



# **FINAL REPORT** OF THE **ARCHDIOCESAN TASK FORCE ON THE MINISTERIAL COVENANT**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE**

JULY 2021



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# INTRODUCTION

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In July 2020, Archbishop Etienne invited a diverse group of leaders to come together as the Archdiocese Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant and charged the group to review the current practices and policies of the Archdiocese of Seattle. The Task Force was further invited to study pertinent human resource questions, reflect on Church teaching, investigate the practices of other dioceses and countries, survey the faithful of the archdiocese on their views, and eventually make recommendations to the archbishop for his consideration to advance the evangelical mission of the Church as it is lived out in Catholic schools every day. The following pages represent the considered work of the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant. It details its membership, work plan, and work products, including recommendations. This final report is the result of a year-long deliberative process, advanced through a series of meetings—both online via Zoom and in-person—a series of smaller subcommittee meetings, numerous telephone calls and countless email exchanges. As the Task Force brought a high energy level and deep faith commitment to its work, readers are invited to enter a similar spirited conversation animated by faith while reading and reflecting on what follows, trusting that God’s grace will be abiding in our words and deeds.



## Members of Task Force on The Ministerial Covenant

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*Front Left: Fr. Kurt Nagel, Nicholas Ford, Kristin Dixon. Back Left: Fr. Vincent Gilmore, Sandra Barton Smith, Fr. Ron Nuzzi, Frank Feeman, Lauren White, Caroline Cacabelos*

# THE PROPOSAL

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# **The Ministerial Covenant: Clarification, Assessment & Implementation**

8/1/2020



# Introduction

In response to needs of the local church and inspired by pastoral solicitude for the faithful, the Archdiocese of Seattle seeks to deepen the understanding, articulation, and implementation of church teaching as it is currently detailed in the Ministerial Covenant for its employees at various levels. Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools Kristin Dixon contacted the Reverend Ronald Nuzzi in early March 2020 to discuss the vision of the archdiocese and its plan for the creation of a task force to address salient issues as announced by Seattle's archbishop, the Most Reverend Paul Etienne in February 2020. Father Nuzzi and Archbishop Etienne discussed the rationale and goals for the task force at length together with Dixon in late March 2020. This proposal follows upon that discussion and describes a process, timeline, and budget for consideration.

## Goals

The task force will receive three charges from the archbishop to guide, focus, and limit its deliberations.

1. Review, study, discuss, and articulate the official teaching and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church as it relates to natural law, the moral life, conscience formation, free will, sin, and human social and sexual development. This formation and education will include official church documents such as papal encyclicals, apostolic constitutions and exhortations, conciliar documents, pastoral and doctrinal statements from bishops, and The Code of Canon Law.
2. Assess, analyze, and summarize the understanding, convictions, beliefs, and opinions of a variety of archdiocesan stakeholders regarding the Ministerial Covenant and its use in employment decisions. Stakeholders to be surveyed and/or interviewed include parents of students currently in Catholic schools; Catholic school principals, teachers, and staff; priests; and alumni of Catholic high schools.
3. Recommend to the archbishop an informed and thoughtful approach to renewing the Ministerial Covenant that values and respects both of the above goals, namely one that embraces and affirms the fullness of church teaching while honoring and appreciating the *sensus fidelium*.



## Work Products

Each of the goals of the task force delineated above have proper, formal work products, the presentation of which signals the conclusion of that particular goal.

1. The education and formation of the task force results in a summary statement of church teaching, detailing the task force's understanding of the official teaching and tradition of the church. This series of statements forms a foundation for proceeding and can be used in a variety of other contexts, such as catechesis, spiritual formation, publication, and personal growth and reflection.
2. The discernment of the task force as it hears from the local church leads to robust discussion, questioning, and member checking. Results from surveys and interviews are summarized and used to craft a set of guiding principles for policy, considering both the summary statements of church teaching as well as the *sensus fidelium*.
3. The decision-making of the task force addresses revised drafts of the Ministerial Covenant, making concrete recommendations to the archbishop about language, policy, employment, and catechesis, detailing an approach to the formation of the faithful at every level.

## Meeting Schedule

To accomplish the aforementioned goals, the task force will meet twelve times during the 2020-2021 school year, including six in-person meetings and six virtual meetings, with ongoing reading, discussion, information gathering, and other work between each meeting. These monthly meetings will be organized around the three stated goals for the task force, dedicating approximately four meetings or four months to each of the stated goals.

	GOAL ONE	GOAL TWO	GOAL THREE
August 2020			
September			
October			
November	Summary Statement		
December			
January 2021			
February			
March		Guiding Principles	
April			
May			
June			
July			Recommendations



## Membership

The members of the task force will be identified and selected by the archbishop in consultation with archdiocesan leadership, including the Office of Catholic Schools. After a short period of inviting nominations, including self-nominations, the archbishop will formally convene and charge task force members for service. Members will be selected from five different groups: Catholic school principals, Catholic school teachers, priests, parents of students enrolled in Catholic schools, and representatives of the Office of Catholic Schools. Two members will be selected from each group, resulting in ten members.

Additionally, the archbishop will appoint a chair of the task force, chosen from outside the archdiocese to organize and direct the overall process. Total membership of the task force will be eleven working members.

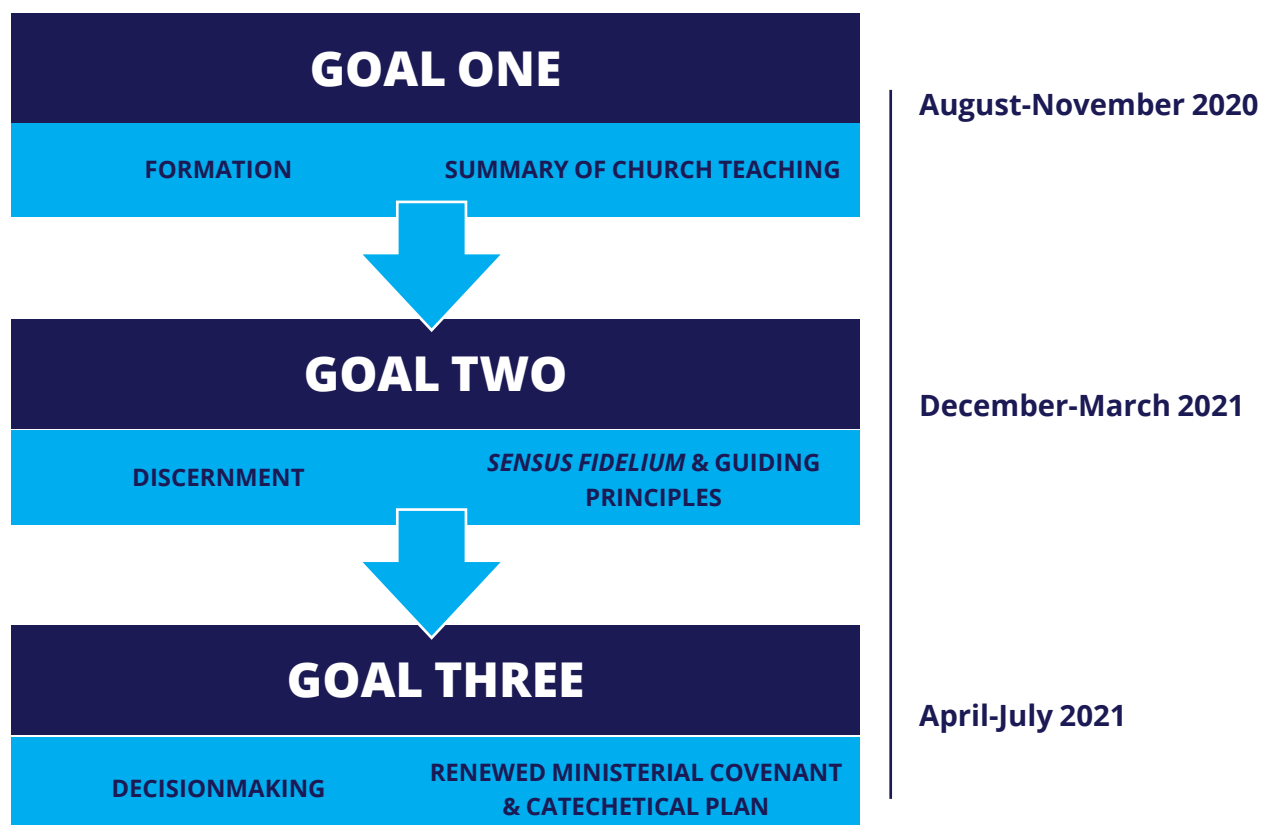
## Other Recommendations

The archdiocese will appoint a recording secretary to attend all meetings of the task force, archive all meeting materials, and create and distribute minutes of each meeting.

The archbishop will initiate contact with select archdioceses and dioceses to acquire copies of their policies and procedures in order to facilitate the education and formation of the task force.

A group of external advisors will be recruited to provide episodic feedback to the ongoing work of the task force and to assist in the eventual reception of its work at the national level. These advisors may include central office leaders such as superintendents, canon lawyers, and bishops as well as parents of students in Catholic schools, pastors, and national leaders in Catholic education.

## Timeline and Work Products



# THE WORK PRODUCTS

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# Summary Statement of Church Teachings

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Phase One Work Product - February 2021

After reading and reflecting on official Church teaching concerning Catholic schools, human sexuality, and marriage, we offer the following statements as brief but accurate expressions of our understanding of Church teaching. While such short statements can never express the fullness of the faith, we have studied seriously and prayed deeply to be guided by the Holy Spirit. We structure our summary statement with several headings, reflecting the topics we have read about, discussed, and prayed over.

We affirm and embrace the fundamental Catholic teaching that all persons are made in the image and likeness of God and should be treated with respect and compassion.

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## Role of Catholic Schools

Catholic schools are established by the Church and are called to offer an academically excellent education, but this education goes beyond academics. Catholic schools aim to form the whole person - body, mind, and spirit. They dedicate themselves to the successful development of a personal faith in Jesus Christ, a moral conscience, social responsibility, and the proper living of personal freedom. Catholic schools prepare students to be advocates for the common good and to be Christ-like examples to all they encounter.

## Role of Parents

Parents are, by God's design, the first and primary educators of their children. It is the responsibility of parents to select the most appropriate education for their children and to raise them within the Catholic faith. The Church provides Catholic schools as a support to parents and invites them to cooperate and collaborate closely with teachers to offer students a unique and rewarding educational experience.

## Role of the Pastor

Pastors have a duty expressed in Church law to provide, as best as possible, a Catholic education for the families of the faithful. This duty is rooted in the Church's divine mission to assist the faithful so they can arrive at the fullness of the Christian life and aid them in finding their way to Christ.

## Role of Teachers

The ultimate success of any Catholic school depends on its teachers. Teachers form the soul of the school and are called to provide excellent instruction, personal witness to the faith, and sound theology to the students they serve. Their example must be inspirational and worthy of following.

## Role of Bishop

It is the responsibility of the local bishop to designate a school as Catholic. The bishop must also ensure those employed as religion teachers are faithful in their correct doctrine, good examples of Christian living, and skillful as teachers. These are responsibilities expressed in Church law.

## Sexuality

Sexuality is the physical expression of the love of husband and wife in imitation of God's own life-giving love. As expressions of God's love, sexual acts are meant to be a free, total, and faithful gift to one's spouse which are open to the possibility of new life. The Church has consistently taught that marriage is the only proper context for this life-giving gift and that any sexual acts that do not conform to these qualities fall outside the natural order God has created. Consequently, all people are called to a life of chastity and fidelity to God's moral law with the support of the church's love and mercy.



## Marriage

Women and men reflect God's love and participate in creation in a special way through God's gift of marriage. Marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman, a total and mutual self-gift, creating a lifelong, exclusive, and faithful union. The purpose of marriage is for mutual salvation, including the good of the spouses, having and raising children, and lighting the path to holiness for all family members and indeed for all of society. For baptized Christians, marriage is a sacrament, a sign of Christ's love for the Church.

## Persons with Same-Sex Attraction

Created in the image and likeness of God, our gay brothers and sisters are inherently valued and accepted by God and the Church. Because of their sharing in and reflecting this God-given dignity, they should be treated with respect and compassion and never be subjected to unjust discrimination. While always respecting and honoring the dignity of all people, the Church continues to challenge gay Catholics to reflect on the meaning and purpose of human sexuality. In living out this challenge they are called to a life of chastity and fidelity to God's moral law with the support of the church's love and mercy.

## Pastoral Care

God created and loves all people. All the faithful deserve love and support in their quest for holiness. We are called to know and love all our brothers and sisters and to live with them in friendship and community. No one should be subject to unjust discrimination, harassment, or violence. Efforts at pastoral care, such as parish, school, or archdiocesan programs, should strive to respect all people, meet them where they are, and show special sensitivity to the suffering, outcast, and marginalized, following the demands of the Gospel.

# Results from the Survey

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## Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant – March 2021

This report summarizes the findings of a survey created and administered by the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant for the second phase of their work. The goal of this phase was to assess, analyze, and summarize the understanding, convictions, beliefs, and opinions of a variety of archdiocesan stakeholders regarding the Ministerial Covenant and its use in employment decisions.

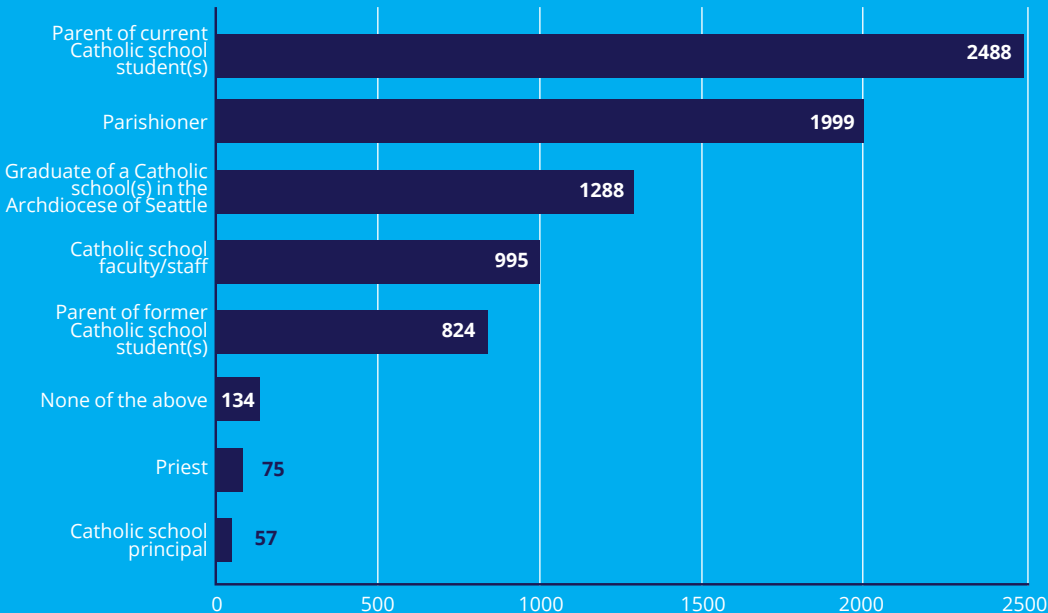
The survey was developed in consultation with researchers from Catapult Learning. The Task Force provided feedback for multiple iterations of the survey before it was launched in January 2021. A link to the online survey was emailed directly to presidents and principals of schools with instructions to forward to their employees, school families, and alumni. It was also sent to pastors and parish leaders with an invitation to share with parishioners. A webpage was developed on the Office of Catholic Schools site to direct any other interested stakeholders to the survey.

The survey was available for a period of seven weeks, from January 7-February 25, 2021. In that time, 4,957 people accessed the survey. The fact that nearly 5,000 people volunteered to respond to an invitation to provide input on the Ministerial Covenant reflects a population eager to engage with current issues in Catholic schools. The high participation may also represent high public awareness and strong opinions about the Ministerial Covenant based on prior knowledge and experiences. Therefore, it is important to consider that the data may be impacted by self-selection bias, that is, people choosing to respond may have stronger opinions or more personal connections to the topic than those who did not opt to participate. Nevertheless, the large sample size affords the ability to make generalizable conclusions from the results.

## Participant Information

Respondents were asked to identify their affiliation to the Archdiocese of Seattle from the following list (selecting all that applied). Those indicating no affiliation as a stakeholder of interest for this survey (“none of the above”) were exited from the survey, as they were deemed ineligible for participation.

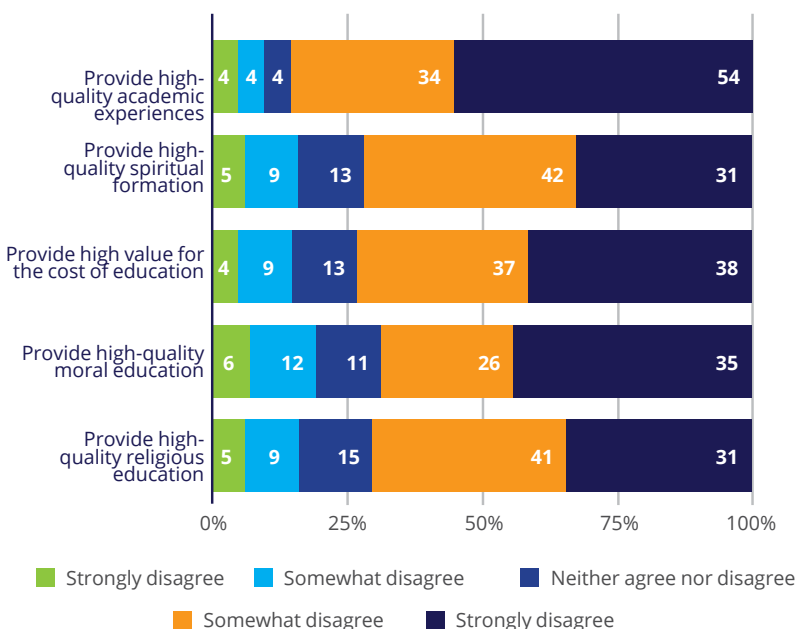
Current Catholic school parents were the largest group of respondents (2488). A large number of alumni/ alumnae of Catholic schools participated (1288) as well as current faculty/staff members (995). The number of parishioners was also high (1999), but most of these respondents also belonged to other categories. Only 274 respondents selected parishioner only from this list of affiliations.



In response to demographic questions, the sample was **75% female, 80% Catholic**, and predominantly middle-aged, with **37% between in their 40s, 24% in their 50s, and 19% in their 30s. Twelve percent were over age 60 and 8% were under age 30.**

## Impressions of Archdiocesan Catholic Schools

The survey asked stakeholders to rate their agreement with statements about the quality of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle. Results are displayed in the chart below, by percentage of responses for each rating.

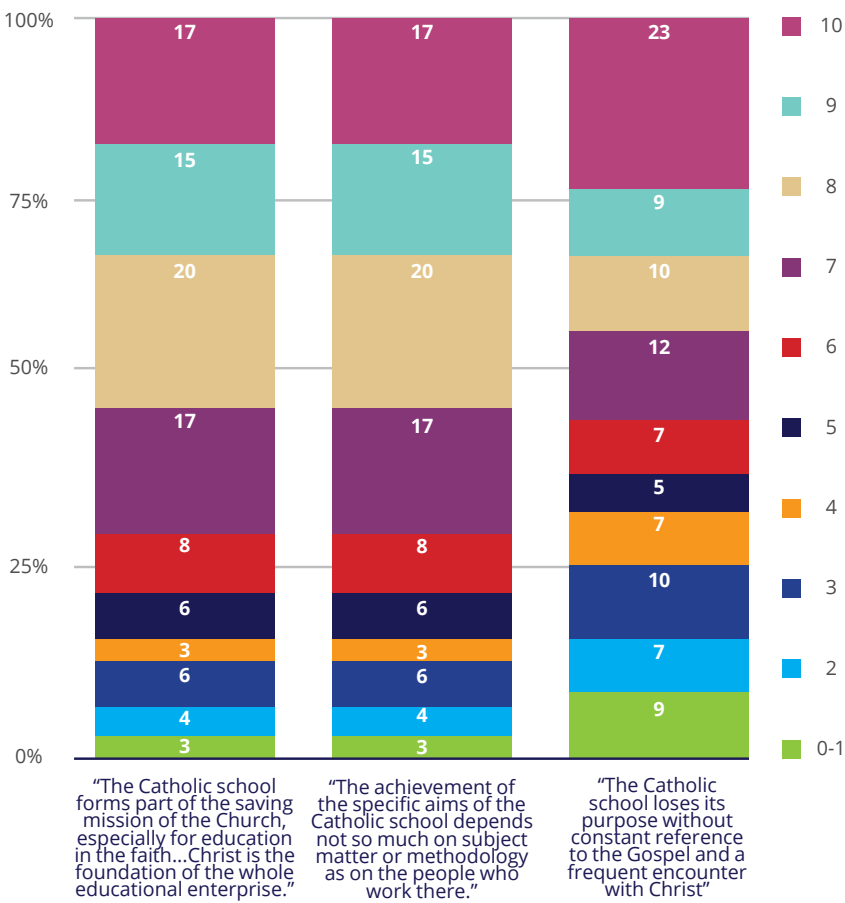


As the chart shows, **88%** at least somewhat or strongly agreed that the schools provide high-quality academic experiences. There was slightly less agreement for the other statements, but all were still over **70%**. Moreover, when presented with the mission statement for Catholic schools, **on a scale from 1-10, responses averaged 7.88 for ratings of the accuracy of the mission.** This indicates overall favorable impressions of Catholic education in Seattle.

# Official Church Teaching on Catholic Schools

The survey presented a few statements drawn from the Vatican document The Catholic School. Participants were asked to rate their personal agreement with each statement on a scale from 1-10. Percentages of responses in each numerical category are presented below.

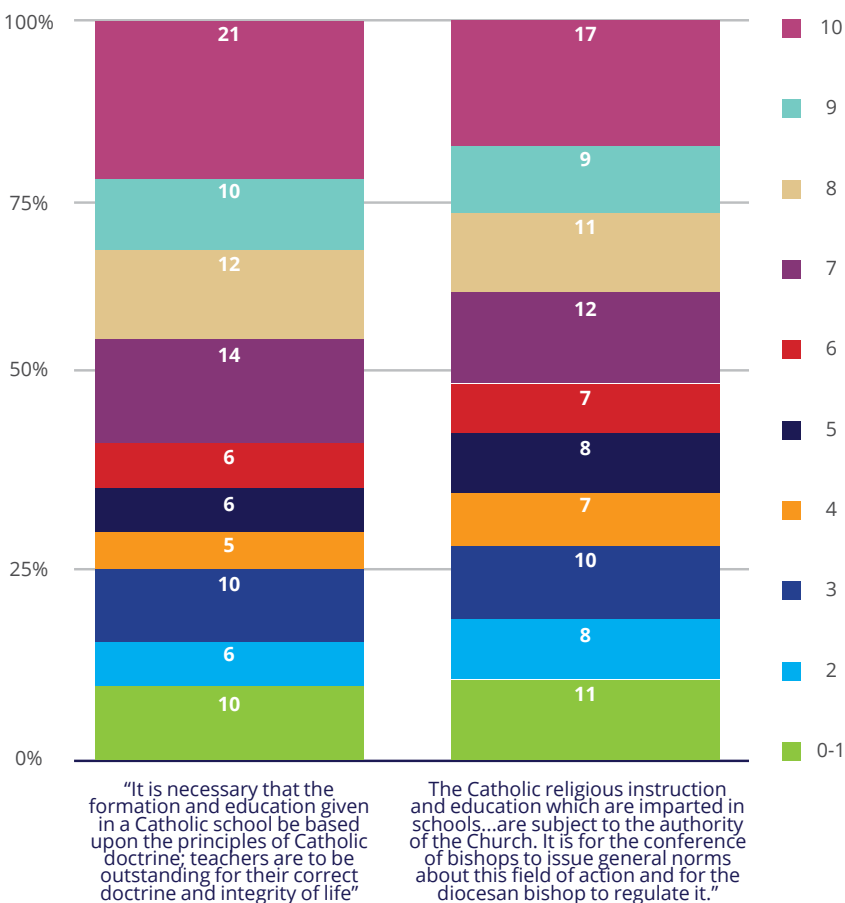
The mean values for agreement ratings for these statements was 7.86, 7.07, and 6.23, respectively. The chart shows a fair amount of variability in the responses, but mostly high ratings, as seen by the wider bands for higher ratings, especially for the first two statements.



## Code of Canon Law

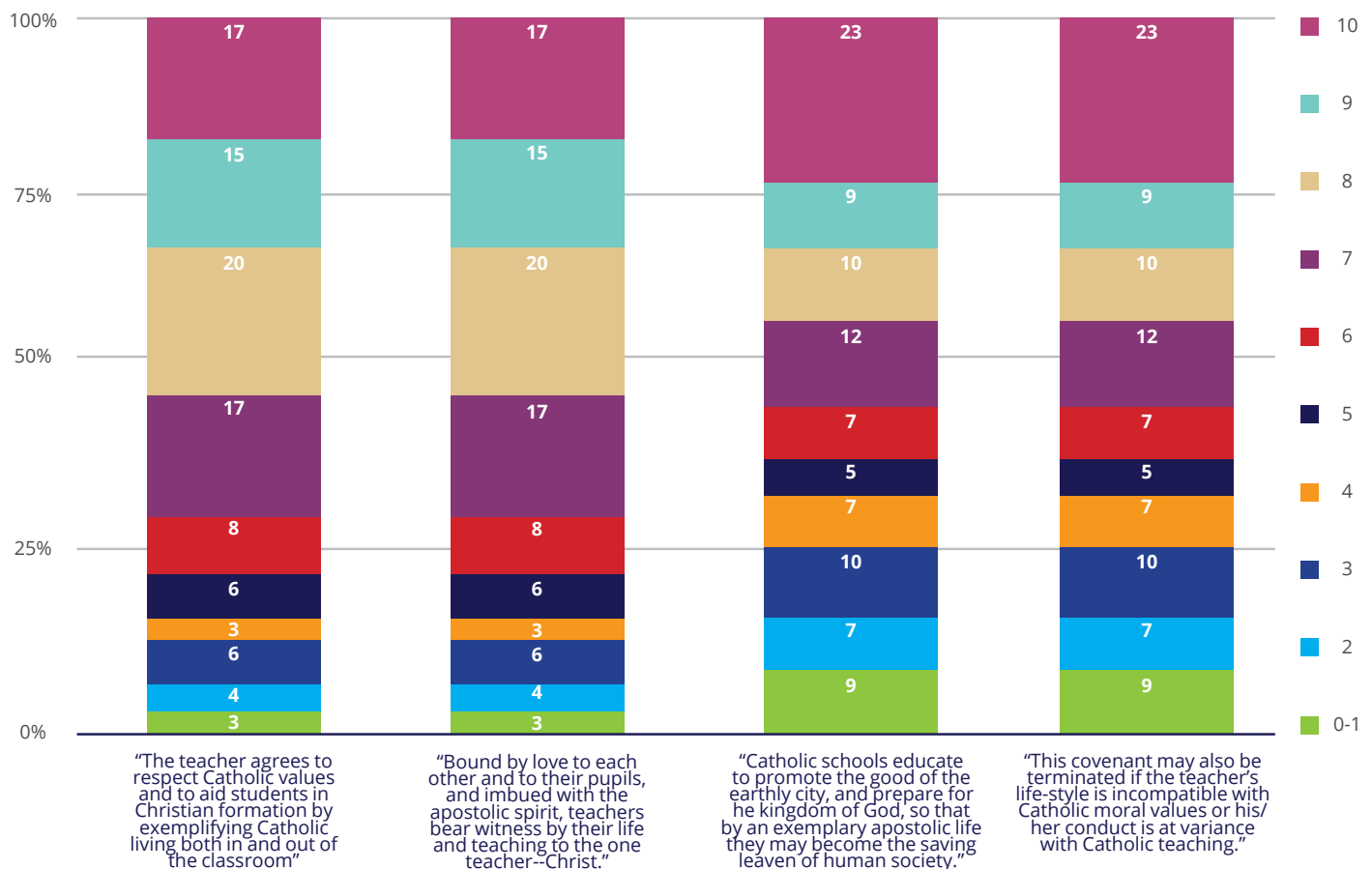
Similarly, participants were asked to rate their personal agreement with passages from the Code of Canon Law related to Catholic schools.

The mean responses for these two items were 6.23 and 5.82, reflecting slightly lower personal agreement with Canon Law statements than with passages from the Vatican document referenced above.



# The Ministerial Covenant

Passages from the Archdiocesan Ministerial Covenant were then presented in the survey, and again participants were asked to rate their personal agreement on a scale from 1-10. Note that instances of “teacher” in these passages were also in reference to principals and presidents of schools. Some words were omitted from passages for brevity in this display, but the meaning was retained.



Mean ratings for these four statements were 6.43, 7.37, 7.11, and 4.41, respectively. Of note is the large number of low ratings for the fourth statement, related to the termination of the covenant due to teacher's lifestyle or conduct. This question was explored further, by disaggregating results by participants and with questions assessing awareness of an agreement with the Ministerial Covenant statement about termination.



Looking more closely at the last item in the above section, participants were asked to rate their personal agreement with the statement “This Covenant may also be terminated if the teacher’s life-style is incompatible with Catholic moral values or if his/her conduct is at variance with Catholic teaching.” There was variability in agreement with this statement based on stakeholder groups. In the following chart, the responses to this question are disaggregated by priests, principals, teachers/ staff, current parents, and alumni/alumni parents.

As the chart shows, priests had far higher rates of agreement with this statement than any other stakeholder group, and former students and their parents had the highest rates of disagreement.

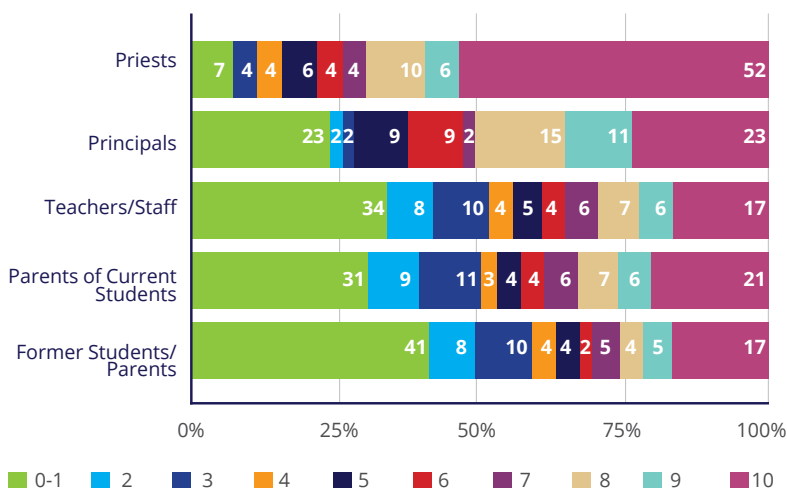
Note that the chart shows percentages, and the groups are not of equal size. For priests, 52% is 35 priests rating this statement at 10, and 7% represents just 5 priests rating 0-1 for their agreement. Likewise, for principals, 23% is 11 principals rating 0-1 agreement and also 11 principals rating agreement of 10.

Participants reported high awareness of the termination statement in the Ministerial Covenant, with 93% being at least “somewhat aware” of this policy.

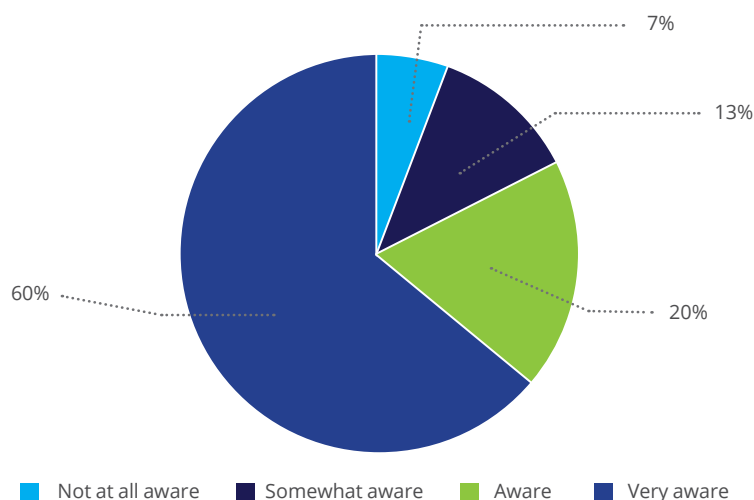
Responses show that a majority (61%) of participants “Disagree” (20%) or “Strongly disagree” (41%) with the policy of terminating teachers, as stated in the Ministerial Covenant.

Next, participants were presented with a list of actions that are at variance with Catholic teaching in different ways. They were asked to select which of the actions they would consider of such seriousness that they would violate or break the Ministerial Covenant, thereby rendering a person ineligible for employment in a Catholic school.

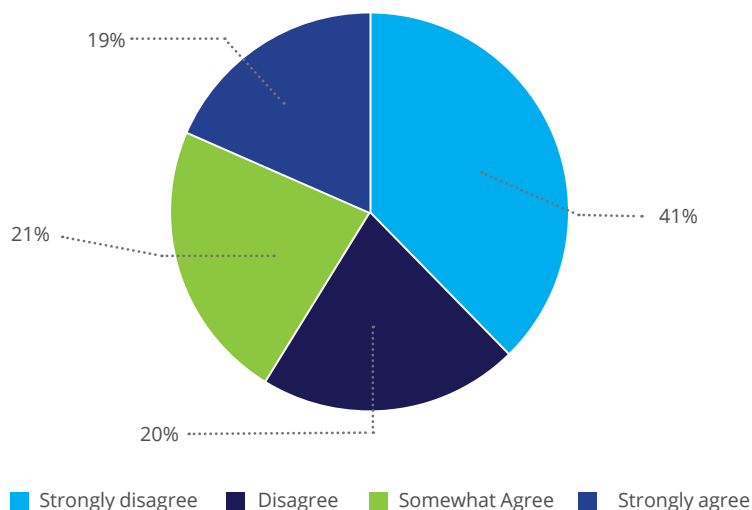
“The Covenant may also be terminated...”

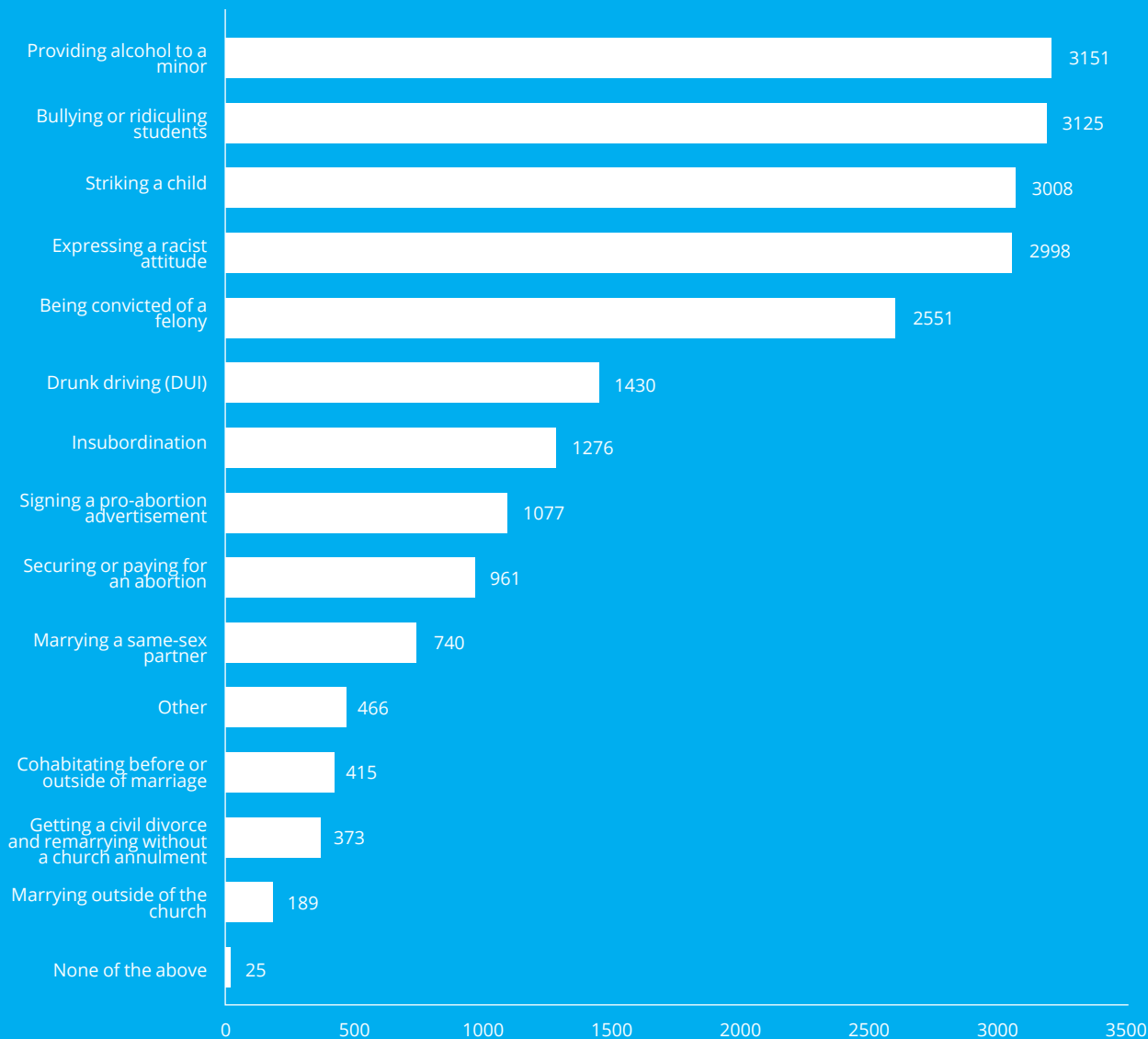


Before this survey, were you aware that Catholic school teachers can current be terminated based on “life-style” and/or “conduct”?



Do you agree that Catholic school teachers should be terminated if “life-style” and/or “conduct” is “at variance with Catholic teachings”?





Responses indicate clear intolerance among respondents for actions that directly affect students, such as providing alcohol to minors, bullying students, striking a child, or expressing racism. Additional infractions provided by those selecting “other” included sexual abuse or harassment, drug use, and domestic violence, among other responses.

Items concerning teachers’ personal lives that less directly impacted students, such as marrying outside of the church, getting remarried after a civil divorce without an annulment, cohabiting before marriage, marrying a same-sex partner, and even having or paying for an abortion were less likely to be considered as serious enough to constitute a break of the Ministerial Covenant.

When looked at by stakeholder group, there were definitely differences. Alumni and their parents have racism as the top issue and much smaller agreement with items from the second chart. Priests have issues of abortion higher than any other stakeholder group and are far less concerned with drunk diving or felonies than others, for example.

In summary, stakeholders are generally aware of the Ministerial Covenant that applies to teachers, presidents, and principals of Catholic schools. They largely disagree with the fact that people can be terminated for actions at variance with Catholic teaching, particularly when those actions only relate to one’s personal life and do not have a direct effect on students.

# Recommendations

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## Introduction

Having worked diligently throughout this past year, we have attempted to listen to a variety of voices and sources, trusting that the Spirit would lead us and guide us in our deliberations. Ever since the archbishop charged us to review the ministerial covenant, we have grown both individually as persons and collectively as a task force in our respect for church teaching, the Scriptures, the faithful people of the Archdiocese of Seattle, the men and women who teach and lead in our Catholic schools, and our colleagues in ministry across the country and around the globe.

Inspired by the goodness we have encountered, we now seek to spread Gospel joy as Pope Francis has invited the church to “embark on a new chapter of evangelization” (Pope Francis, 2013, ¶ 1.) We recognize the Spirit at work in the recent call of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and Archbishop Etienne to focus pastoral planning on knowing Jesus Christ and embracing His mission. We understand and affirm the values called forth in the pastoral planning toolkit and join with all our brothers and sisters in the archdiocese to live our faith in action, to proclaim our hope in the Resurrection, to do the truth in love, and to seek unity in diversity. We embrace this call to conversion and to discipleship as we strive to live the unconditional love and joy of the Gospel. We firmly believe that the following recommendations are faithful to these purposes.

As we prepare to offer concrete and specific recommendations, some guiding principles frame our approach and understanding. They serve as the overall context for all that follows and assert our fundamental dispositions.

1. We believe that it should always and everywhere be clear in all education and formation programs that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God and thus should be treated and respected according to this inherent dignity. This important conviction of Catholic teaching should be upheld in all areas of life, including sexual orientation, for the love of God embracing all of us in its fullness is a reality that should be reflected in every element of the culture and operation of our Catholic schools and parishes. For this reason, it is particularly incompatible with the Gospel to categorize or label people negatively due to their sexual orientation or identity.
2. We affirm that all forms of unjust discrimination, prejudice, or violent attack upon individuals because of their sexual orientation or identity are utterly incompatible with the message of the Gospel and have no place in Catholic schools or parishes.

The following recommendations are organized into four distinct categories, each addressing a particular sphere of influence we judge to be critical to the ongoing flourishing and success of Catholic schools and to the growth in holiness for all that schools aspire to provide. The four areas, in no particular order, are: 1) the expansion and deepening of large-scale archdiocesan formation programs for a broad variety of constituencies; 2) the re-establishment of pastoral care ministries for youth and young adults with a focus on supporting and accompanying our youth through adolescence and early adulthood; 3) the clarification of leadership and administrative responsibilities for Catholic school principals and presidents; and 4) reconsideration of the content, language, and operationalization of the current ministerial covenant, particularly its lifestyle provision.

# Formation

To more fully live and embrace the goals of the ministerial covenant, we recommend that the current formation and education programs and processes be expanded and deepened so that all adults in leadership positions in schools, parishes, and homes have more regular and easy access to high quality events, materials, and experiences that deepen their understanding of the faith and provide meaningful opportunities to live the faith in daily life and work.

1. Catholic school leaders, including principals and presidents, would be strengthened by ongoing education and formation on Catholic identity, teaching as ministry, moral theology, Catholic Social Teaching, and the Church's role in the modern world. Such programming could include a variety of optional, invitational events in addition to a core set of requirements, retreats and service opportunities, and an annual Mass and dinner to celebrate service, mark achievements, and renew commitments. Subject matter experts and, on occasion, national and international thought leaders can be invited as presenters.
2. Similarly, all Catholic school faculty and staff would benefit from an expansion and deepening of ongoing education, professional development, in-service opportunities, and formation, emphasizing the beautiful and the good that is in the Catholic tradition. A revised and expanded curriculum for formation with a new and well-articulated scope and sequence would itself communicate a seriousness of purpose and the depth of formation aspired to. Topics should include a variety of Church teachings on education, sacraments, morality, and current events, as well as emerging needs as assessed within the archdiocese and as expressed by teachers. We strongly recommend some assessment or accountability mechanism beyond mere attendance. An overall challenge and constant theme of this formation remains the integration of Catholic identity and the strengthening of a Catholic culture throughout the formal and implicit curriculum. Thus, the aim of faculty and staff formation is always both their personal growth in holiness as well as their increasing ability to contribute to the Catholic ethos of the school through their service and witness.
3. School parents and other adults also stand to benefit from parent education and other opportunities to both learn about the faith and live it in practice. We recommend the creation of an archdiocesan Catholic Identity Handbook, both in print and digital, to help establish a common vision across the archdiocese. Increased and more thoughtful use of video, multi-media, and social media should support this effort. Regular communication with parents is key, especially as it involves connecting home, parish, and school. Onboarding programs for parents new to a school or parish community should also be considered to help advance this mission.
4. Students and families have requested interventions regarding bullying, racism, harassment, and discrimination. Retreats, workshops, and class sessions addressing these issues would strengthen the overall Catholic identity of schools when properly contextualized within the tradition. We recommend that select resources regarding these topics be prominently featured on the Office for Catholic Schools' (OCS) website and that the standard curriculum be used to ensure mission integrity and consistent messaging.

Considering recent experience and the ongoing lack of clarity regarding the content and importance of the Church's teachings, priority should be given to those topics most on the minds and hearts of the faithful,

especially social justice issues such as racism and poverty, moral issues related to sexual ethics, care for the environment, child protection policies, and other matters that arise in the context of faith formation.

## **Pastoral Care Ministries**

1. We recommend that the archdiocese move with resolve to re-establish and activate pastoral care ministries that intentionally accompany our youth and young adults who are dealing with LGBTQ questions, through adolescence and early adulthood. Much can be learned from other dioceses who are having success with similar programs that focus on accompaniment for support as Pope Francis emphasizes, rather than advocacy. An archdiocesan network for adult leaders involved in such ministries would be a helpful and complementary component. The specific goal is to create a safe space within the community of the Church where the Spirit can dwell for young people to question, struggle, and be vulnerable without threat or coercion. The language of programming, the tone of policy, preaching, and public relations should reflect compassionate care while embracing faith in action, hope in the Resurrection, truth in love, and unity in diversity as well as fidelity to the Church's teaching (Archdiocese of Seattle Pastoral Planning, 2021).

## **School Leadership Initiatives**

1. We recommend that the Office of Human Resources (HR) and the Office for Catholic Schools (OCS) collaborate on a consistent application, hiring and onboarding process, using both print and online resources, including training videos and exit expectations. This process, while welcoming and positive, should be clear about the religious purpose and mission of Catholic schools, and include thoughtful examination, close reading, analysis, discussion, and discernment of the ministerial covenant. Official church documents on education, Sacred Scripture, and the Code of Canon Law should figure prominently in such onboarding.
2. We recommend that clearer and stronger lines of accountability and authority be defined for principals and pastors in relation to the archdiocese. Relationships among pastors, elementary school principals, and the OCS can be strengthened by inclusion of the signature of the superintendent and archbishop on all ministerial covenants for principals, an arrangement typical among other dioceses and congruent with Canon Law. The superintendent, as the archbishop's canonical delegate, provides support to the pastor and shares in the responsibility to supervise, evaluate, and hire principals. Pastors participate in the supervision, evaluation, and hiring of principals as well. New elementary school principals should take office after the execution of a signed covenant by the archbishop, superintendent, and pastor, followed by a formal installation by the pastor.
3. We recommend that archdiocesan leaders focus on achieving greater unity of mission and purpose among all the Catholic high schools. Relationships among all Catholic high schools, the OCS, the archbishop, and the local church can be strengthened in a variety of ways: a) by applying a common set of standards and expectations for Catholic identity across all high schools, whether archdiocesan or private; b) by the formal assignment of priest chaplains, priest faculty, or priest administrators to

Catholic high schools; c) by having the archbishop and superintendent sign ministerial covenants for archdiocesan high school principals and presidents; d) by the archbishop formally installing all high school principals and presidents prior to their assuming office in a public ceremony or liturgy; e) by archdiocesan-led and sponsored interscholastic efforts around mission; and f) by having dedicated professional staff to initiate and execute all of these efforts.

4. Alignment of new and revised policies such as formation expectations, the Catholic Identity Handbook, the ministerial covenant, HR policies, new onboarding measures, expanded covenants for principals, and stronger unity among high schools will require a thorough vetting and analysis by both civil and canonical counsel. We recommend a detailed review and alignment of all policies, with a view to avoiding redundancies, duplications, and contradictions. The content and tenor of all policy statements should reflect an invitation to a deeper encounter with Jesus as expressed in the Gospel and in the pastoral planning process recently announced.

## **The Ministerial Covenant**

1. For the continued success of Catholic schools and indeed for the growth and strengthening of the Catholic faith, we recommend that service in a Catholic school continue to be conceptualized as ministry. We further recommend that a commitment to such ministry is most accurately articulated in the form of a ministerial covenant rather than a contract. We acknowledge that a formal ministerial covenant is desirable and needed for several reasons. The archdiocese rightly wants to emphasize and elevate the important place of Catholic education within the overall mission of the Church; the critical role of adult leaders such as teachers, principals, presidents, and school staff is repeatedly a major theme of official church documents on education; the archdiocese, like most employers, wishes to preserve some elements of discretion in evaluating the suitability of all employees; and current tensions in the application of constitutional law call for clarity in our understanding of education as a ministry of the Church, lest we risk a variety of freedoms and finances that we currently enjoy.
2. We recommend that principals, presidents, pastors, and any other administrators who offer a ministerial covenant to others and co-sign such important documents participate in common professional development to help ensure consistent application of the covenant and mission integrity. This professional development should outline a regular and clear process for discernment of the covenant annually. Everyone who offers or signs a ministerial covenant should be able to do so with full knowledge, complete transparency, and a clear and informed conscience.
3. Our review and evaluation of the current language and application of the ministerial covenant has met with conflicting results. Unsurprisingly, the members of the task force differ considerably on their views concerning what the ministerial covenant should outline and how its provisions should be applied. In fact, we find that the views of the members of the task force accurately reflect a similar difference of opinion among the Catholic faithful more broadly, as reported earlier in the discussion of the results of our winter 2021 survey. Much like what we found among parents, priests, principals, teachers, and alumni, opinions are firmly held and coalesce around two distinct views. While the task force has a shared unanimity of purpose and understands and respects the teaching and tradition of



the Church, people of good will can and often do disagree about the most prudent application of those teachings, discerning different paths to follow, different programs to undertake, and different policies to enact.

One view holds that the ministerial covenant upholds the standard of long-standing Catholic teaching and wisely affirms the vital role of adults in providing a clear witness, both in their lives and teaching, to the students whom they serve. Those espousing this view value the ministerial covenant as it is currently written and applied, and maintain that the best way forward is to continue with the covenant, enforcing its lifestyle provisions equitably and as needed, clarifying to prospective hires the implications of the covenant in the hiring and onboarding processes, reviewing the covenant prayerfully with employees every year before signing, and developing robust formation programs for all involved to help support ongoing faith development, a proper understanding of employment responsibilities, and transparency.

A second viewpoint recommends that the lifestyle provisions of the ministerial covenant should be discarded immediately as discriminatory, reconciliation and healing should be sought, and that issues arising from the quality of an employee's witness be evaluated moving forward with prudence on a case-by-case basis. Those espousing this view value a ministerial covenant, but want it revised so that the archdiocese no longer discharges, non-renews, or terminates employees for highly personal life choices that they have discerned in conscience.

Below we summarize the arguments in support of each position as we currently understand them. Both respect the teaching of the Church regarding marriage and human sexuality. The differences are in matters of the prudent application of those teachings and involve different views of what is needed at this moment in time to best advance the mission of the Church and the success of Catholic schools. While our treatment is not exhaustive, it is extensive, and it details items that the task force has duly and prayerfully considered.



A. Reasons to retain the lifestyle provision, clarify its scope, and continue to uphold it in employment decisions as a matter of mission integrity

1. The call to discipleship and to a deeper encounter with Jesus expressed in the archdiocesan pastoral planning process includes a challenge to have a living faith that is put into action and to proclaim the truth in love. Such a call to conversion must be rooted in Catholic values, truth, and standards that we apply equitably and fairly to all.
2. This opportunity for evangelization includes a review of the standards of what it means to be a Catholic and a re-setting of the goals and purposes of Catholic schooling. The overall context is one of the renewal and reclaiming of our Catholic values, morals, and beliefs in an age where they are often ignored and even attacked.
3. It is the clear teaching and tradition of the Church that sexual acts and relationships are proper only in the context of marriage and that marriage is, by God's design, the union of one man and one woman in a lifelong commitment. Every generation has the responsibility to uphold this teaching despite changing cultural norms and other historical developments (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2003).
4. Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body is a most helpful resource in this regard, is directly on point, current, well developed, and in wide use across the United States and throughout the world (John Paul II, 2003, 2017).
5. Those employed in Catholic schools have a right to transparency in their employment. All employees should know, understand, and respect the values and standards of their employer and should, in agreeing to employment, abide by said values and standards.
6. Adherence to the teachings of the Church is not optional. It is not discriminatory for the Church to ask its ministers to know, understand, and live by its teachings. It is a basic qualification for the job.
7. Any inconsistency in the application of the lifestyle provision of the covenant between employees should be addressed by applying the standards of the Church's teaching equitably to all, thereby furthering the Catholic identity of the school. The provision should justly and necessarily apply to any lifestyle inconsistent with Catholic teaching, including those in same-sex marriages, those cohabiting outside of marriage, and Catholics in invalid marriage according to the Church.
8. No one is fired or non-renewed from employment due to their orientation, identity, desires, or ideas. Rather, it is the breaking of the covenant through actions, public witness, and lifestyle choices that constitutes a reason for firing or non-renewal. A ministerial covenant should always be freely signed, applied fairly, and enforced equitably.

9. It would be morally inconsistent to teach students about the Catholic faith and challenge them to live by its values while placing in front of them adults who do not live by Church teachings. Moreover, such action would dilute the mission of Catholic education and be counterproductive. We teach first and foremost, not by our words, but by our actions and decisions. Those school staff who publicly choose to live contrary to the Catholic Church's moral doctrines are teaching that dissent in a powerful way to their students—even if that is not their intent and even if they are otherwise silent about it. Their actions and life choices matter. Even more important, the administration that hires and knowingly permits this to occur implies by their choice that it is morally acceptable, thereby undermining the faith in the eyes of the students by supporting what is clearly contrary to Church teaching.
10. Conflict, in the form of a set of adversarial relationships, is likely if the lifestyle provision is discarded because many priests strongly support the current policy. It is unclear if their minds could be changed by archdiocesan fiat.
11. There are many dioceses and countries, both far and near, who have similar lifestyle or manner-of-life provisions in their employment documents and that abide by them with success.
12. Given the current tensions in Catholic schools between different parent groups and their differing opinions, it seems inevitable that in deciding on the retention or deletion of the lifestyle provision, we will amplify some hurt and division. Deleting the lifestyle provision risks alienating that portion of Catholic school families who most prioritize the Catholic formation of their children according to the Church's teaching. For the long-term health and Catholic identity of schools, prudence dictates that we should affirm and support this part of our population.
13. Students in Catholic schools need role models in chastity. Almost all other sources of influence in their lives—media, music, culture, friends—present a contrary way of life. Where will they see the faith lived out fully, even sacrificially? It is imprudent at this moment in history to downplay sexual morality. The world needs our witness, and the Spirit is calling us to faithfulness.
14. No judgement of persons or determination of sinfulness is implied in any such covenant decision. Individual consciences must always be respected, but employment as a minister is a different matter. An in-conscience decision for a lifestyle choice can be accepted, acknowledged, and respected even while maintaining that such choices may render a person ineligible for further ministerial employment.
15. We welcome the presence and participation of all men and women of good will in the life of the Catholic Church and repeat our affirmation of the inherent, God-given dignity of all persons regardless of the race, nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, gender, age, sexual identity, ethnic background, or socio-economic status. At the same time, we hold that ministry in the Church and in Catholic schools is such a mission-critical dynamic that it requires faithfulness to Church teaching.

## B. Reasons to discard the lifestyle provision immediately while strengthening formation and accompaniment

1. It is consistent with the example of Jesus, the leadership of Pope Francis, and the pastoral planning of the archdiocese to seek to accompany one another on the journey of discipleship without judgement. The archdiocese has an opportunity here to demonstrate some humility, exercise compassion, seek reconciliation, and walk in faith with all people, especially those with whom they differ on important moral questions.
2. We understand accompaniment “always begins and flourishes in the context of service to the mission of evangelization” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 173). It must help lead others closer to God, never ceasing to be a pilgrimage with Christ to the Father (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 170). We affirm that “the Church will have to initiate everyone—priests, religious and laity—into this ‘art of accompaniment’ which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other” (cf. Ex 3:5). (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 169).
3. It is consistent with the Code of Canon Law (# 1752) which indicates that the salvation of souls is the supreme law of the Church, to take advantage of this opportunity to seek healing, reconciliation, and unity.
4. It is fundamentally discriminatory to single out certain behaviors for summative employment decisions while ignoring other behaviors. The current ministerial covenant has been inequitably enforced, resulting in grave injustices. The archdiocesan employment benefits policy is an example of this inequity, defining those qualifying for coverage as a dependent as “an opposite sex legal spouse who is not legally separated,” while being silent about all other lifestyle issues.
5. We recognize and acknowledge that chastity is an important virtue in the Christian moral life, but it does not singularly determine our moral worth or identity before God. Sexual orientation is not solely dispositive in determining holiness, sinfulness, or suitability for employment.
6. The removal of this discriminatory language from the ministerial covenant will symbolically open our arms in welcome to our community and provide an opportunity for growth of both parishes and schools. Through the proposed formation programs, we can focus on and give priority to our call to conversion and discipleship as articulated in the pastoral planning process. We are confident that through such focused formation efforts the beauty of church teaching will be embraced by those we welcome.
7. The pain and heartbreak of current students weighs heavily on us. Dozens of unsolicited letters to the task force detailed harassment, ridicule, bullying, and discrimination in Catholic schools, leading to the conclusion that for some students, Catholic schools are not safe places.
8. The pain of the adult church is also clear, many of whom find the Church tone deaf to their concerns, a situation that retaining the lifestyle provision will only exacerbate.



9. The recent international sexual abuse crisis, the widespread sexual abuse of children by clergy, and the mishandling of offenders by bishops is an important context for this decision. It seems unwise, insensitive, and untimely to focus on these lifestyle questions while we still suffer from the errors of the abuse crisis. Retaining the lifestyle provision will no doubt appear hypocritical to many and even pharisaical to some.
10. The private and independent Catholic high schools of the Archdiocese of Seattle (Category II schools) have developed multiple workable practices and have found a middle ground in as much as they do not have a lifestyle provision and still maintain high professional employment standards. They also enjoy splendid reputations. This is a great opportunity for unity with them, in bringing together one, common vision for service and witness.
11. Having two different sets of standards for Catholic high schools is problematic in the extreme. It is not defensible theologically, logically, canonically, or pastorally to have some standards for Catholic high schools that are so critical to Catholic identity and mission that employees would be fired or non-renewed for violating them, while other Catholic high schools in the archdiocese do not abide by said standards yet remain Catholic.
12. There are many dioceses and countries, both far and near, who do not have such lifestyle provisions and who operate successful and strong Catholic schools. While some countries receive public funding for Catholic schools and thereby must follow civil anti-discrimination laws, they nonetheless manage to be successful and respected Catholic institutions.
13. The academic disciplines of psychology, biology, sociology, and even theology have expressed tentative views on the genesis of same-sex attraction through the centuries and in different cultures. Even the Catechism of the Catholic Church (# 2357) expresses this uncertainty. Humility is the most appropriate posture in the light of growing scientific knowledge, accumulating lived experience, and ongoing theological reflection.
14. It is not a rejection of the Church's teaching on marriage and sexuality to exclude the lifestyle provision from the ministerial covenant. Rather, it is a full embrace of the Church's teaching on justice, mercy, compassion, and the call to conversion and accompaniment expressed both in the Gospel and in the archdiocesan pastoral plan.
15. While a decision to discard the lifestyle provision will be welcomed by most, challenged by many, and painful for a few, it is the most prudent path forward for the unity of the Church and the future of Catholic education. As Pope John XXIII said at the opening session of Vatican II, "Nowadays, however, the spouse of Christ prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than of severity. She considers that she meets the needs of the present day by demonstrating the validity of her teaching rather than by condemnations." (Pope John XXIII, October 11, 1962).

# CONCLUSION

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The task force trusts that these views and recommendations will help inform the discernment and decisions of the archbishop, who in his responsibility as shepherd and chief teacher is free to endorse, accept, modify, delay, or reject any or all our recommendations. We offer them as the product of our own reading, discussion, and prayer, trusting that the Spirit will continue to inspire all the faithful in the ongoing call to conversion and the ever-present challenges of discipleship.

To the people of God, the Church of Seattle, we pledge a renewed commitment to work together, confident in our common faith. To our archbishop, we promise our continued cooperation and support, vowing to assist in all future efforts to implement what we have recommended and collaboratively following your own prayerful discernment and decisions.

We express our gratitude to the thousands of people who responded to the survey and especially to all those who continually make sacrifices for our Catholic schools and the education and formation of our children, the veritable future of the Church. We value, respect, and appreciate the service and witness of teachers, principals, pastors and priests, school staff, parents, and archdiocesan leaders, especially those in the Office for Catholic Schools. To the students at Catholic schools across the archdiocese whose faith gives us light and hope each day, we promise to persevere in our dedication to the Catholic faith and the Church's schools to provide you the best possible Catholic education. We are grateful for your presence and thank God for the gifts you bring. We pledge our continued support and ongoing commitment to the mission we have joyfully embraced to encounter Jesus, to become disciples, to make new disciples, and to accompany each other in love.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant is grateful to the countless numbers of colleagues, friends, and families who supported our year-long efforts to better understand Church teaching, the needs of the Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of Seattle, and the promptings and workings of the Holy Spirit each day. To the thousands of people who responded to our winter survey, we say a heartfelt thank you. To Catholic school principals and presidents, alumni association directors, archdiocesan office staff, archdiocesan priests and pastors, we extend our gratitude for your patient cooperation. We have felt your support and benefited from your prayerful remembrance.

Special mention we reserve for those who, quietly and behind the scenes, worked diligently on our behalf, allowing us to succeed with ease and without delay. Without their dedicated service, we could not have accomplished our goals. From the Archdiocese of Seattle: Helen McClenahan, Managing Director of Communications and Janeal Grosinger, Office Coordinator for the Office for Catholic Schools; and from the University of Notre Dame, Monica Kowalski, Ph.D., Associate Director of Program Evaluation and Research. Your professionalism has enriched our work.

A final word of thanks to the Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, Archbishop of Seattle. Your confidence in us and trust in our deliberations is most appreciated. We offer this final report, "confident that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).

# APPENDICES

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## **Appendix 3: Survey Instrument**

# Archdiocese of Seattle Survey

Q1 Dear Friends and Colleagues in the Archdiocese of Seattle:

As members of the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant, we are working to advise Archbishop Etienne on how best to proceed with various questions surrounding employment practices in all\* schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese and its parishes. Hoping to better understand the convictions, beliefs, and opinions of a variety of stakeholders, we respectfully request your participation in the following survey.

Please note that this is not a poll or a vote, with a majority rule outcome. Rather, it is our sincere effort to reach out and listen to the views of our friends, colleagues, neighbors, and Christian brothers and sisters, along with our promise to value your views and give them serious consideration. Responses are anonymous and will only be reported as overall data, combined with all other responses. We respect your privacy and value your honesty.

After completing a series of 13 questions, you will be provided an opportunity to share any additional comments you would like. We anticipate 5-10 minutes will be needed to complete the survey. Thank you for your cooperation. Please hold our work in prayer during the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Sandy Barton Smith – Assistant Superintendent, Catholic Identity & Essential Services

Caroline Cacabelos – Teacher, Kennedy Catholic High School, Burien

Kristin Dixon – Superintendent for Catholic Schools

Annie Dolan – Parent, St. Joseph, Issaquah

Frank Feeman – Grandparent, St. John the Evangelist, Seattle

Nicholas Ford – Principal, Our Lady of Fatima

Father Vincent Gilmore – Pastor, Holy Rosary, Edmonds

Father Kurt Nagel – Pastor, Holy Family, Kirkland

Lauren White – Teacher, Bishop Blanchet High School, Seattle

Father Ronald Nuzzi, Chair, University of Notre Dame

\*Text in blue indicates a clickable link with additional information that will open in a new window.

**Q2 What is your current affiliation with the Archdiocese of Seattle? (Check all that apply.)**

- ☐ Catholic school principal
- ☐ Catholic school faculty/staff
- ☐ Priest
- ☐ Parent of current Catholic school student(s)
- ☐ Parent of former Catholic school student(s)
- ☐ Graduate of a Catholic school(s) in the Archdiocese of Seattle
- ☐ Parishioner
- ☐ None of the above

*Skip To: End of Survey If What is your current affiliation with the Archdiocese of Seattle? (Check all that apply.) = None of the above*

**Q3 Please indicate if you are:**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**Q4 Please indicate if you are:**

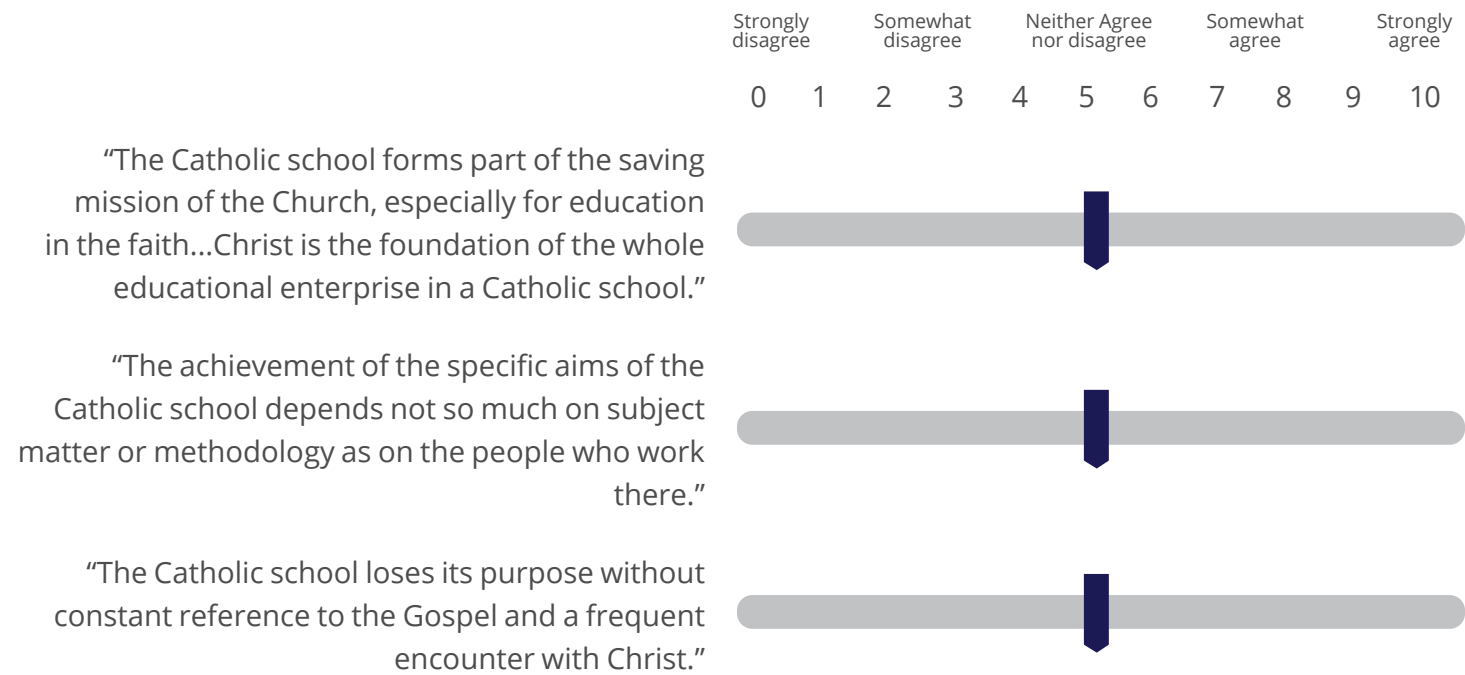
- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Non-Catholic

**Q5 Please indicate your age range:**

- ☐ Under 30
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60+

Q6 OFFICIAL CHURCH TEACHING ON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

In the Vatican document, The Catholic School, we find the following statements. Please indicate your personal agreement with each statement by sliding the indicator.

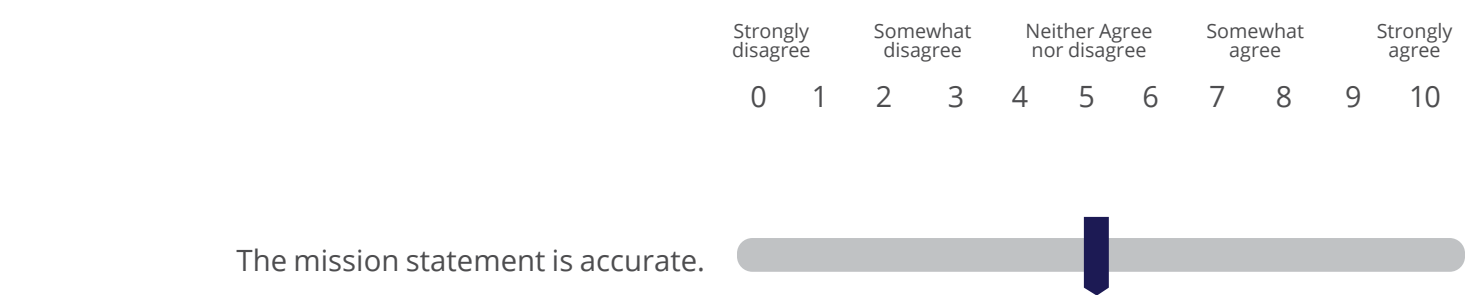


Q7 ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Mission Statement for Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Seattle states:

*"Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle have a long tradition of academic excellence that is firmly rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. From preschool through 12th grade, students are prepared for success in college, life, and beyond. Catholic schools are communities where educators and families effectively partner to ensure the development of the "Whole Child": Mind, Body, and Spirit."*

Please indicate your agreement with this statement as an accurate description of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Seattle.



**Q8 Please rate your agreement with these statements about your overall impression of Seattle Catholic schools.**

**The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle...**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Provide high-quality academic experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide high quality spiritual formation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide high value for the cost of education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide high quality moral education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide high quality religious education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q9 THE CODE OF CANON LAW**

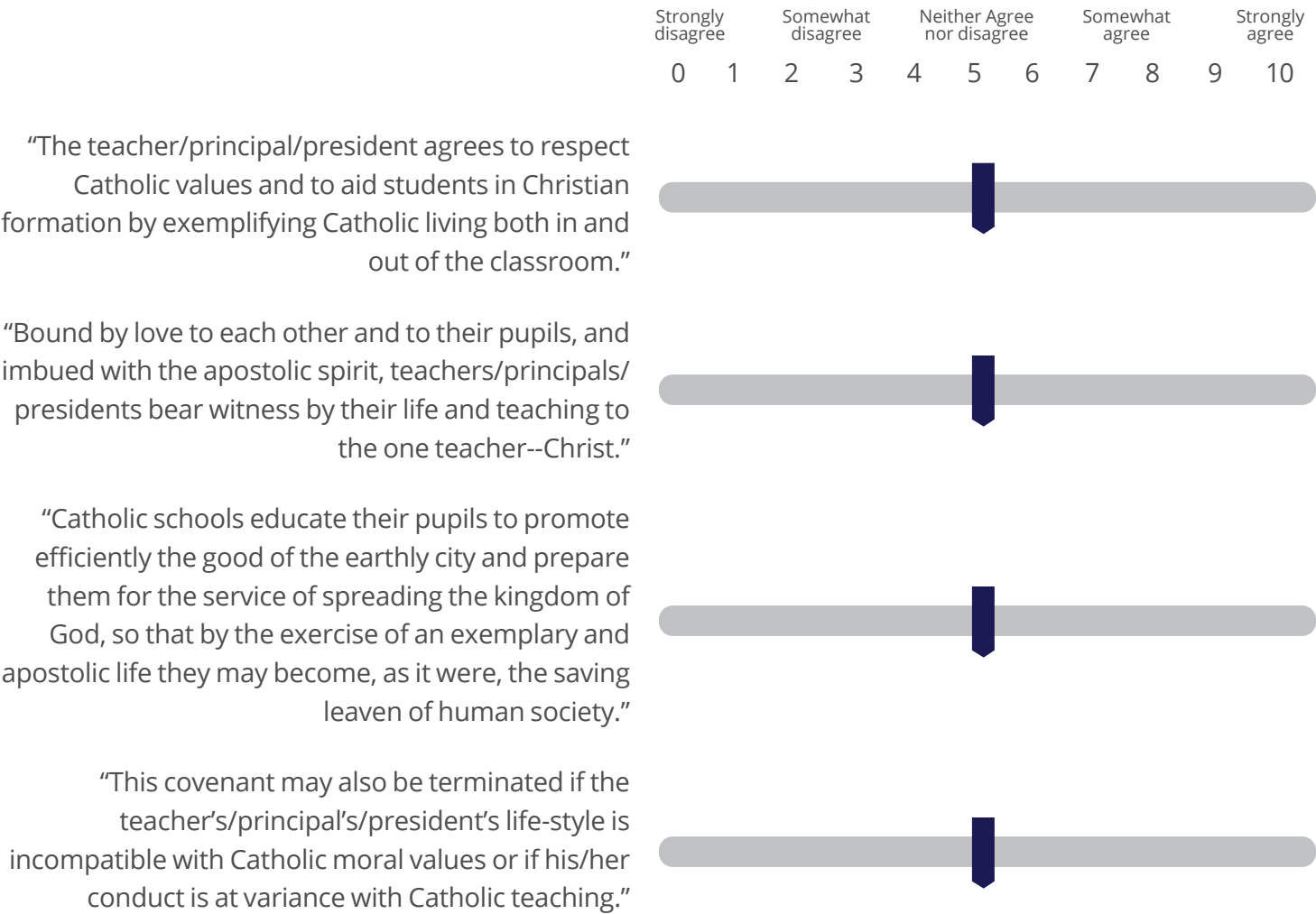
In The Code of Canon Law, the official collection of laws governing the Catholic Church worldwide, we find the following statements. Please indicate your personal agreement with each statement by sliding the indicator.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
“It is necessary that the formation and education given in a Catholic school be based upon the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding for their correct doctrine and integrity of life.”	<div><div></div></div>										
“The Catholic religious instruction and education which are imparted in any schools whatsoever or are provided through the various instruments of social communication are subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the conference of bishops to issue general norms about this field of action and for the diocesan bishop to regulate and watch over it.”	<div><div></div></div>										

**Q10 THE MINISTERIAL COVENANT**

Guided by The Code of Canon Law and the Mission of the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools, the Archdiocese of Seattle has instituted a Ministerial Covenant. The Ministerial Covenant is a legally binding document that is signed as a condition of employment by teachers, principals, and presidents in all schools owned and operated by the archdiocese and its parishes. It includes the following statements.

Please indicate your personal agreement with the inclusion of each statement in the Ministerial Covenant:



**Q11 Before reading this survey, were you aware that Catholic school teachers/principals/presidents can currently be terminated based on “life-style” and/or “conduct at variance with Catholic teaching”?**

- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not at all aware



**Q12 Do you agree that Catholic school teachers/principals/presidents should be terminated if “life-style” and/or “conduct” is “at variance with Catholic teaching”?**

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**Q13 Below is a list of actions that are at variance with Catholic teachings in different ways. Which of these actions would you consider of such seriousness that they violate or break the Ministerial Covenant, thereby rendering a person ineligible for employment as a teacher/principal/president in a Catholic school? (Select all that apply.)**

- ☐ Marrying outside of the Church
- ☐ Getting a civil divorce and remarrying without a Church annulment
- ☐ Being convicted of a felony
- ☐ Marrying a same-sex partner
- ☐ Signing a pro-abortion advertisement
- ☐ Securing or paying for an abortion
- ☐ Striking a child
- ☐ Bullying or ridiculing students
- ☐ Drunk Driving (DUI)
- ☐ Expressing a racist attitude
- ☐ Providing alcohol to a minor
- ☐ Cohabiting before or outside of marriage
- ☐ Insubordination
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Q14 We welcome any additional comments you have about Catholic schools and the implementation of the Ministerial Covenant.**

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## **Appendix 4: Ministerial Covenant**

# Standardized Teacher Ministerial Covenant Archdiocese of Seattle Office for Catholic Schools

## 0.75 and greater FTE - Benefit Eligible Employee

***Be the shepherds of the flock God gave you, and look after it willingly as God would want you to, and not unwillingly. Do not work for mere pay but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been given into your care but be examples to the flock (1Peter 5:2-3).***

The teacher agrees to respect Catholic values and to aid students in Christian formation by exemplifying Catholic living, both in and out of the classroom. Catholic schools educate their pupils to promote efficiently the good of the earthly city and prepare them for the service of spreading the kingdom of God, so that by the exercise of an exemplary and apostolic life they may become, as it were, the saving leaven of human society. Bound by love to each other and to their pupils and imbued with the apostolic spirit, administrators and teachers bear witness by their life and teaching to the one teacher Christ (Gravissimum Educationis 8). This is the spirit that characterizes the covenantal relationship between the employer and the employee on the Catholic School. The following items of agreement are meant to give specific delineation to certain aspects of the relationship.

This covenant is entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, for the academic year

20\_\_ - 20\_\_ beginning September 1, 20\_\_ and concluding August 31, 20\_\_ by and between

\_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter referred to as "teacher" and \_\_\_\_\_, hereinafter referred to as "employer" and provides as follows:

1. The provisions of the Archdiocese of Seattle Catholic Schools Policy and Procedure Manual are incorporated herein and made a part of the agreement and the teacher and the school agree to abide by the policies and directive therein.
2. The teacher shall serve this school in the position and in the specific duties assigned by the Principal. Established policies, rules and regulations expressed by the school and the Principal shall be part of the professional procedure together with the applicable rules and regulations of the Washington State Department of Education, the Archdiocese of Seattle, applicable Canon Law, and the local School Commission.
3. The school term of teaching shall be \_\_\_\_\_ days. The teacher shall be in attendance at the school the required days prior to the opening of school and the days following the closing of school term according to school policy.
4. The teacher shall be responsible for presenting a valid State of Washington Teaching Certificate, or application for the same, to the Principal's office. Failure to present the teaching certificate may be grounds for termination at the discretion of the principal.
5. Benefits will be paid in accordance with the established policy on benefits for all eligible employees of the Archdiocese of Seattle.
6. In case of absence for sick leave or personal leave as defined in the Policy and Procedure Manual Archdiocese of Seattle Catholic Schools, sick leave will be paid for a total of 10 days throughout the school year and personal leave will be paid for a total of 2 days throughout the school year.
7. Teachers shall attend all workshops, institutes, parent, and faculty meetings required by the Principal, unless excused by the Principal. Registration fees will be paid by the school.

8. The teacher shall be present at school at least 30 minutes before the school day starts and remain at least 30 minutes following the regular school day according to school policy.
9. The teacher agrees to comply with all terms of this covenant; demonstrate general competency; perform the duties incumbent upon him/her as a teacher and give professional evidence of effective teaching. This covenant may also be terminated if the teacher's lifestyle is incompatible with Catholic moral values or if his/her conduct is at variance with Catholic teaching.
10. In case a teacher resigns or is removed from the teaching position before the completion of the covenant, the teacher has the right to payment for days worked up to the termination day. Payment due will be calculated by multiplying the contract salary by a fraction whose numerator is the number of days worked and whose denominator is.
11. The first three months, in the first year of employment, is a probationary period in which the school administration and the employee mutually discern the employee's eligibility to continue employment as a regular employee of the school.
12. This covenant will be for one school year and will be brought up for review annually.
13. a. In case of dispute arising from conditions of this covenant the teacher will take up the matter with the Principal to effect conciliation and/or follow the local due process procedure.  
  
b. If conciliation is not achieved at the local level either party may have recourse to the *Due Process of the Archdiocese of Seattle*. In any event, employees are required to complete all canonical recourses available *prior* to seeking remedies under civil law.

### **In consideration of such services, the school agrees:**

1. To pay the Teacher an annual salary in accordance with the established policy of the Archdiocesan payroll plan. The salary will be computed as follows:
  - a. The Teacher's Basic Salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Paid Extra Assignment(s): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL FINANCIAL COMPENSATION:\$** \_\_\_\_\_
2. To provide the following benefits:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Security &amp; Worker Comp Contribution</li> <li>• Worker's Compensation</li> <li>• Health Insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life and Disability Insurance</li> <li>• Retirement Benefits</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
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3. To allow:
 

\_\_\_\_\_ Days per year personal leave & \_\_\_\_\_ Days per year sick leave

Covenant accepted by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor/President Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix 5: Task Force Members Biographies**



## **Caroline Cacabelos**

Caroline Cacabelos, born and raised in south Seattle, WA, has immersed herself in Seattle Catholic education for a majority of her life— St. Anthony, St. Paul, Eastside Catholic (middle school), and Seattle Preparatory School. For her undergrad, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Justice and Society (Peace and Justice Studies) at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. In her first year of post-grad, she returned to Seattle Prep through the Alumni Service Corps program. After the ASC program concluded, she continued forming her passion for Catholic education and social justice at Kennedy Catholic High School as the Leadership and Activities Coordinator. In addition to this role, she has been a part of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee, the Cabinet, and the formation of important student affinity groups and clubs. Following her service as a teacher representative on the Archdiocesan Task Force, she will continue her journey of Catholic education as a Master of Student Development Administration candidate at Seattle University.

## **Kristin Dixon**

Kristin Kreilkamp Dixon currently serves as Superintendent of Schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle. Mrs. Dixon has served in various capacities in the Archdiocese as middle school teacher, vice-principal, development director, principal and as Assistant Superintendent for Academic Excellence. Faith-filled, passionate teachers, courageous school, and parish leaders, as well as the many committed families inspire her every day to listen and learn, and to respond with care and gratitude for the many gifts that make Catholic education possible. Her participation on Archdiocesan taskforces or national committees allows her to continue learning. She is grateful for the opportunity to serve.

## **Frank Feeman**

Frank Feeman and his wife DeAnn are the proud parents of seven graduates of Archdiocesan Catholic Schools. They have six grandchildren. Three attend Catholic Elementary School –soon to be four! Frank and DeAnn have been active parishioners and volunteers at St. John the Evangelist in Seattle for over forty years.

Professionally, Frank is a Certified Public Accountant and practiced public accounting until his first retirement in 2005.

Frank has served as a member and chair of the Archdiocesan Finance Council, is a founding Trustee of the Fulcrum Foundation, and served as a Trustee of Catholic Community Services of Western Washington. Frank was the Chief Financial Officer of the Archdiocese of Seattle, retiring in 2018.

## **Nicholas Ford**

Nicholas Ford has served as a teacher and administrator in the Archdiocese of Seattle for 9 years at Our Lady of Fatima Parish School in Seattle. He recently began a new role as principal of St. Patrick Catholic School in Tacoma. A native of eastern Canada, Nicholas has studied at Boston College and Seattle University. He served as a Jesuit volunteer in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where he began his ministry in Catholic education as Dean of Studies at Gonzaga Primary School. He and his wife, Rachel, live in Tacoma with their three children, Calogero, Aloysius, and Filomena. Nicholas has represented Catholic school principals on the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant at the invitation of Archbishop Etienne.

## **Fr. Vincent Gilmore**

Fr. Vincent Gilmore has been ordained for 31 years. 15 of those years was serving as a teacher and administrator in primary and secondary Catholic schools in S. California. For the past 6 years Fr. Vincent has been serving in the Archdiocese of Seattle, presently as Pastor of Holy Rosary, Edmonds, and Dean of the Snohomish Deanery.

## **Fr. Kurt Nagel**

Fr. Kurt Nagel was born in Heppner, Oregon on August 12, 1961. The second of four children, he was raised in Oregon and Washington. He attended the University of Washington, earning a B.A. and M.A. in history, and received a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in Colonial American history. In 1992 he entered Mundelein Seminary in Chicago and was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Seattle in 1997. Fr. Nagel was Parochial Vicar at St. Charles Borromeo in Tacoma from 1997-2000, and from 2000-2007 was Pastor of Queen of Angels, in Port Angeles, and St. Anne, Forks. (He was also Administrator at St. Mary Star of the Sea from 2002-2005). Since July 2007 he has been Pastor of Holy Family in Kirkland.

## **Fr. Ron Nuzzi**

Rev. Ronald Nuzzi is a priest of the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio and currently serves as the Executive Director of Equitable Access and Excellence with Catapult Learning, LLC. Fr. Nuzzi has worked in Catholic higher education as a university professor at the University of Dayton, Saint Louis University, and the University of Notre Dame. A regular speaker, writer, and researcher on Catholic education, he has done work for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), many individual dioceses, and works regularly with Catholic schools in Australia, Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. He served as chair of the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant at the invitation of Archbishop Etienne.

## **Sandra Barton Smith**

Sandra Barton Smith currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent for Mission and Catholic Identity in the Office for Catholic Schools, Archdiocese of Seattle. Sandra has served as a Catholic school elementary teacher, Vice Principal, and Principal at St. Philomena School, Des Moines, which is also her parish community for almost forty years. She is a member of the Archdiocesan Task Force on the Ministerial Covenant at the invitation of Archbishop Etienne.

## **Lauren White**

Lauren White has served the Seattle Archdiocese for the last 15 years in various faith formation and liturgical ministries. After 6 years of youth ministry, she pursued her passion for teaching the faith. She earned a master's in theological studies from the University of Dallas and was commissioned as a Lay Ecclesial Minister through the Christifideles program. She currently serves as a theology teacher and campus ministry team member at Bishop Blanchet high school. She continues to share her love for liturgy through music ministry at her parish and spends her summer directing a Catholic youth conference. She lives in Seattle with her husband.



