



Children's Scholarship Fund

Baltimore

giving parents a choice ~ giving children a chance

Catholic Schools Study

The Rand Corporation analyzed big-city high schools to determine how education for low income minority youth could be improved.² It looked at 13 public, private, and Catholic high schools in New York City that attracted minority and disadvantaged youth. Of the Catholic school students in these schools, 75 to 90 percent were black or Hispanic. The study found that:

- The Catholic high schools graduated 95 percent of their students each year, while the public schools graduated slightly more 50 percent of their senior class;
- Over 66 percent of the Catholic school graduates received the New York State Regents diploma to signify completion of an academically demanding college preparatory curriculum, while only about 5 percent of the public school students received this distinction;
- 85 percent of the Catholic high school students took the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), compared with just 33 percent of the public high school students;
- The Catholic school students achieved an average combined SAT score of 803, while the public school students' average combined SAT score was 642; and
- 60 percent of the Catholic school black students scored above the national average for black students on the SAT, and over 70 percent of public school black students scored below the same national average.

More recent studies confirm these observations. As parents, politicians, and concerned observers become aware of the benefits of Catholic schooling, particularly for the poor, the rhetoric demanding action builds. Syndicated columnist William Raspberry, a self-described "Reluctant Convert to School Choice," wrote recently, "It seems as obvious for poor children as for rich ones that one-size-fits-all education doesn't make sense."³ Furthermore, according to a recent survey conducted by Terry Moe, senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, and John Chubb, founding partner and curriculum director for the Edison Project, a stunning 83 percent of public school parents and 82 percent of inner-city poor parents want parochial schools to be included in the choice of schools to which they can send their children.⁴