Upon a Solid Foundation:

The ACSI Response to and Expansion on the

CARDUS

EDUCATION SURVEY

ACSI

Association of Christian Schools International

Executive Summary

In 2011, the *Cardus Education Survey* (*CES*) was released. This report examined the correlation between Christian education motivations and student outcomes. It dissected motivations and outcomes in spiritual formation, academic rigor, and cultural engagement. The report focused on Protestant Christian school and Catholic school programs. This paper by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) is both a response to the *CES* and a dissemination of related ACSI-specific data that have not previously been made public.

The *CES* found that Protestant Christian schools largely excel at spiritual formation, which is a key emphasis of Protestant Christian programs—one that pays off as their graduates live out their lives. We highlight those findings, and we further call for church leaders to take up the cause of Christian education. We also expand on the Cardus report by articulating a particular philosophy of Christian education as we understand it.

The *CES* drew the conclusion that Catholic schools were far more academically rigorous than Protestant Christian schools, largely because of four factors. We review those factors and suggest that the data point less to an academic chasm between the two types of schools than to differing focuses on student outcomes. We review other data from the past 40 years that show a similar academic result from both Catholic and Protestant Christian schools.

Lastly, the study determined that Protestant Christian school programs lacked cultural impact in some key areas. Several of the *CES* measurements of cultural impact used a top-down approach to cultural influence (i.e., the impact of political and high-visibility individuals on the culture). We have emphasized a more balanced, dual nature of cultural impact that includes both top-down and bottom-up (i.e., the impact of the average person on the community) engagement and further highlighted where our graduates have excelled in these areas.

We have tried to validate the Cardus report, because the accuracy and importance of its data is unquestionable. The Cardus think tank has done all Christian educators a great service. What we have sometimes disagreed with is the interpretation or conclusions drawn from the data.

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Purpose and Context

1.1—Goals

This report is both a response to the *Cardus Education Survey* (*CES*) findings in general and an analysis of some *CES*-provided measurements particular to ACSI schools that have not previously been made public.

1.2—The *Cardus Education Survey*

Cardus is a Christian think tank headquartered in Ontario, Canada. Its stated purpose is renewing North American "social architecture" in the areas of education and culture, work and economics, civics, and cities (Cardus 2012). Cardus wanted to undertake a study that would help fill knowledge gaps about K–12 Christian education and help interested parties better understand the intended and actual outcomes of Christian education in academics, spiritual development, and cultural engagement in the United States and Canada. In 2011, Cardus released its initial report, detailing the findings of its two-year, million-dollar study. The project surveyed students, teachers, and administrators to obtain benchmarks in the categories mentioned above. The overarching question the researchers sought to answer was, "Do the motivations for private religious Catholic and Protestant schooling in North America align with graduate outcomes?" (Pennings et al. 2011; front cover). The answer is yes—they largely do.

The value and validity of the *CES* cannot be overstated. It is one of the most—if not *the* most—comprehensive surveys on North American K–12 Christian education ever conducted, and it gives a defensible basis for what Christian educators do. It also shows where we need to improve our efforts and gives us quantifiable points at which to measure our progress moving forward. The impact of this report will be felt for years to come.

1.3—The State of Religious Education

Our conversation about Protestant Christian education takes place in a very narrow line of inquiry, and it is all too easy to forget the overall setting of the U.S. educational system. Let us set the context by asking, What is the state of education in the United States? During the 2009/2010 school year, about 5,488,000 U.S. preK–12 students (about 10 percent) were enrolled in private schools (Aud et al. 2011, 26, 150). Of those private school students, 80 percent were in religious schools, including Catholic and Protestant Christian schools (Broughman, Swaim, and Hryczaniuk 2011, 2).

Studies and testing records generally show that private schools outperform public schools year after year. For example, testing data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) from 1978 to 2011 show that private school students outperformed public school students in reading and math every time the NAEP assessments were given, and comparative data are available (National Center for Educational Statistics 1978–2011). So our limited discussion of Protestant Christian schools already takes place in the top 10 percent of schools (when judged by average student performance). Not a bad place to start the conversation.

We also want to challenge pastors and other church and denominational leaders to consider the impact their local Protestant Christian schools are having and the responsibility church leaders and parents have to raise up competent believers. We believe the Cardus report says it eloquently enough:

> It is clear that graduates of Protestant Christian schools are ideal church members in many ways. From church attendance to congregational volunteering, the Protestant Christian school is having an impact on how its graduates participate in church life. It is troubling, then, that while Protestant Christian schools are having a positive impact on the church, we note that Protestant Christian clergy rarely encourage their congregants to choose Christian schooling for their children—quite a different paradigm than that which is present in Catholic churches. We believe the church and the Christian school have the potential to be mutually reinforcing entities if greater support is given to schools. While we understand the church's need to support public schools, as well as the argument to place children in these schools as "salt and light," we wonder if the church would be wise to better support Christian schools for the betterment of their families, children, and … their communities as a whole. (Pennings et al. 2011, 20)

The days of year-after-year growth in the North American Protestant Christian school movement ended some time ago. Our schools are struggling because of many forces beyond their control. The economic downturn has created a new normal for all organizations that wish to keep their doors open. Add to that fact the recent influx of charter public schools. While we applaud the efforts of many good Christian brothers and sisters who have started charter schools for the good of their communities, a charter school in essence is public and therefore not independent—and certainly not religious. It lacks the fundamental elements that make a private Protestant Christian school unique—its religious mission and purposeful inculcation of the faith. Simply put, our schools need champions in our churches who see religious education for what it is—an extension of the home and the congregation.

Spiritual Formation

It is imperative to understand that Christian schools must first succeed in spiritual formation to further succeed in the cultural and academic transformation of their students and, thereby, their communities. Therefore, we are pleased to note that the *CES* data show that the vast majority of Protestant Christian school administrators report their students' relationship with God as a top, if not the top, priority (Pennings et al. 2011, 23). Academic rigor and spiritual formation are not at odds with each other—but they are not equals, either. There must be no mistake that academic accomplishment must come out of spiritual integrity.

Figure 1 illustrates this concept, showing spiritual formation at the center of a student's development and academic discipline working its way out from the center. We believe ACSI schools do have their priorities straight. Does academic rigor need to be improved upon? Yes. Must academic rigor be emphasized at the expense of spiritual development? No. To that end, we are pleased to know Cardus has validated what administrators and parents have known for some time—Protestant Christian education is making a substantial difference in students' lives.

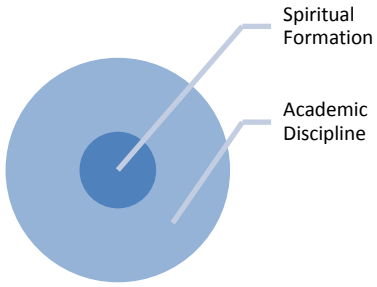

Figure 1: Academic Discipline in Context

Of all the data collected in the Cardus report, "one of the most significant findings in this study is the long-term commitment of Protestant Christian school graduates to stay within the Protestant faith. Attending a Protestant Christian school seems to impact graduates' choice to stay into adulthood within the Christian faith" (Pennings et al. 2011, 19). Spiritual formation is the foundation from which all other endeavors of excellence and relevance must flow.

2.1—Why Pay Twice for Tuition? ACSI Schools' Impact on Spiritual Formation and Life

While parents and educators have reason to be pleased, pastors should also be rejoicing over the *CES* findings. Students graduate from Protestant Christian schools feeling well prepared for a spiritual life; consequently, they are more committed to their churches. They practice spiritual disciplines and follow church teachings more often than graduates from any other type of school (Pennings et al. 2011, 16). In general, Protestant Christian school graduates have a higher regard for authority—specifically church authority—and for the infallibility of the Scriptures. They also attend church more regularly and are more active in their congregations than other school graduates (16–17).

One area we would like to see improvement in is Protestant Christian school graduates' leadership in their congregations. The study found that type of school has little impact on whether a student will be in a leadership role in his or her church (Pennings et al. 2011, 19). We would like to see our schools influence that outcome more positively.

As the data show, Protestant Christian school graduates are the most regular in outward religious practice, but what about inward spiritual discipline? These students "are distinctively different from their peers in their belief that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation" (Pennings et al. 2011, 17). Homeschool, public school, and Catholic school graduates all pray, read Scripture, and evangelize at about the same rates, but Protestant Christian school graduates practice all three at significantly higher rates (21). When Protestant Christian school graduates marry and have children, they also spend more time incorporating their faith into their family life; they pray, discuss God, and read Scripture together as a family more often than any of their peers (Pennings et al. 2011, 22).

Not only are ACSI schools training well-grounded graduates, but the schools themselves are well-anchored and consistent in their theological beliefs. ACSI-accredited programs have

averaged the least amount of theological shift in the past five years of any group measured (Cardus 2011, 36); that fact should comfort parents and supporters.

2.2—Moral Integrity and Spiritual Disciplines as Community Salt and Light

Another distinctive of Protestant Christian school graduates is their tendency to choose careers on the basis of their religious calling and to place less importance on compensation (Pennings et al. 2011, 20). These students average lower household incomes, yet they give more of their time and their finances to their churches and communities than their peers do (18–19). In general, Protestant Christian school graduates give almost five times more money to their churches and about seven times more to other religious causes than any other group does (18). They also give significantly more time, volunteering more hours in their churches and about the same number of hours in other community causes (19, 26). It is of interest that these graduates also feel more gratitude for their possessions, even in light of their relatively lower household incomes and greater efforts in giving (24–25). What community would not want such citizens?

1. **Highest congregational monetary giving**
2. **Highest other religious monetary giving**
3. **Highest total monetary giving**
4. **Most church-related volunteer hours**
5. **Similar number of volunteer hours in all other causes**

Figure 2: Giving Habits of Protestant Christian School Graduates

Some people have complained that all this giving stays confined inside the local church. However, many aid programs are run by churches or parachurch ministries, so monetary gifts and donations of time to these organizations have a stabilizing force on their communities. A recent Barna Group study shows that three-fourths of U.S. adults believe churches have a positive impact on their community, while only 1 in 20 believe they have a negative impact. When asked how churches could positively influence the community, people most often mentioned helping the poor and addressing poverty. One of the Barna study's overall findings was that, even by the unchurched, "churches are perceived to be an important element of a community" (2011). Being the hands and feet of Christ has a direct impact on one's community.

The *CES* data suggest that Protestant Christian school graduates' religious beliefs also have an impact on how they interact with the culture around them. These graduates use Scripture to make moral decisions more often, and they believe more strongly that moral standards are absolute—including prohibitions against premarital sex, divorce, and cohabitation (Pennings et al. 2011, 16–17, 20). These students also strongly believe religion should be included in public discourse on the pressing issues of our time (20). Finally, they are doing more community good through their commitment to short-term mission and aid trips. Protestant Christian school graduates participate in more post-high-school relief and development, mission, and evangelism trips than any of their peers do (19). It is clear that these students are not islands unto themselves in their communities, but they are integrated into its various parts.

Academic Rigor

The overarching academic finding of the *CES* was that Protestant Christian education is significantly less academically rigorous than Catholic education (Pennings et al. 2011, 31). Such a claim deserves further inquiry and close inspection.

As previously mentioned, Protestant Christian schools are already among the top 10 percent of schools when judged by average student performance on the NAEP test. For the past 37 years, since ACSI and its predecessors started tracking Stanford Achievement Test scores in 1974, ACSI schools have scored significantly higher than the national norm in every grade level every year. Clearly Protestant Christian schools, and ACSI schools specifically, are excelling academically. The *CES* finding is based on several criteria, among them school academic programs (including number of required courses in various disciplines and number of AP courses available), the percentage of graduates who attend more-selective colleges and universities, and graduates' average years of higher education and number of advanced degrees. While Catholic schools do offer some specific academic advantages, we believe that the academic gap is significantly less than first reported and that it has less to do with academic preparation than with school, parent, and student goals.

One of Cardus' more-positive findings was that the *CES* "did not find the damaging anti-intellectual effect that many would say is a product of Protestant Christian schooling" (Pennings et al. 2011, 34). Protestant Christian education has turned a corner in both preK–12 and postsecondary education. Much ado has been made, and rightly so, over the anti-intellectual bent of the evangelicalism of several decades ago. Efforts by ACSI and others are producing fruit; the academic mind-set has shifted. We still have work to do, but the turn has been made.

3.1—ACSI and Catholic Schools Share an Academic Advantage Over Public Schools

The National Center for Education Statistics, a section of the U.S. Department of Education, administers the congressionally mandated National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The NAEP's goal is to make objective information available so evaluations of our nation's educational systems can be made and measured. The NAEP test and measurement scores show that over the past 10 years there is little statistical difference between Protestant Christian school scores and Catholic school scores (Perie, Vanneman, and Goldstein 2005, 1; National Center for Educational Statistics 1978–2011).[1]

If a significant gap in academic programs exists, one would expect to see Catholic schools substantially outperforming Protestant schools, but the survey results don't show that. Instead, we do find Catholic schools excelling at specific aspects of academic rigor. For example, the *CES* data show that Catholic schools offer nearly twice as many advanced placement (AP) courses as Protestant Christian schools overall do (Pennings et al. 2011, 31). However, that number shrinks

[1] NAEP distinguishes between conservative Christian and Lutheran schools; the *CES* did not make this distinction, so we combined Lutheran and conservative Christian school numbers from the NAEP report before comparing them to Catholic school numbers for consistency.

to nearly a third more when compared with ACSI-accredited programs (Cardus 2011, 150). ACSI schools do need to improve AP course offerings and in some other areas as well, but, overall, student achievement has not been significantly impaired. Both Catholic and ACSI programs offer high-quality educations that any parent should be pleased with.

A 2008 analysis published in *Catholic Education* further confirms the consistent quality of Protestant and Catholic education over several decades. William Jeynes undertook a meta-analysis of 41 scholarly studies, conducted over 40 years, that compared public and religious educational programs. He attempted to further break down the data to compare Catholic and Protestant schools. Like the NAEP data and some of the *CES* data, Jeynes' findings show consistent performance:

> The results indicate that Catholic and Protestant school students have about the same academic advantage over their counterparts in public schools. However, the pattern of more specific academic measures is quite different. Protestant school students did better on academic tests than did Catholic school students. However, Catholic students did better than Protestant school students on non-standardized measures.
>
> The results of this meta-analysis suggest that Catholic and Protestant school educators can learn from one another. These findings may indicate that students from Protestant, mostly Evangelical, schools may obtain a broader range of knowledge than their counterparts in Catholic schools. However, Catholic school students, given that they are less likely than children in Protestant schools to be held back and more likely to take demanding courses, may function in a more supportive environment than Protestant school students. Hopefully, these results will encourage greater communication and cooperation between Christian educators. (Jeynes 2008, 266–67)

Data from both the NAEP and Jeynes' report show that, over the past four decades, the academic standards for both Catholic and Protestant schools have remained high—and relatively similar.

One measurement of rigor is the number of semesters in a given field of study a school requires for graduation. Catholic schools require more courses than Protestant Christian schools overall in 6 of the 10 subject areas the *CES* measured (Pennings et al. 2011, 31). However, the ACSI-specific data revealed that ACSI-accredited schools require more semesters than Catholic schools do in 9 of the categories—math, science, English, theology or biblical studies, foreign language, art or music, civics, other social studies, and physical education. ACSI-accredited programs only require fewer courses in religion other than theology or biblical studies (Cardus 2011, 152–162). ACSI schools also have more dual-enrollment students (high school students taking college courses part-time) than Catholic or other Protestant programs do (185).

3.2—Attainability and Desirability of Selective College and University Attendance

The *CES* data reveal the undisputed fact that Catholic school students attend more-selective colleges and universities more often than Protestant school students do (Pennings et al. 2011, 31). What this fact tells us is less clear. The *CES* cited several possible contributing factors,

including differing administrator, parent, and student goals; Catholic schools' better academic reputation, especially among recruiters; and the conclusion that, although graduation requirements are similar, Protestant courses are less academically rigorous (31–34).

We contend that Protestant school students' lower presence in more-selective programs has less to do with the students' capability to get into such schools and more to do with their preference to do so—a distinction between attainability and desirability. As shown above, Catholic and Protestant schools' academic test scores are more alike than different. According to the ACSI-specific data, Catholic schools ranked highest in four of five measurements for school emphasis on college and university admissions (Cardus 2011; 3–4, 16, 27–28). Catholic schools also ranked first in parent and student support for a focus on college and university admissions (87–88, 103). Catholic schools also received several times more college recruiters (Pennings et al. 2011, 32). Clearly Catholic schools emphasize excelling in college programs—and these efforts are working.

However, a lack of similar emphasis in Protestant Christian schools does not necessarily equate to poorer academics. In fact, the *CES* data show that Protestant Christian school graduates feel more prepared for college than any of their peers do (Pennings et al. 2011, 32–33). Although the *CES* speculates that these feelings of preparedness may be because these graduates are often attending less demanding colleges, we contend that they are due to the level of academic and spiritual preparation uniquely found in Protestant Christian schools.

Should ACSI schools push their students toward more-selective colleges and universities? In contrast to Catholic schools, it seems Protestant Christian schools currently emphasize religious universities by placing greater emphasis on spiritual development. Protestant Christian school graduates choose Protestant Christian universities four times as often as other graduates do (Pennings et al. 2011, 33).

ACSI's goal is that every student be equipped to fulfill his or her full potential in Christ instead of focusing on a particular type of postsecondary education. We believe that potential may include attending a more-selective college or university if that is what God intends for the student. Simply attending a Christian school should not limit a student's ability to attend a particular college—but high-level college attendance should not be the primary goal of Christian educators.

The *CES* observed that if, as its findings show, Protestant Christian schools are preparing students in their faith, then "parents should not fear sending their students into secular colleges and universities" (Pennings et al. 2011, 34). We agree with this statement, but we also note Jesus' warning in Luke 6:39–40: "He also told them this parable: 'Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher' " (NIV). Few would challenge the idea that the average teenager entering college or university will be greatly influenced by his or her professors while navigating the early years of adult life.

A balance must be struck on this issue; where that balance lies is not clear. The *CES* data indicate that more than 40 percent of Protestant Christian programs place students in top-20 postsecondary programs (Pennings et al. 2011, 32). This statistic only tells us there is room for growth; it cannot tell us whether we should push students toward highly selective institutions. Such a discussion is a philosophical and theological question on which Christians will disagree. Therefore, our motivation as Christian educators is to prepare students to be able to attend a selective university if led there by God, but not to direct them there just for the power and authority such institutions can offer. (To be clear, the *CES* does not infer that Christian students must leave their faith at the door of a highly selective institution but that students should enter selective colleges and universities to influence the world for Christ. We agree.)

A related *CES* finding is that Protestant Christian school graduates attain about a year less formal education and earn fewer higher degrees than Catholic school students do (Pennings et al. 2011, 34). While we have no ACSI-specific data on this point, we would clearly like to see more growth in the Christian school community in this area. Although data do show that graduating from any private K–12 program increases the likelihood that a student will graduate from college (34), our primary goal is to equip students to be able to go wherever and do whatever God has called them to. Within that framework, ACSI would like to see more Protestant Christian students obtain postgraduate degrees.

Protestant Christian education needs to improve in some academic areas, but the overall picture is far from bleak. Forty years of data show that Catholic and Protestant Christian programs are fairly equal in academics, although they tend to emphasize different types of postsecondary education. Fewer Protestant Christian school graduates attend more-selective university programs, and fewer Catholic school graduates attend religious universities. The data seem to indicate that this outcome is not by accident or because of academic inequality.

Cultural Engagement

The current Christian debate over how best to influence society is not new. Many were disillusioned with Jesus because they hoped for a true stately king, a political savior who would bring freedom from Roman bondage. Instead, they received a king of a different design—a Savior born in a humble stable and buried in a borrowed grave.

This current debate might be described by a top-down or bottom-up model (see fig. 3). A top-down model shows leaders of all shapes and sizes setting the cultural tone and standards, which the rest of society then follows to varying degrees. A bottom-up model says influence and change do not come primarily from leaders but from foundational changes on the level of average people—changes which then work upward to institutional leaders. ACSI is not suggesting an either/or dichotomy of top-down or bottom-up cultural engagement but a both-and view. However, we believe that lasting change in society does not come from politicians but from ordinary people showing Christ's love to their neighbors. This is not a settled issue; there is lively debate within Christianity on how best to be "salt and light," particularly in our unique political processes.

The Cardus survey looks at both top-down and bottom-up influences, noting that Protestant Christian school students rank extremely high when it comes to donating money and time (Pennings et al. 2011, 26), a desire for public service (30), and many aspects of personal relationships, including interracial relationships (28) and stable families (26). The authors make it clear that the "research finds Christian schools to be serving a public good in many ways, regularly countering the argument of social divisiveness and defying the stereotypes about graduates' radical political beliefs and actions" (24).

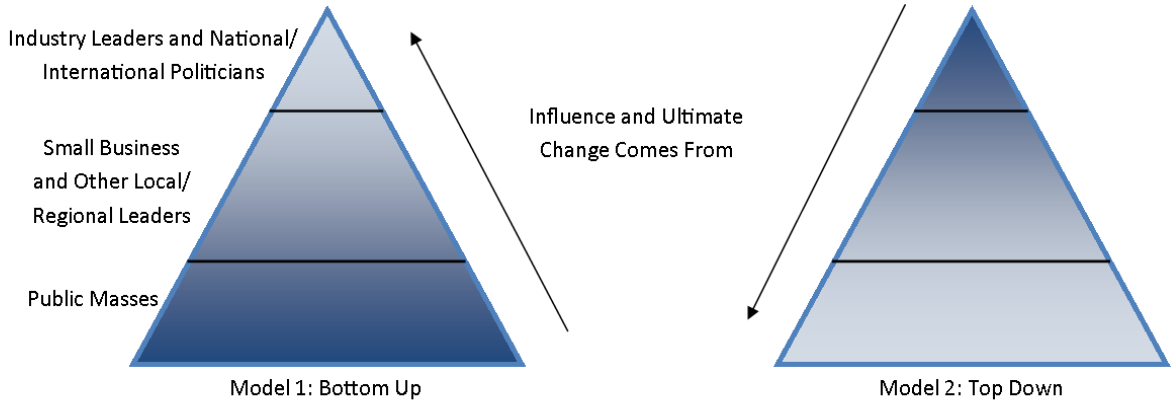

Figure 3: Cultural Influence

However, the authors seem to set a higher value on top-down influence by saying the study did not "find Christian school graduates to be culturally engaged in the more substantial ways that echo the rhetoric of 'world-changing' … with graduates showing a surprising lack of engagement in areas traditionally thought to influence culture: through the political sphere, relationships with people in positions of power and status or people earning higher university degrees, and intellectual engagement in the arts" (Pennings et al. 2011, 24).

There is nothing wrong with emphasizing a top-down view; in fact, it is what one would expect (and even want) from a politically minded think tank. However, our goal as educators is to prepare students to achieve the ultimate design God has for them, whether that is a top-down or bottom-up influence.

Contrary to the *CES*, we would contend that our graduates are indeed "world-changing" and that the term is more than rhetoric. Clearly there is more work to be done within top-down influence, but as the *CES* clearly shows we are excelling at bottom-up influence.

4.1—Bottom-Up World Changers: Protestant Christian School Graduates as Model Citizens

We have already seen that Protestant Christian school graduates give more of their time and money to charitable causes than any of their peers do and that they hold to cultural moral absolutes. They also have a stronger sense of direction in their lives and refer to Scripture more often to help them make difficult decisions (Pennings et al. 2011, 24–25). Respect for authority

is also highest among these graduates (27). The *CES* found that Protestant Christian school graduates marry younger and have more children yet divorce less than most of their peers (26). The study noted, "There is a community stabilizing effect of Christian schools …. Few would argue that stable families are not good for communities. The positive contributions of Christian school graduates in contributing to these should not be underestimated" (26).

The study authors examined graduates' community relationships, particularly in light of the common criticism that religious education is a breeding ground for hate and group isolation. Contrary to this claim, the Cardus findings show that Christian school students form relationships outside their own racial identity. Public school graduates cited racial tension as a problem in their school significantly more often than Christian school graduates did (Pennings et al. 2011, 28). Protestant Christian school graduates credited their teachers' actions and role modeling with having a significant impact on their actions (28–29).

It is clear that Christian school students are not isolationists but integrated members of their communities. The impact of Protestant Christian school graduates on their communities may be hard to measure but, as the *CES* points out, it should not be undervalued. Arguably, these graduates are making more of a bottom-up difference than any of their peers are—and that is significant.

4.2 Political and Cultural Engagement: A New Era

Protestant Christian school graduates spend less time and money on the arts and similar intellectual endeavors than most of their peers (Pennings et al. 2011, 29). However, the *CES* found no isolationist trends in these schools—so what accounts for the lower involvement? One possibility is weaker school arts programs, but further research would be needed to prove that theory. Another explanation is simply resource allocation prioritization; since Protestant Christian school graduates average lower household incomes and more children yet give more time and money to church and community volunteer programs than their peers, there are fewer resources for other endeavors. Conversely, if other graduates spend less time and money on religious and community programs, they may be spending more on the arts and related intellectual endeavors. While we would like to see our graduates have as diverse an impact on their societies as possible, we do not want that impact to come at the cost of family and other community influence.

Perhaps the biggest surprise in the *CES* findings was Protestant Christian school graduates' low level of political engagement. Contrary to the stereotype of evangelicals as right-wing radicals, Protestant Christian school graduates participate far less in political demonstrations, donate less money to political causes, indicate a lower interest in politics overall, and avoid political conversations more than their peers do (Pennings et al. 2011, 27–28).

These students are making more of a difference in the culture than many of their peers are—on an interpersonal level and in some areas of their local communities. Yet that is only part of the equation; our students also need to engage in the political issues of our day. An emphasis in Christian schools on raising strong families and communities should continue—but there is no

reason why our students cannot also be trained to strive and succeed in political ventures as they are in other ventures.

Conclusion

Educators, like parents, must have "both a 10-year goal and a 10,000-year goal for [their children]…. Our 10-year goal is that they will place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, one day establish families of their own which are devoted to Jesus Christ, and graduate from college thoroughly prepared for effective and productive careers wherever God calls them to serve and glorify Him. Our 10,000-year goal is that we will all spend eternity together in the presence of our Creator" (Simmons 2011). Without the 10,000-year view as the foundation, no amount of influence or achievement will do any graduate any good for Christ's Kingdom. The 10,000-year view must be the context for the 10-year view. The former cannot be an excuse for poor performance in the latter, but it should be the impetus to strive for excellence.

The *CES* and the related, ACSI-specific data both show that our schools are succeeding in both the long- and short-term views. Our schools have some work to do to better prepare and train students in some areas, such as political work and academic influence, but by and large we are succeeding in molding young disciples of Christ who are capable of entering any sphere of influence and making a difference.

We urge you to look through the attached tables at the ACSI-specific data in each of the three categories discussed here. In the majority of the measures for spiritual, academic, and cultural indicators, ACSI programs ranked the highest or most favorable when compared with all other Protestant Christian schools.

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Appendix A—ACSI-Specific Data

Cardus provided nearly 800 pages of specific data for ACSI. This report pulled data from ACSI-accredited and other ACSI-member schools out from the general Protestant Christian school category in the *Cardus Education Survey*. This appendix includes relevant information from that report relating to spiritual, academic, and cultural measurements. Under each section, we list the areas in which ACSI-accredited and other ACSI-member programs ranked higher than all other Protestant Christian schools. (Although the ACSI-specific data also included comparisons to Catholic schools, we have not considered them for this appendix.) ACSI schools had more-positive responses than other Protestant Christian schools on the majority of the questions directly relating to spiritual, academic, or cultural matters.

The information in this appendix is taken from the report "ACSI Accredited/Non-Accredited Comparison" (2011, Hamilton, ON: Cardus). Numbers in parentheses are page numbers in the original report.

Table 1: *CES* Data—ACSI-Specific Spiritual Measurements

ACSI programs as compared with all other conservative Protestant programs in spiritual matters

Areas in which **ACSI-accredited** programs ranked either first or second only to other ACSI-member programs

1. Emphasis on student involvement in evangelism—ranked first (7)
2. Student involvement in evangelism as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (31)
3. Student involvement in evangelism as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (18)
4. Emphasis on student development of moral character or personal virtue—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (48)
5. Emphasis on student development of a close, personal relationship with God—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (50)
6. Student development of a close, personal relationship with God as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (80)
7. Student development of a close, personal relationship with God as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (65)
8. Emphasis on student development of a Christian worldview—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (53)
9. Student development of a Christian worldview as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (83)
10. Student development of a Christian worldview as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (68)
11. Student participation in mission and social-service trips outside North America—ranked first (129)
12. Student participation in mission and social-service trips inside the United States and Canada—ranked first (130)
13. Percentage of program ties to youth religious organizations (such as Young Life)—ranked first (145)
14. Percentage of science curricula that discuss young earth creationism—ranked first (173)
15. Percentage of science curricula that discuss old earth creationism—ranked first (174)
16. Percentage of science curricula that discuss evolution—ranked first (175)
17. Percentage of science curricula that discuss intelligent design—ranked first (176)
18. Percentage of science curricula that discuss theistic evolution—ranked first (177)
19. Programs that teach young earth creationism favorably—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (178)
20. Programs that teach old earth creationism favorably—tied for second after ACSI-member programs (179)
21. Programs that teach intelligent design favorably—ranked first (181)
22. Programs that teach evolution least favorably—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (180)
23. Programs that teach theistic evolution least favorably—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (182)

24. Disciplinary problems for disrespect of the school's faith tradition—ranked lowest (317)
25. Percentage of school board members who are pastors—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (271)
26. Programs that require student attendance at school chapel and worship services—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (349)
27. Programs that require students to obey school rules outside of school—ranked first (358)
28. Programs that teach that the Bible is the inspired Word of God—all Christian programs responded equally (359)
29. Programs that teach that the Bible contains errors in moral, spiritual, and religious matters—tied for lowest (361)
30. Programs that teach that the Bible contains errors in science and history—ranked lowest (362)
31. Programs that teach that the Bible supports the doctrine of the Rapture—ranked first (363)
32. Current program theological orientation—ranked most conservative (364)
33. Program theological orientation five years previously—ranked most conservative (365)
34. Average program change in theological orientation over the past five years—ranked least amount of change (366)

Areas in which **other ACSI-member** programs ranked either first or second only to ACSI-accredited programs

1. Emphasis on student involvement in evangelism—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (7)
2. Student involvement in evangelism as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (31)
3. Student involvement in evangelism as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (18)
4. Emphasis that students will work in a religious ministry (as a pastor, for example)—ranked first (12)
5. Emphasis on student development of spiritual habits (such as prayer and Scripture reading)—ranked first (46)
6. Emphasis on student development of a close, personal relationship with God—ranked first (50)
7. Student development of a close, personal relationship with God as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (80)
8. Student development of a close, personal relationship with God as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (65)
9. Emphasis on student development of moral character and personal virtue—ranked first (48)
10. Student development of moral character or personal virtue as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (78)
11. Student development of moral character or personal virtue as the top-ranked priority—ranked first (63)
12. Emphasis on student development of a Christian worldview—ranked first (53)

13. Student development of a Christian worldview as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (83)
14. Student concern for spiritual and religious matters—ranked first (107)
15. Student participation in schoolwide worship or prayer services—ranked first (121)
16. Student participation in student religious groups—ranked first (122)
17. Student participation in mission and social-service trips inside North America—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (130)
18. Percentage of program ties to youth religious organizations (such as Young Life)—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (145)
19. Percentage of science curricula that discuss young earth creationism—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (173)
20. Percentage of science curricula that discuss old earth creationism—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (174)
21. Percentage of science curricula that discuss theistic evolution—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (177)
22. Programs that teach young earth creationism favorably—ranked first (178)
23. Programs that teach old earth creation favorably—ranked first (178)
24. Programs that teach intelligent design favorably—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (181)
25. Programs that teach evolution least favorably—ranked first (180)
26. Programs that teach theistic evolution least favorably—ranked first (182)
27. Programs teach other perspectives on origins favorably—ranked first (183)
28. Percentage of school board members who are pastors—ranked first (271)
29. Extent of influence by pastors and leaders of a sponsoring church on school policies and decisions—ranked first (285)
30. Percentage of programs that require attendance at school chapel and worship services—ranked first (349)
31. Percentage of programs that require students to obey school rules outside of school—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (358)
32. Programs that teach that the Bible is the inspired Word of God—all Christian programs responded equally (359)
33. Programs that teach that the Bible is the infallible guide for personal faith or behavior—ranked first (360)
34. Percentage of programs that teach that the Bible contains errors in moral, spiritual, and religious matters—tied for lowest (361)
35. Percentage of programs that teach that the Bible contains errors in science and history—tied for second-lowest after ACSI-accredited programs (362)
36. Percentage of programs that teach that the Bible supports the doctrine of the Rapture—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (363)
37. Program theological orientation five years previously—ranked second-most-conservative after ACSI-accredited programs (365)

Table 2: *CES* Data—ACSI-Specific Academic Measurements

ACSI programs as compared with all other conservative Protestant programs in academics

Areas in which **ACSI-accredited** programs ranked either first or second only to other ACSI-member programs

1. Emphasis on preparing students for standardized testing—ranked first (2)
2. Emphasis on preparing students to get into college or university—ranked first (3)
3. Emphasis on preparing students to get into a highly selective college or university—ranked first (4)
4. Student admission to college or university as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (16)
5. Student admission to a highly selective college or university as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (28)
6. Students doing well on standardized tests as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (26)
7. Emphasis on student development in math and science knowledge—ranked first (39)
8. Math and science knowledge as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (69)
9. Math and science knowledge as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (54)
10. Emphasis on student development in historical and literary knowledge—ranked first (40)
11. Emphasis on student development in knowledge of a classical language—ranked first (41)
12. Knowledge of a classical language as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (71)
13. Emphasis on student development in other second-language learning—ranked first (42)
14. Other [nonclassical] second-language learning as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (72)
15. Emphasis on student appreciation for a liberal arts education—ranked first (49)
16. Student love of learning as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (60)
17. Parent support for the goal of preparing students for college or university—ranked first (87)
18. Parent support for the goal of preparing students for a highly selective college or university—ranked first (88)
19. Student participation in academic clubs—ranked first (118)
20. Percentage of program ties to academic organizations (such as the National Honor Society)—ranked first (143)
21. Number of AP courses offered—ranked first (150)
22. Highest number of semester hours in math required to graduate—ranked first (152)
23. Highest number of semester hours in science required to graduate—ranked first (153)
24. Highest number of semester hours in English required to graduate—ranked first (154)
25. Highest number of semester hours in theology or biblical studies required to graduate—ranked first (155)
26. Highest number of semester hours in foreign language required to graduate—ranked first (157)

27. Highest number of semester hours in art or music required to graduate—ranked first (158)
28. Highest number of semester hours in civics or government required to graduate—ranked first (159)
29. Highest number of semester hours in other social studies or humanities required to graduate—ranked first (160)
30. Highest number of semester hours in other subject areas required to graduate—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (162)
31. Teaching philosophy supports hands-on or experiential learning—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (164)
32. Percentage of programs that give students the opportunity to attend local colleges part-time—ranked first (184)
33. Percentage of programs that offer online or distance learning—ranked first (186)
34. Percentage of students involved in online or distance courses part-time—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (187)
35. Percentage of seniors in a college preparatory or academic track—ranked first (194)
36. Percentage of programs that have a student government—ranked first (273)
37. Percentage of students who are not meeting standards—ranked lowest (300)
38. Percentage of students who have behavioral problems—ranked lowest (302)
39. Percentage of visits from college or university recruiters in the past year—ranked first (327)
40. Percentage of visits from religious college or university recruiters in the past year—ranked first (328)
41. Percentage of visits from nonreligious college or university recruiters in the past year—ranked first (329)
42. Percentage of programs that require students to take a college entrance exam—ranked first (357)

Areas in which **other ACSI-member** programs ranked either first or second only to ACSI-accredited programs

1. Students doing well on standardized tests as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (15)
2. Student admission to a highly selective college or university as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (28)
3. Emphasis on student development in math and science knowledge—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (39)
4. Math and science knowledge as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (69)
5. Emphasis on student development in knowledge of a classical language—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (41)
6. Knowledge of a classical language as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (71)
7. Emphasis on student development in other second-language learning—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (42)
8. Other [nonclassical] second-language learning as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (72)

9. Student love of learning as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (75)
10. Student love of learning as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (60)
11. Parent support for the goal of academic excellence—ranked first (85)
12. Parent support for the goal of preparing students for college or university—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (87)
13. Parent support for the goal of preparing students for a highly selective college or university—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (88)
14. Student participation in academic clubs—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (118)
15. Study-abroad opportunities for students—ranked first (131)
16. Number of AP courses offered—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (150)
17. Highest number of semester hours in math required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (152)
18. Highest number of semester hours in science required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (153)
19. Highest number of semester hours in English required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (154)
20. Highest number of semester hours in theology or biblical studies required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (155)
21. Highest number of semester hours in other religion courses required to graduate—ranked first (156)
22. Highest number of semester hours in foreign language required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (157)
23. Highest number of semester hours in art or music required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (158)
24. Highest number of semester hours in civics or government required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (159)
25. Highest number of semester hours in other social studies or humanities required to graduate—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (160)
26. Highest number of semester hours in physical education required to graduate—ranked first (161)
27. Highest number of semester hours in other subject areas required to graduate—ranked first (162)
28. Teaching philosophy supports hands-on or experiential learning—ranked first (164)
29. Percentage of students attending local colleges part-time—ranked first (185)
30. Percentage of students involved in online or distance courses part-time—ranked first (187)
31. Percentage of seniors in a specialized track (other than bilingual, general high school, college prep or academic, or vocational or business)—ranked first (196)
32. Percentage of students who have behavioral problems—ranked second-lowest after ACSI-accredited programs (302)
33. Percentage of programs that require students to pass a proficiency test to graduate—ranked first (356)

Table 3: *CES* Data—ACSI-Specific Cultural Measurements

ACSI programs as compared with all other conservative Protestant programs in cultural matters

Areas in which **ACSI-accredited** programs ranked either first or second only to other ACSI-member programs

1. Emphasis on preparing students to confront harmful cultural trends in North America—ranked first (6)
2. Students confronting harmful cultural trends as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (30)
3. Emphasis on student participation in the political system—ranked first (8)
4. Students participating in the political system as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (32)
5. Emphasis on student participation in volunteering and community service—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (9)
6. Emphasis on addressing social and political debates from a faith perspective—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (13)
7. Students actively working for social justice as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (29)
8. Parent support for the goal of trying to change U.S. or Canadian society—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (91)
9. Parent support for the goal of confronting harmful cultural trends in North America—ranked first (92)
10. Students value careers in business as a vocation or a calling—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (113)
11. Students value careers in government as a vocation or a calling—ranked first (114)
12. Student participation in athletics—ranked first (115)
13. Student participation in student political groups—ranked first (119)
14. Student involvement in serving or volunteering in the local community—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (133)
15. Percentage of programs that offer students service or volunteering opportunities in the local community—ranked first (134)
16. Student involvement in political campaigns, meetings, and rallies—ranked first (139)
17. Percentage of programs that offer student involvement in political campaigns, meetings, and rallies—ranked first (140)
18. Student involvement in protests and marches—ranked first (141)
19. Percentage of programs that offer student involvement in protests and marches—ranked first (142)
20. Percentage of programs with ties to youth recreational organizations—ranked first (144)
21. Percentage of programs with ties to student social-service organizations—ranked first (146)
22. Percentage of programs with ties to community or social-service organizations—ranked second after other ACSI-member programs (147)
23. Percentage of programs with ties to other local civic organizations—ranked first (148)

24. Percentage of programs with ties to other types of organizations—tied for first with other ACSI-member programs (149)
25. Percentage of programs that require students to participate on athletic teams—ranked first (354)

Areas in which **other ACSI-member** programs ranked either first or second only to ACSI-accredited programs

1. Emphasis on student participation in the political system—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (8)
2. Emphasis on student participation in volunteering and community service—ranked first (9)
3. Student participation in volunteering or community service as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (33)
4. Emphasis on student appreciation for works of art and music—ranked first (10)
5. Emphasis on addressing social and political debates from a faith perspective—ranked first (13)
6. Addressing social and political debates from a faith perspective as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (37)
7. Emphasis on having a healthy marriage and family life—ranked first (14)
8. Students addressing social and political debates from a faith perspective as the top-ranked priority—ranked first (24)
9. Having a healthy marriage and family life as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (38)
10. Having a healthy marriage and family life as *the* top-ranked priority—ranked first (25)
11. Students actively working for social justices as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (29)
12. Confronting harmful cultural trends in North America as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (30)
13. Participating in the political system as one of the top-ranked priorities—ranked first (32)
14. Emphasis on students developing a strong commitment to the school community—ranked first (47)
15. Parent support for the goal of trying to change U.S. or Canadian society—ranked first (91)
16. Students care about volunteering and community service—ranked first (106)
17. Students value careers in government as a vocation or a calling—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (114)
18. Student participation in athletics—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (115)
19. Student participation in community service and volunteering groups—ranked first (120)
20. Percentage of programs that have all-school volunteering and community service days—ranked first (125)
21. Percentage of programs that offer students service or volunteering opportunities in the local community—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (134)
22. Percentage of programs that offer student involvement in political campaigns, meetings, and rallies—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (140)

23. Student involvement in political campaigns, meetings, and rallies—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (139)
24. Percentage of programs with ties to youth recreational organizations—ranked second after ACSI-accredited programs (144)
25. Student participation in boycotting products or companies—ranked first (137)
26. Percentage of programs that offer student participation in boycotting products or companies—ranked first (138)
27. Percentage of programs with ties to community and social-service organizations—ranked first (147)
28. Percentage of programs with ties to other types of organizations—tied for first with ACSI-accredited programs (149)
29. Teaching philosophy supports exposing students to many different cultures and worldviews—ranked first (169)
30. Percentage of programs that require students to volunteer at school—ranked first (352)
31. Percentage of programs that require students to participate in community service—ranked first (353)

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