The Latino population in the Puget Sound region is the largest and fastest growing student population group. Latino families contribute significantly to the economic and cultural vitality of this area and are predominately of the Catholic faith. The 373 self-selected respondents in this study were drawn from a cross section of nine counties within the Seattle Archdiocese. Clearly, this group of Catholic Latinos value a Catholic education for their children and are open to exploring how this could be possible.
Executive Summary

- The majority of the families in this study were married, had an average of approximately four children per household and reported incomes below the federal poverty level.

- These families reported a high degree of interest in the educational success of their children.

- A slight majority said that they have considered Catholic School as an option for their family because this faith-based education provide the quality and content that would help build their children’s future.
Executive Summary

- Only 37% of the respondents knew of someone who was attending Catholic School and almost half did not know if there was a Catholic School in their area.

- While the majority received information about Catholic schools from their local parish, actual knowledge about Catholic Schools was sparse and very few every tried to enroll a family member.

- Many of those who did try to enroll a family member in a catholic school reported a negative experience and barriers.

- Major barriers for enrolling family members were cost and language.
Agenda

- Background
- Research
- Plan
- Recommendations
In the United States today:

1 in 6 residents is Latino
1 in 5 school children is Latino
1 in 4 babies is Latino
1 in 3 Catholics is Latino
1 in 2 Catholics under 30 is Latino

National Research center on Hispanic Children & Families
In Washington state today:

755,790 Latinos (2010 Census)
47% of Latinos graduate from high school
Average annual income of $20,000
(Manhattan Institute for Policy Research)
“Latino students suffer from a persistent academic achievement gap.”

- Only 53% of Latinos in USA graduate from High school in 4 years
- Only 16% of Latino 18-year-olds are considered "college-ready."
- Only 25% of Latinos aged 18 to 24 enroll in college

Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame
“The majority of Hispanic/Latino families today identify themselves as Christians, specifically as Catholics, and they attend church here in the United States more so than they did in their native countries. This is mainly due to the feeling of loneliness and isolation they experience after leaving behind their extended families and friends in their native countries; they look to the church for support and a sense of belonging during this time of loss, change, and transition.”

Ida Miranda  *Lifelong Faith*, 2007
“Recruiting and welcoming Latino children and families into Catholic schools may be the biggest challenge—and greatest opportunity—for Catholic Schools across the nation. The leaders of nearly every (arch)diocese in the country are asking: “With so many Latino children in our parishes and so few in our schools, what must we do to encourage them to enroll?”

Director, University-School Partnerships
Alliance for Catholic Education, University of Notre Dame
Research Objectives

1. Assess the needs of Latino families in western Washington

2. Analyze data, identify common trends and develop strategies to connect with Latino communities

3. Record the findings in a format that accurately reflects and interprets the results of the study

4. Inform new strategies that improve Latino engagement and enrollment
Research

- 13 Focus Groups Majority Catholic Parishes with 373 Participants
  - Included 45 cities & 9 Counties
    - King
    - Pierce
    - Lewis
    - Cowlitz
    - Pacific
    - Snohomish
    - Skagit
    - Island
    - Whatcom
“I want the best for my kids. It is my dream to send my children to Catholic schools.”
Family Income Range (373 responses)

- $0-$25K: 164 respondents (44%)
- $25K-$50K: 138 respondents (37%)
- $50K-$75K: 28 respondents (8%)
- $75K-$100K: 5 respondents (1%)
- > $100K: 1 respondent (<1%)
- No answer: 37 respondents (1%)

Number of Respondents
Participant Marital Status

- Married: 252 (67%)
- Widowed: 1 (<1%)
- No answer: 5 (1%)
- Single: 38 (10%)
- Divorced: 11 (3%)
- Union Libre: 66 (18%)
Age of Children at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 yrs old</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-11 yrs old</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-15 yrs old</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18 yrs old</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 18 yrs old</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do you know about Catholic schools?

- A lot—15 (4%)
- A moderate amount—56 (15%)
- No answer—26 (6%)
- A little bit—170 (46%)
- Nothing—105 (28%)
Do you know anybody who attends Catholic school?

- Yes: 138 (37%)
- No: 210 (56%)
- No answer: 25 (7%)
What is your impression of Catholic schools?

- **Good education**—217 (58%)
  - Especially for teaching respect, values, faith and morals
- **Expensive**—25 (7%)
- **I don’t know**—70 (19%)
- **No answer**—60 (16%)
What do you think the benefits of receiving a Catholic education would be?

Most Common Answers:
- Learn more about the Catholic church and faith
- Better quality education and attention for my child
- Improved environment for my child
- Brighter future for my child
Have you ever considered a Catholic education for your children? Why or why not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes (52%)</th>
<th>No (42%)</th>
<th>No Answer 6%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Expense</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent academics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have you ever tried to enroll your children in a Catholic school?

- **No answer—19 (5%)**
- **Yes—57 (15%)**
- **No—297 (80%)**

### Comments from “Yes”:
- Language barrier
- Didn’t feel welcome
- “Horrible experience”
- Paid to be on the waitlist and never heard anything
- I didn’t get my registration fee back, even though we weren’t enrolled
What do you know about the cost of Catholic schools?

- No information—201 (54%)
- No answer—30 (8%)
- Very expensive—140 (38%)
Do you have a Catholic school in your neighborhood?

- Yes - 200 (54%)
- No - 140 (37%)
- No Answer - 33 (9%)
Would you be able to provide transportation if your child attended Catholic school?

- Yes—192 (51%)
- No—143 (38%)
- No Answer—38 (10%)
What is the best way to communicate with you?

- Radio: 96 (13%)
- Spanish TV: 172 (22%)
- Newspaper: 41 (5%)
- Computer: 84 (11%)
- Word of mouth: 191 (25%)
- Other: 144 (19%)
- No answer: 38 (5%)
Have you ever heard about Catholic schools through your parish?

- Yes—190 (51%)
- No—155 (42%)
- No answer—28 (7%)
### Action Plan

**A. Support Latino families already in schools by building and strengthening relationships to create communities of trust**

- **Establish Pilot Region**

- **Work in cultural awareness through staff workshops**

- **Spend one month with each school**
B. WORK WITH SCHOOL LEADERS TO POSITION THEMSELVES FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

- CREATE AN AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

- IDENTIFY LEADERS IN THE PARENT COMMUNITY TO BE AMBASSADOR

- RECRUIT AND MENTOR FAMILIES WHO SEND THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SCHOOL
C. DEVELOP LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES

- CREATE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, PARISH AND LOCAL LATINO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- WORK CLOSELY WITH EXISTING SOCIAL AND HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, THE HISPANIC/LATINO MEDIA, BUSINESS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
D. DEVELOP A “TOOL BOX” FOR SCHOOLS AND ADMINISTRATORS

- DEVELOP INTERACTIVE “TOOL BOX” FOR SCHOOLS WITH PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE IN WORKING WITH LATINO FAMILIES

- CREATE A DOCUMENT FOR EACH SCHOOL WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND IDEAS TO SUPPORT LATINO OUTREACH EFFORTS
Increasing Hispanic enrollment

Parish

School-Based Training

Enrolled families

Community Outreach
Recommendations

A. Establish a dedicated phone number with Spanish language assistance for families interested in learning more
B. Examine additional scholarship options
C. Focus on early education
D. Work closer with individual parishes
E. Plan for prolonged and sustained engagement with Latino communities
F. Build leadership among Latino families
G. Examine transportation solutions
“When parents become involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools.”

—Anne T. Henderson
The Evidence Continues to Grow
Interviews

- “The Latino Community needs to understand through Education they can be a vital part of the community. Education is paramount. It is what makes someone capable of succeeding in this country”.  
  -Luis Moscoso, Washington State Representative

- “My dream for the Latino population in Washington is that every single parent and child will have all the education opportunities as they can so they can fully develop their talents and their dreams”-Rosario Reyes, Latino Educational Training Institute

- “Latinos face two barriers. (1) Poverty. People work very hard and for many hours and they simply don’t have the time to get involved in the school (2) Culture. The school system here is so different and they need to learn”-Barbara Gurley, Washington Alliance for Better Schools
Interviews

• “I wish Latinos had an opportunity to feel welcome and part of the community in order to access all of the programs available to have a better life, to receive help when they need it, to feel supported and encouraged” – Catalina Angel, Hispanic Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator The ARC Snohomish County

• “The biggest need of our families is education. They need information about programs, services, resources, and someone to help them with all of that. There are a lot of systems and programs available but they do not know they exist. When they do find out about them there is no one that speaks their language” – Sugely Sanchez Parent to Parent Coordinator/Multicultural Outreach The ARC Snohomish County
“The Latino Community of St Mary Magdalen Parish has responded with **gratitude** and **commitment** to the school and parish community. It is a privilege to fulfill **our mission** as Catholic educators and to reach and serve all members of our faith and education community. I have been inspired by the dedication of the Latino Community to their **faith**, **family**, and now to the **Catholic education** of their children.”

—Bruce Stewart Principal, St. Mary Magdalen Catholic School

“**For Latino Families, financial assistance** would be helpful. They need **scholarships** in larger amounts, perhaps half of the tuition to make it possible”

—Dr. Gary Udd Principal, St. Rose Catholic School
“As I think about all our Latino children and their families at Horizon Elementary and reflect on the beauty of their culture, it is my hope and prayer they stay true to what makes them authentic, grow proud of their language and culture, and protect and strengthen the characteristics of their identity which will grow the possibilities and promise for their future success.” - Leslie Clauson Principal, Horizon Elementary School, Mukilteo School District.
Known Cultural Differences

- **Approach must be relationship driven.**
  - Word of mouth is faster than the internet
  - Continue working on relationships that are built
  - This takes time!

- **Family-centered**
  - The Latino community is family centered
  - Events that include the entire family are inviting

- **Printed information is not the best way to communicate to this community**
  - Education level
  - Not a cultural norm
  - TV, Radio and word of mouth preference
Research Conclusions

- Latino families have a staggering lack of information on Catholic education
  - Cost and available scholarships
  - Location of schools
  - Generally positive impressions, despite some negative experiences
  - Enrollment procedures and financial aid. The perception that enrollment in Catholic schools is unaffordable and out of reach

- Many families live below the poverty line with few education options
  - Catholic education has the power to transform their lives
  - Average family size of the families participating is 3-4 children. Parents do not believe they can enroll some and exclude others
  - Parents own education level, language barrier and lack of trust

- Accessibility must be addressed
  - Welcoming atmospheres established
  - Expanding scholarship opportunities through donor outreach
Building relationships and establishing trust is paramount
- Parent empowerment through education
- Coordination with parish communities would be very helpful

Parents want to help, but do not know how.
- Developing a positive and safe relationship with families can give them access to the resources available in the school and the community.

Access to free and appropriate education for the adults
- In the school community and delivered in a manner that is culturally sensitive.
Goal Measurable Outcomes - 2020

1. Establish an Ambassador program in each school and region

2. Establish and grow a Latino scholarship fund for low income Latino Families in each School

3. Increase the overall Latino Enrollment in the Archdiocese of Seattle by **20%** and a total enrollment and more than 2,000 students

4. Build a partnership with the business community in each Region that supports Latino Families and Catholic Schools
Phase 1 – 1st year of CCHD grant

- Pilot region established in Snohomish County
  - Spend ONE month with each school
  - Work on cultural awareness through staff workshops
  - Identify leaders in the parent community to begin “ambassador programs”
  - Create partnerships between school, parish and local Latino community resources
  - Develop interactive “tool box” for schools with practical assistance in working with Latino families
  - Help schools institute cultural festivities
  - Work closely with Catholic School Office staff to ensure the goals and mission of the office is regularly met