catholic social teaching in educational settings kick off the issue. First, Angela M. Mucci's article, "Examining Teachers' Self Described Responses to Student Behavior through the Lens of Catholic Social Teaching Principles," presents findings from her study examining the relationships between teacher beliefs about Catholic social teaching (CST) and self-described responses to student behavior problems. The results shed light on the important influences teachers' personal beliefs have on the way they understand, establish, and communicate expectations for student behavior in the classroom. Also writing about the influence of CST in Catholic educational settings, Jill Bradley-Levine and Kari A. Carr present findings from an ethnographic study of an after-school program serving students in urban Catholic schools in their article, "Critical Theory and Catholic Social Teaching: A Research Framework for Catholic Schools." Using CST as a theoretical framework for interpreting their data, the researchers discuss linkages between these important teachings and the practices of educators and researchers in urban, Catholic schools and after-school programs.

Following these articles focused on CST, we present two articles examining specific curricular areas and initiatives. First, in "The Friendship Journey: Developing Global Understanding in the Middle Grades," Kevin Besnoy, Ellen Maddin, Sara Eisenhardt, and Emily Steele present an analysis of a cultural exchange program experienced by middle school students in a Midwestern Catholic school. This multi-method study reveals changes in students' awareness and respect for other cultures, outcomes closely aligned with values of the Catholic Church as a global institution. Next, Judith J. Hall and Christopher A. Sink discuss variations in mathematics learning environments in Catholic secondary schools in their article "Nature of Mathematics Classroom Environments in Catholic High Schools." In their analysis, Hall and Sink identify two primary types of mathematics learning environments

(teacher-centered and student-centered), highlight their characteristics and relationships to student attitudes toward mathematics, and consider important differences between Catholic and public high schools observed through this study.

In his article, "Catholic Labor Education and the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists: Instructing Workers to Christianize the Workplace" Paul Lubienecki presents fascinating historical research into the Catholic labor education movement of the early and mid 20th century in the United States. In his analysis, he examines the ways in which two key papal encyclicals (*Quadregesimo Anno* and *Rerum Novarum*) were interpreted by Christian labor associations and dioceses across the country, resulting in the establishment of labor schools that provided workers with an education that spanned labor organization and religious instruction.

The final article in the main section of this issue examines the phenomena of "religious charter schools." The article, "Catalyst Schools: The Catholic Ethos and Public Charter Schools," written by Rebecca Proehl, Heather Starnes, and Shirley Everett, investigates three Chicago public charter schools embodying an educational model associated with the Lassalian charism. The authors explore tensions, challenges, and lessons learned in the process of bridging Catholic and public education in such schools.

The discussion of charter schools continues in the Focus Section on Law and Catholic Schools, guest edited by Sr. Mary Angela Shaughnessy. The first article in the focus section, "Clarifying the Public-Private Line: Legal and Policy Guidance for Catholic-affiliated Charter Schools," authored by Kari A. Carr and Janet Decker, outlines the laws affecting Catholic-affiliated charter schools (as well as religiously-affiliated charters in general) and provides a helpful list of frequently asked questions related to the legal rights and responsibilities of such schools.

Also in the Focus Section on Law and Catholic Schools is an article reviewing recent court cases related to school choice initiatives in the United States. Authored by Matthew P. Cunningham, "The Establishment Clause School Choice, and the Future of Catholic Education" is a timely and astute analysis of the ever-changing legal landscape around school choice programs. Cunningham's article complements the selection of articles included in the [Focus Section in our September 2014 issue](#), which presented proceedings and analsyis from the 2013 Catholic Higher Education Collaborative (CHEC) Conference, which focused on Catholic school finance.

Rounding out the Focus Section is an article by Michael Huggins examining the legal issues surrounding insulin administration to students with diabetes in Catholic schools. In his article, "Insulin Administration in Catholic Schools: A New Look at Legal and Medical Issues," Huggins details important background information on diabetes and the treatment of students with diabetes in K-12 Catholic schools. He also provides a great service for administrators and others in the Catholic school community by synthesizing the state laws related to insulin administration (and associated emergency responses) into a comprehensive table.

In addition to these articles, the issue also contains three reviews of new books. Also in this issue, we continue to publish abstracts for the main articles in French and Spanish.

Beginning with the spring 2016 issue of the Journal, we will include a new section called *Education in Practice*. This section will feature articles written by practitioners in Catholic schools and focused on effective and innovative practices in PK-12 Catholic education. The articles in the *Education in Practice* section will complement the research articles in each issue. We welcome article proposals for the inaugural *Education in Practice* section through October 15, 2015. Please visit the Journal website to see the full Call for Proposals.

Please share any feedback you have on this issue with us via email (catholicedjournal@lmu.edu) or Twitter (@Catholicedjournal). We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

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Editors