21st CENTURY GIRLS' SCHOOLS:

FOR WHAT REASONS ARE NEW INDEPENDENT GIRLS' SCHOOLS OPENING IN THE UNITED STATES?

By

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ABSTRACT

For a multitude of reasons, the founding of an independent school in the modern-day United States is an extremely challenging undertaking. The list of essentials necessary to envision, prepare, open, and operate a functioning school are endless, yet school founders are driven to do so out of a commitment to and passion for a particular school environment. Independent schools benefit from four defining freedoms that make them truly independent: a) defining the school mission, b) admitting and retaining only those students who are well served by the school's mission, c) determining qualifications for hiring teachers, and d) determining how the school will fulfill its mission through curriculum and instruction (McConaghy, 2006). The primary differentiating factor for the start-up schools used in this study was single-gender education for girls and young women – "all-girls" schools. Interestingly, after years of decline, there is an increasing number of families seeking this type of learning environment for their daughters. Though literature on the mid-to-late 20th century decline of girls' schools is vast, literature on the current revival and projected future of all-girls schooling is limited.

To understand better how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States, this study employed an exploratory qualitative analysis approach, utilizing a sample set of schools determined by their founding years (between 1995 and 2013). A thorough review and analysis of the ten youngest independent girls' schools recognized by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) – from coast to coast, provided a deep understanding of the similarities and differences of each school's founding, and the total sample's relevance to the current status and future of all-girls schooling. The results demonstrate, generally, school founders' desires for: a more challenging academic environment; a greater focus on socio-emotional development; the removal of the distractions of coeducation; the

promotion of gender equity and women's leadership; a religious affiliation; and/or a combination of the above. Combining the latest research on how girls learn best, with both innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to pedagogy, technology, and social issues, these ten young independent girls' school have resulted in high-achieving academic communities that are exciting to students, parents, and educators alike. Providing this current research on the heavily debated topic of single-sex education is essential to determining its present value and future within the United States educational market.

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To my wife and best friend, **Bailey**…

I am endlessly grateful for your love, kindness, and support. This project would not have been possible without your encouragement – and patience! Thank you for allowing me to pursue my passions, and for always being ready to have fun along the way.

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And to my committee members, **Dr. Ben Justice & Dr. Nora Hyland**…

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Thank you for introducing me to this outstanding form of education. I will never forget the eight wonderful years I spent on your beautiful campus, and learning with and from your inspiring leaders, faculty, students, parents, alumnae, and trustees.

And to the emerging **Trinity Hall community**…

Thank you for the opportunity of a lifetime to open and grow this amazing school with you. I am entirely grateful for the admirable work of our founders, our leaders, our superior faculty, and our inaugural class of students and their parents. Let us continue to educate and empower the young women of the Jersey Shore for many years to come.

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This project was *supposed* to be completed before you were born. It wasn't, but thankfully for you, you are too young to have to read it! Rest assured, it is your mother's and my highest priority to provide you the best education possible – hopefully at one of these fine schools!

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

For a multitude of reasons, the founding of an independent school in the modern-day United States is an extremely challenging undertaking. The list of essentials necessary to envision, prepare, open, and operate a functioning school are endless. They require significant and nearly never ending amounts of both tangible and intangible resources, including visionary leadership; educational expertise; personal and organizational time and energy; philanthropic generosity; as well as interest and support from the community.

Positively, independent schools benefit from four defining freedoms that make them truly independent: a) defining the school mission, b) admitting and retaining only those students who are well served by the school's mission, c) determining qualifications for hiring teachers, and d) determining how the school will fulfill its mission through curriculum and instruction (McConaghy, 2006). In his book, *Starting an Independent School: A Founder's Handbook*, educator and researcher Jeff McConaghy summarizes "it is that freedom from regulation and bureaucratic entanglement that frequently allows these schools to evolve and succeed." However, these same freedoms come at a cost. Independent schools are governed by independent boards of trustees – and privately financed, primarily through charitable contributions, endowment income, and most of all, tuition – which new schools struggle to generate a lot of during early years. Because of the many ups and downs that come along with the difficult process of opening a new independent school to serve a specific population of students, the existence of persistent leadership, perseverance, and occasionally, luck, are needed

for long-term success. As such, McConaghy concludes, "founding a school is both the challenge *and* the opportunity of a lifetime."

Therefore, those individuals willing to spearhead an independent school founding are driven to do so out of a commitment to and passion for a particular school environment – be it a specific mission, a religious affiliation, a particular age range, an instructional style, or the make-up of the student body, among other factors. In the start-up cases being reviewed for this study, the differentiating focus was linked to the genders – or lack thereof – being served at the school; specifically, independent single-gendered schools for girls and young women – "all-girls" schools. Interestingly, after years of decline, there is an increasing number of families seeking this type of learning environment for their daughters. But for cities and regions previously unserved – or underserved – by an all-girls school, it takes innovative and dedicated founders to create a school to fulfill this educational option in their communities.

What drives people to start girls' schools? To understand better how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States, this study provides a thorough review and analysis of the ten youngest independent girls' schools recognized by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). A thorough understanding of each school's founding history was necessary in determining its relevance to the current status and future of all-girls schooling. Because young schools often lack storied traditions and noteworthy achievements marketed by competing schools, founding histories serve as a key component of the school's identity and as a selling point to potential students and their families. It is essential to know the rationale for the founding; the existing school's modeled during its creation; and what the founders learned about – and changed – about their vision during the planning year(s) and early years of operating. The results demonstrate,

generally, school founders' desires for: a more challenging academic environment; a greater focus on socio-emotional development; the removal of the distractions of coeducation; the promotion of gender equity and women's leadership; a religious affiliation; and/or a combination of the above.

Participating Schools

1. **The Archer School for Girls**, an independent 6-12 all-girls school in Los Angeles, California, opened to just over thirty students in grades six and seven in a converted Pacific Palisades dance studio in 1995. The school was founded by three women, all graduates of girls' schools and all parents of daughters about to enter middle school.

   Honoring their founders' vision, Archer remains intentional in its practice of teaching girls the way they learn best. Founded on research and supported by expert faculty, The Archer School for Girls is "an educational community that supports and challenges young women to discover their passions and realize their true potential" (Archer, 2013).

2. **Lake Washington Girls' Middle School**, an independent all-girls middle school (5-8) located in Central Seattle, Washington, opened to grade six in 1997 with only five students. The school was founded by a group of parents who acted upon a unique vision to form a middle school for early adolescent girls.

   Lake Washington Girls' Middle School prepares girls to be "confident young women, strong in mind, body, and voice." The school values diversity and promotes personal and social responsibility. Students, teachers and families are "active partners in creating a

challenging academic environment, fostering independent thinking and instilling a life-long love of learning" (LWGMS, 2013).

3. **Girls' Middle School**, an independent all-girls middle school (6-8) in Palo Alto, California, originally opened in 1998 with a sixth-grade class of thirty-five girls in Mountain View, CA. The school was founded by educator Kathleen Bennett and supported by an advisory council.

   The Girls' Middle School strives to educate girls at a crucial time in life. They seek to create "an inclusive environment where academic growth is nourished, and conclude that GMS students discover their strengths and express their voice while respecting the contributions of others" (GMS, 2013).

4. **Orchard House School**, an independent all-girls middle school (5-8) in Richmond, Virginia, originally opened with twelve students in grades six and seven in 1998. The school was founded by four Richmond parents who were inspired by an educational symposium about empowering girls – led by educator Nancy Davies, and developed the idea of creating a different middle school experience for their daughters.

   Orchard House believes the world is a better place when students are engaged, constructive, and useful. The essence of an Orchard House education is "the development of each girl's personal authority and consciousness so that she lives and contributes to the world with understanding, joy, hope and courage" (Orchard House, 2013).

5. **Julia Morgan School for Girls**, an independent all-girls middle school (6-8) in Oakland, California, opened on a college campus in 1999. The school was created by a group of

educators, parents, and members of the community at large who believed that East Bay girls would be well served by the existence of a girls' middle school.

The primary objective of the Julia Morgan School for Girls is to prepare their students to be "the confident, capable, creative and compassionate women of tomorrow." They are dedicated to "the intellectual, creative, social and emotional growth of girls during their critical middle school years" (JMSG, 2013).

6. **Atlanta Girls School** is an independent college-preparatory day school in Atlanta, Georgia, serving girls in grades 6-12. The school opened to grades six through nine in 2000 and was founded by two women, Emily Ellison and Brooke Weinmann, who established AGS to help girls and young women develop their fullest potential "intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually."

   The Atlanta Girls School aims to provide a challenging college-preparatory program in a learning environment designed to "foster the full potential of each student and to enable her to become a vital contributor to our complex global society" (AGS, 2013).

7. **Seattle Girls' School**, an independent all-girls middle school, opened in downtown Seattle, Washington, in 2001. The school was founded by Sharon Hammel and a small group of concerned south Seattle parents who read about the disturbing trend of girls dropping out of the study of math, science, and technology in their adolescent years. Not wanting to see their daughters "lose their confidence before finding their competence," these parents formed the beginnings of SGS.

   The Seattle Girls' School's mission is "to inspire and develop courageous leaders who think independently, work collaboratively, learn joyfully and champion change" (SGS, 2013).

8. **Girls' School of Austin**, an independent K-8 all-girls school opened in 2002 with grades five and six in a small home in West Austin, Texas. The school was founded by a dedicated group of parents and community members with a shared vision: to provide an intellectually challenging education for girls in a supportive and creative environment.

   The Girls' School of Austin's mission is to "inspire girls to achieve personal excellence and go on to lead distinguished and fulfilling lives" (GSA, 2013).

9. **Online School for Girls**, which began classes in 2009, is both the first single-gender online school and the first independent online school in the world. The school was founded by innovative leaders from four noteworthy all-girls schools who formed a non-profit consortium under a common belief that online education is "an increasingly powerful way to learn."

   Online School for Girls' mission is to "provide an exceptional all-girls educational experience by connecting girls worldwide through relevant and engaging coursework in a dynamic online learning community" (OSG, 2013).

10. **Trinity Hall,** an independent all-girls college-preparatory high school in the Catholic tradition in Middletown, NJ, opened in 2013 to its inaugural ninth grade class of thirty students. The school expects to add a new grade each fall, building a rigorous four-year high school program by September 2016. Trinity Hall was founded by a group of dedicated parents and supporters who came together with a shared goal of establishing an independent all-girls high school in Monmouth County, an educational option considered long overdue by many.

> Trinity Hall's mission is "to educate and empower young women for the intellectual, ethical, spiritual, social, and physical challenges and enjoyments of the globally-connected world in which we live" (Trinity Hall, 2013).

Significance

Providing current research on the heavily debated topic of single-sex education is essential to determining its present value and future within the U.S. educational market. A majority of research on the topic compares and contrasts the effectiveness of single-sex and coeducational schooling based on the factors of school culture and climate, gender inequity, socio-emotional development, and most heavily – but flawed, academic achievement. Unsurprisingly, given that most researchers feel strongly one way or the other, this reporting is often purposeful and therefore biased. None of this research is worthwhile without an updated review of happenings, regulations and trends – in this case, of independent girls' schools.

Though literature on the mid-to-late 20th century decline of girls' schools is vast, literature on the current revival and projected future of all-girls schooling is limited. The most compelling work to date – *Where Girls Come First: The Rise, Fall, and Surprising Revival of Girls' Schools* (2004), by Ilana DeBare, a freelance writer and former news reporter who co-founded an all-girls middle school, Julia Morgan, during the 1990's. In her book, DeBare interweaves the first complete history of girls' schools in America with her own first-hard experiences in Oakland, California. Her chronicle of the daily life at girls' schools over the past two hundred years examines the strong convictions of "parents and educators that have fueled the rise of new all-girls schools throughout the country" (DeBare, 2004).

As to how this relates to the present education market in the United States, overall, according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, enrollment in private schools continues to grow, and the reasons families choose private schools are as diverse as the schools themselves (NCES, 2005). As McConaghy indicates, the desire for choice in education is also evident in the recent buzz about charter schools and vouchers, and the number of public school students taking advantage of these opportunities each year (2006). And more recently, the desire for choice in education is evident in the number of publicly funded single-gendered schools – mainly all-girls – opening up in urban areas throughout the country. The *public* girls' school start-ups have only successful *independent* girls' school designs and approaches from which to model themselves after in hopes of increasing student achievement over existing options.

The information and results from this study immediately serve as a resource to various constituents within the field of education. From the academy of scholars dedicated to the pursuit of pedagogical trends in independent school classrooms, to entrepreneurial school start-up companies seeking to break into a thriving market, to parents contemplating the most appropriate school option for their child, this report clearly shows the current market, many strengths and endless possibilities for establishing and developing twenty-first century independent girls' schools.

CHAPTER II:

METHODOLOGY

In order to understand how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States, this study employs an exploratory qualitative analysis approach, utilizing a sample set of schools determined by their founding years. The beginning histories, mission statements, demographics data, strategic programming, enrollment patterns, and fiscal health of the sample schools were identified, questioned, and analyzed for future implications. The inductive, exploratory approach provided a wealth of data relevant to the overarching research question, and the subsequent perception questions from which comparisons and contrasts were identified.

To establish a consistent framework from which to explore newly founded girls' schools, the schools identified and analyzed in this study had to be recognized by (at minimum) one of two established independent school membership organizations in the United States, the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS).

The National Association of Independent Schools defines qualifying members as pre-collegiate, independent, non-profit schools located in the United States. NAIS represents approximately 1,400 independent schools and associations in the United States, and affiliates with independent schools abroad as well. NAIS's mission is to be "the national voice of independent schools and the center for collective action on their behalf." Their mission is rooted in the core values of independence, interdependence, inclusivity, and innovation. NAIS believes the freedoms derived from independence and self-determination are deserving of preservation,

worthy of emulation, and a source of the success of independent schools in preparing students to contribute effectively toward a peaceful, prosperous, just, and equitable world. The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) exists "to represent and sustain schools that are self-determining in mission and program, free from government control, and governed by independent boards" (NAIS, 2012).

Additionally, all ten schools also maintain optional memberships with the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS), self-described as a leading advocate for girls' education with a distinct commitment to the transformative power of all-girls schools (NCGS, 2011). The coalition acts at the forefront of educational thought, collaborating and connecting globally with individuals, schools, and organizations dedicated to empowering girls to be influential contributors to the world. NCGS envisions "a world where every girl will have access to the education and resources she needs to develop into a competent and confident woman, one who is equipped to assume whatever role she seeks for herself, wherever in the world" (NCGS, 2011).

To straddle the cusp of the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, a time frame from 1995 to current was pre-determined, resulting in ten qualifying girls' school start-ups: The Archer School for Girls, Los Angeles, CA in 1995; Lake Washington Girls' Middle School, Seattle, WA in 1997; Girls' Middle School, Mountain View, CA in 1998; Orchard House School, Richmond, VA in 1998; Julia Morgan School for Girls, Oakland, CA in 1999; Atlanta Girls School, Atlanta, GA in 2000; Seattle Girls' School, Seattle, WA in 2001; Girls' School of Austin, Austin, TX in 2002; Online School for Girls in 2009; and Trinity Hall, Middletown, NJ in 2013.

Because twenty-first century independent schools use meticulously designed websites and printed communications to market and promote themselves to prospective students and

families, each newly founded school's history, mission statement, and strategic initiatives are readily available on the Internet. Each school's website, then, served as the primary source for this study.

In addition to using each school's website and relevant publications as data, in-depth recorded interviews were conducted with people directly involved with the founding at a majority of the case study schools. The interviewees are identified in three categories: 1) School Founder – if the starting group consisted of three or fewer individuals; 2) Founding Trustee – if the starting group consisted of a larger group of supporters; and 3) Founding Head of School – the first identified educational and operational leader of each school. Brief descriptions of each interviewee are provided in Section B of this chapter.

Since the purpose of this study was to gain a better of understanding of how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States, the interviewees were asked scripted questions regarding the founding process of their schools and the obstacles they faced along the way, including gaining support from others and coping with the financial obligations of a school start-up (see Appendix B). The varying degrees of success at which the school founders faced these challenges were informative and potentially helpful to future school founders and agents of change, especially in the field of single-gendered schools.

To accompany the over-arching research question (*For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the United States?),* and to provide a specific framework for the review and analysis of each school start-up, five detail-oriented perception questions were identified:

1. Was the school founded to fill a void in the educational market within the city?

2. Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings?
3. Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States?
4. Was the school founded to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?
5. Are there additional founding reasons shared by school in this study that may be worth of further analysis?

Each of the five questions above required specific research and analysis. The questions led the analysis of each case study school, not vice-versa. Therefore, when each school's website and materials were reviewed for relevant findings and themes, they were done so with a lens towards: a) the school's location and market; b) the school's mission and promotion of the all-girls environment; c) the policy factors impacting the school's founding; d) the school's curriculum and pedagogical approaches; and e) non-specified findings worthy of further research. And when interviewing a representative from each school, specific questions were posed to help derive a fuller understanding of each factor.

- For Question #1: Who was involved with the opening of the school? What year did the planning begin? What year did the school open? What grade levels did/does the school serve? Why a girls' school in their city/region? How did the founders plan on enrolling students during the school's first years of existence?
- For Question #2: Why did the founders find all-girls schooling so appealing? Were any established girls' schools used as a model for this school? What factors were the driving force behind the original mission statement?

- For Question #3: What were the biggest challenges faced when opening the school? Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States?
- For Question #4: Was research on gender differences a driving force? If so, who conducted the research and what information was found to help determine a need? How was the original curriculum developed and approved? Were any specific measures taken to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?
- For Question #5: Who were the heroes of the school opening? What were their roles in making the school a reality? How was the school name selected and approved? How did the school fare in the first few years? Was this better, worse or as expected? Were there specific enrollment, financial and operational goals set to determine the success of the opening?

The interview responses were transcribed and organized for question-by-question analysis. In the (abbreviated) methodology chart on the following page, data source codes are provided for each question, and later identified specifically for each of the ten schools. See Appendix C for the extended chart.

Methodology Chart

<table>
<tr><th colspan="6">Question:

For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the US?</th></tr>
<tr><th>DATA</th><th>Sub-Question 1

Was the school founded to fill a void in the educational market within the city?</th><th>Sub-Question 2

Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings?</th><th>Sub-Question 3

Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the US?</th><th>Sub-Question 4

Was the school founded to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?</th><th>Sub-Question 5

Are there additional founding reasons shared by schools in this study that may be worthy of further analysis?</th></tr>
<tr><td>A.
Mission and Philosophy</td><td colspan="4">See A.1, A.2, A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.8, A.9, A.10</td><td rowspan="4">Increased amount of educational options.

Diversity and access to quality education for all children.

Valued educational experiences of founders.</td></tr>
<tr><td>B.
History & Founders Interviews</td><td colspan="4">See B.1, B.2, B.3, B.4, B.5, B.6, B.7, B.8, B.9, B.10</td></tr>
<tr><td>C.
Marketing Materials</td><td colspan="4">See C.1, C.2, C.3, C.4, C.5, C.6, C.7, C.8, C.9, C.10</td></tr>
<tr><td>D.
Financial Statements</td><td colspan="4">See D.1, D.2, D.3, D.4, D.5, D.6, D.7, D.8, D.9, D.10</td></tr>
</table>

Data Sets Collected

A. Mission and Philosophy Statements

New schools begin with a vision – and oftentimes, a vision that needs to be flushed out and reconsidered regularly over a period of time. This vision, once in movement, leads to the formation of the school's mission and pedagogical and social philosophy. For this reason, school

founders must carefully develop a clear image of what each element of their school will look like – including its whereabouts, its leadership, its faculty, and its beliefs. Ultimately, when stating the outcomes desired for the student body to-be, the following issues must be considered and communicated, specifically (McConaghy, 2006):

- Size (overall school, individual classes)
- Curricular focus
- Level of teacher autonomy and collaboration
- Administrative structure
- Level of parent involvement
- Type of students
- Diversity (students, faculty/staff)
- Desired outcomes
- Teaching methods
- Extracurricular options (Sports, Arts, etc.)

These visions are later scripted into a mission statement under which the school will operate, and similar to institutions of higher education, K-12 independent schools' mission statements are omnipresent in the field. They are made readily available for all to read on school websites, application materials and organizational profiles, and are often referred to and emphasized by school heads, boards of trustees, senior administrators, school faculty – and students and families. Functionally, accreditation agencies now demand the establishment and ongoing adherence to and review of mission statements. Furthermore, strategic planning is often predicted on its formulation (Morphew and Hartley, 2006).

Through an examination of each school's mission statement, one is able to discern the type of student body the school is wishing to attract, retain and graduate. Concurrently, families view the mission statement as a commitment to the form of education their child will be

receiving. Essentially, by stating a mission, schools are promising to accomplish identified objectives for each student.

In twenty-first century independent schools, child development objectives have veered away from solely academic benchmarks within the traditional disciplines of mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. Over the last several decades, the instruction of world languages; the emphasis on health and physical education; the introduction and promotion of musical and theatrical arts; and the evolution of extracurricular offerings have become mainstream and equally emphasized in nearly every school's curriculum – clearly taking instructional time away from the traditional school disciplines.

However, these newly founded schools pride themselves on objectives outside of the expected curriculum and co-curriculum in order to find a niche to find and maintain enrollment and growth. Therefore, educational trend words can be identified within school mission statements to summarize the objectives they have deemed important. Such trend words may include empower, interdisciplinary, spiritual, emotional, ethical, physical, STEM, character, diversity, global, ethical, and leadership, among others. Successful schools stand true to their mission in all facets of their operation. By evaluating each school's mission, we are essentially evaluating their identity and potential for continued growth.

Sources:

A.1. The Archer School for Girls: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127149

A.2. Lake Washington Girls' Middle School: www.lwgms.org/mission-vision/

A.3. Girls' Middle School: www.girlsms.org/about/philosophy

A.4. Orchard House School: www.orchardhouse.org/about/philosophy.php

A.5. Julia Morgan School for Girls: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Our-Mission.html

A.6. Atlanta Girls School: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/mission_and_vision

A.7. Seattle Girls' School: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/mission.php

A.8. Girls' School of Austin: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/vision.php

A.9. Online School for Girls: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/about/our-mission

A.10. Trinity Hall: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/missionandvision

B. History of School Founding/Archives/Founders Interviews

Because young schools often lack storied traditions and noteworthy achievements marketed by competing schools, founding history statements serve as a key component of the school's identity and as a selling point to prospective students and their families. Therefore, people and stories behind each school's beginnings are made available on every school website with varying degrees of detail and accuracy.

All persons behind the creation of an independent school have a significant impact on its identity, its function, and its initial successes or failures. As a result, there is a certain degree of purpose and perhaps individual benefit that drives a person or group of people to spend the time, money and resources to overcome the difficult challenges of opening a new school, as opposed to settling for the existing public or independent school options in the area. It was expected that the findings would vary greatly, though knowing commonalities were sure to exist. All founders interviewed in this study overcame various obstacles along the way, including gaining support from others and coping with the financial obligations of a school start-up. Therefore, the ability

for the founders to face these challenges with varying degrees of success proved to be telling – for future school founders, for educators, for researchers, and for independent school consumers.

But at the same time, the reality is – for all new independent schools, "Vision is important, but it must be rooted in a market reality," summarizes immediate past-President of NAIS, Patrick Bassett (McConaghy, 2006). When determining if a school vision is aligned with some demand or need in the community, research must be done to assess the conditions of the market for feasibility. McConaghy offers several questions to consider:

- How many target-age kids live there?
- Would the parents be open to an independent school?
- Can enough parents afford to pay tuition?
- Are parents dissatisfied with the other schools in the area?
- In business terms, is there actually an opportunity for a successful venture?

This market analysis research can be done individually or outsourced to a consulting firm, and with varying degrees of specificity. Throughout the analysis process, data is being collected from the community of prospective students and parents; from existing public, independent, and parochial schools; from feeder schools and their administrators; from townspeople and prospective donors; and from other founders who have been in their shoes before. For the purposes of this study, the following location and market factors were researched, compared and contrasted in order to develop generalizations:

a) **Location/Setting**: Geographic region; Urban, suburban, or rural; Population density; Social climate; etc.

b) **Grade Levels Offered**: Elementary, Middle or High Schools; or K-8, 6-12, K-12, etc. The unique grade offerings at these newly founded schools were primarily mission and academic-based decisions, however, some were derived from market impact. While all

schools promoted the benefits of the all-girls educational experience for girls, some schools expressed their belief that the experience most heavily benefits pre-adolescent, adolescent, and/or teenage students.

c) **Competition**: Analysis of independent coeducational, independent single-sex, charter and public school options in the area. The following questions were answered: Was there a successful girls' school present in each market? Was there a boys' school but no girls' school? Was the girls' school a new addition to the market? Were the public school options considered inadequate for the group of founding parents?

Sources:

B.1. The Archer School for Girls: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127149

Interview Subject: Diana Meehan, School Founder. Diana, the lead founder, was a well-connected educator-activist who was disappointed with the selection of schools available to her then eleven-year-old daughter – and make Archer happen for her, and decades of young women to follow. She later documented Archer's story in *Learning Like a Girl* (2007).

B.2. Lake Washington Girls' Middle School: www.lwgms.org/our-history/

Interview Subject: Patricia Hearn, Founding Head of School. Patricia was originally hired as a teacher in advance of the school's opening. In the early years, while the school founders handled many of the administrative tasks, Patricia took a lead on the curriculum and instruction. As LWGMS progressed, she was named Head of School and remains in that position today.

B.3. Girls' Middle School: www.girlsms.org/about/our-history

No interview was conducted for GMS (emails/calls not returned). All required information was obtained from the school's website and related materials.

B.4. Orchard House School: www.orchardhouse.org/about/history.php

Interview Subject: Nancy Davies, Founding Head of School. Inspired by her presentation at a Gender Symposium for St. Catherine's School in Richmond, OHS's founding group of women asked Nancy to get involved in their project at the board level. She was later hired to be the Founding Head of School in time for the school's opening in 1998. She remains in that position today.

B.5. Julia Morgan School for Girls: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/History.html

Interview Subject: Ilana DeBare, Founding Trustee. Ilana was a longtime newspaper reporter at the San Francisco Chronicle and Sacramento Bee before she cofounded JMSG with a small group of parents wanting the all-girls experience for their daughters. She later documented their story (and related research) in *Where Girls Come First: The Rise, Fall, and Surprising Revival of Girls' Schools* (2004).

B.6. Atlanta Girls School: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/podium/default.aspx?t=119498

Interview Subject: Emily Ellison and Brooke Weinmann, School Founders. Emily and Brooke were concerned parents who set out to reintroduce single-gender schools for girls to the Atlanta educational landscape – which had disappeared in the late 1940's. Emily currently serves at the school's Director of Advancement, and Brooke remains on the Board of Trustees.

B.7. Seattle Girls' School: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/history.php

Interview Subject: Marja Brandon, Founding Head of School. Hired as an experienced educator to lead the school, Marja moved to Seattle in September of 2000 with one year to "write curriculum, recruit a class, find a building, and get the whole thing going," in her words.

B.8. Girls' School of Austin: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/history.php

Interview Subject: Amy Lowrey, Founding Trustee. Amy helped open the school with a group of concerned parents and financial supporters. She has remained involved with the school throughout, currently serving as an Art Teacher.

B.9. Online School for Girls:

www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/community/our-schools

Interview Subject: Brad Rathgeber, Founding Head of School (Director). While in his role of Director of Technology at Holton-Arms School (MD), in 2009, Brad was one of the cofounders of the Online School for Girls - serving as the school's first Board President before being named the full-time Director (same as Head of School).

B. 10. Trinity Hall: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/ourstory

First-hand accounts by researcher James Palmieri who served as a consultant to the school founders before being hired as Assistant Head of School. James was previously Director of Strategic Initiatives at Kent Place School (NJ). Data also includes direct (documented) quotes from Mary Mahon Sciarrillo, Founding Head of School – previously Head of Upper School at Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child (NJ).

C. Marketing Materials: Websites, Admission Packets, Online Viewbooks, Advertisements, College Profiles, etc.

In order to continuously entice students and families to apply and enroll in their schools, school leaders regularly conduct marketing campaigns aimed at branding the school's unique attributes. These may include such criteria as curricular offerings, athletic and extracurricular options, safe and comfortable learning environments, or signature programming that highlights the social development of the student body. Simply, each school attempts to set their school apart from competing schools. Understanding the desired school environment, the curricular and pedagogical approaches, and the types of programs highlighted by these newly founded schools, will enable us to gauge the degree to which the schools are modeling themselves after well-established U.S. girls' schools, or the degree to which they are attempting to pioneer innovative and transformational educational practices. A mission-driven school will have admission procedures that help identify proper fits for their applicant students and their families. Parents can do the same by visiting schools, speaking to faculty and current families, and perusing school materials and publications. While some prefer more progressive school environments, others cherish traditional practices perhaps similar to the education they received.

As a result, many schools are going the route of hiring communications professionals to lead the disbursement of school information, happenings, and events to their local and greater communities. To enter an educational market and compete with public schools, charter or magnet schools, parochial schools, and/or existing independent school options, the following marketing efforts are mainstream for both new and longstanding organizations: branding – logos, style guides, signage, spirit wear, and giveaways; print ads in local newspapers and magazines; the promotion of school happenings within the local media outlets; hosting open houses and

visiting school fairs; advertising in high-trafficked communities of interest; inviting realtors and community leaders to campus; and perhaps the best marketing all, using current or alumni student ambassadors to model the student body and share their stories. As such, student pictures, quotes, and achievements are essential for all marketing materials.

Sources:

C.1. The Archer School for Girls

C.1.a. Why a Girls' School: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127153

C.1.b. Admissions Site: www.archer.org/admissions

C.1.c. Viewbook: www.danielin.com/archer/emagz/viewbook/

C.2. Lake Washington Girls' Middle School

C.2.a. Why a Girls' School: www.lwgms.org/why-a-girls-school/

C.2.b. Admissions Site: www.lwgms.org/admissions/

C.2.c. Viewbook: www.lwgms.org/storage/admissions/ViewbookPROOF.swf

C.3. Girls' Middle School

C.3.a. All Girls Education: www.girlsms.org/about/all-girls-schools

C.3.b. Admissions Site: www.girlsms.org/admission

C.3.c. STEM: www.girlsms.org/about/stem-program

C.3.d. Uniquely GMS: www.girlsms.org/uniquely-gms

C.4. Orchard House School

C.4.a. Why a Girls' School: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/whygirls.php

C.4.b. Admissions Site: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/index.php

C.4.c. Viewbook: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/index.php

C.5. Julia Morgan School for Girls

C.5.a. Why a Girls' School: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Why-a-Girls-School.html

C.5.b. Admissions Site: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/Admission-Category/How-to-Apply.html

C.5.c. Video Documentary: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Video-Documentary-no-editor.html

C.6. Atlanta Girls' School

C.6.a. Why a Girls' School: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/why_a_girls_school

C.6.b. Admissions: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/podium/default.aspx?t=111127

C.6.c. AGS411: http://ags411.org/

C.6.d. Portrait of the AGS Graduate: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/portrait

C.7. Seattle Girls' School

C.7.a. Why Girls' Education: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/why-girls-education.php

C.7.b. Admissions Site: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/admissions.php

C.8. Girls' School of Austin

C.8.a. Why a Girls' School: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/why.php

C.8.b. Admissions Site: www.thegirlsschool.org/admissions/

C.9. Online School for Girls

C.9.a. Why a Girls' School: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/about

C.9.b. Admissions: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/admissions/admissions-process-apply-now

C.9.c. What Our Students Say: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/community/our-students/video-test-page

C.10. Trinity Hall

C.10.a. Why an all-girls school: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/why-an-all-girls-school

C.10.b. In the Catholic tradition: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/catholic-tradition

C.10.c. Admissions: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/admissions

D. Financial Statements (990's): Enrollment, Tuition, Operating Budget, Annual Surplus and Deficit, Endowment, Additional Revenue Sources, etc.

For new school ventures, the formation of a business plan is vital to the assessment of feasibility, forcing founders to take a closer look at financial needs and to identify potential problems before they arise (McConaghy, 2006). New school business plans – like other businesses, provide benchmarks and established goals by which to judge progress, and can serve as helpful and necessary tools when meeting with outside interests such as potential trustees and philanthropists (McConaghy, 2006).

In a majority of independent schools, tuition revenue is the primary source of funding for operating expenses. Therefore, a school's enrollment is a telling statistic that can provide information regarding its fiscal health – but only if the school's desired or capacity enrollment is known. Independent schools come in all shapes and sizes – from one-room school houses serving one class of students, to multi-divisional and multi-campus operations with thousands of students. So, for example, a school with 800 students may not be operating as healthy as a school with 75 students, if the larger school's capacity is 1,200 and the smaller school's is 80. It

is all relative. Schools with larger student bodies must have larger faculties, facilities, expenses, etc. Therefore, this section relates back to the vision of the school founders, and their master plan. Many all-girls schools are small by design, and determine a desired enrollment size best suited to meet their mission.

Instead of assessing school's by the size of their enrollment, this study will assess each school's growth from year one to their current enrollment, all in relation to the enrollment targets shared by the school founders or heads of school. This, along with the other factors being reviewed can help to tell the story of each school's current and (projected) future market value. In cases where schools were/are adding students and/or grade levels each year, it is more likely that the school's market niche, mission, program, and resources were well planned and likely to continue seeing growth or reaching capacity. In cases where enrollment dipped after the founding years, or remained stable but far from capacity, the possibility for failure increases with each passing year.

Furthermore, oftentimes, new schools are challenged by increasing debt and operating costs. Annual financial reports from all nonprofit institutions, including schools and universities, are made available for public viewing. The most current available annual reports (Form 990's) were analyzed to observe revenues (tuition, fees, grants, charitable contributions, etc.) versus expenses (salaries, benefits, physical plant, materials and supplies, etc.).

Sources:

D.1. The Archer School for Girls: 2010 Form 990

http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/954/463/2010-954463705-06c2860d-9.pdf

D.2. Lake Washington Girls' Middle School: 2010 Form 990

http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments//2010/911/835/2008-911835055-047a88a0-9.pdf

D.3. Girls' Middle School: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/943/253/2009-943253594-061427ee-9.pdf

D.4. Orchard House School: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/541/902/2010-541902937-06cdeae6-9.pdf

D.5. Julia Morgan School for Girls: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments//2010/943/285/2010-943285524-06cde1a8-9.pdf

D.6. Atlanta Girls School: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/582/408/2010-582408353-0743c3c9-9.pdf

D.7. Seattle Girls' School: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/912/007/2010-912007300-073c74bb-9.pdf

D.8. Girls' School of Austin: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/742/963/2009-742963379-060afc33-9.pdf

D.9. Online School for Girls: 2010 Form 990
http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/270/417/2010-270417089-069b4373-9.pdf

D.10. Trinity Hall: Not yet published

E. Contextual Data: Number of Schools, Nationwide Enrollments, Financial Aid, etc.

The vast differences identified in the National Association of Independent Schools' annual *StatsOnline Statistics Survey*, results specifically between academic years 1989-1990 and 2010-2011, are identified and summarized. The noteworthy enrollment, tuition, financial aid and student diversity sets are informative of the changing – and challenged – market of independent schools, especially in this existing era of economic turmoil in our nation.

In summary, to best understand how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States, this study:

1. Employs an exploratory qualitative analysis approach
2. Utilizes a sample set of schools determined by their founding years (1995-2013)
3. Incorporates various sources, including interviews with founders and founding heads of school
4. Analyzes the beginning histories, mission statements, demographics, strategic programming, enrollment patterns, and fiscal health of the sample schools

CHAPTER III:

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of K-12 single-sex versus coeducation in the United States is not a straightforward task because there are so few quantifiable assessment examples pitting one against the other. With few existing examples – and even those with arguable validity results, researchers are aware of these shortfalls and are striving to flesh out the disparities in study analyses. Empirical studies in the United States come, predominantly, from the independent school sector, resulting from the many years in which single-sex schooling was prohibited in the public sector. Naturally, a greater number of empirical studies are completed outside of the United States – in countries such as England and Australia, where single-sex schools and classrooms exist in greater percentages.

Dr. Leonard Sax, founder and executive director of the National Association of Single-Sex Public Education (NASSPE) in the United States, is among many educational researchers who attempt to quantify the benefits gained by students learning in single-gendered instructional settings. In a descriptive study completed in 2005 using single-sex and coeducational alumni, Sax revealed significant differences that extended across multiple categories, including self-confidence, political and social activism, life goals, and career orientation. He concluded that the significant differences begin by identifying the higher levels of academic engagement among graduates of single-sex schools, and included evidence that SAT scores among single-sex alumni were higher than their coeducational peers. Sax's findings in support of single-sex education – and additional research publications between 2005 and today, are regularly debated by the opposition.

Gerald W. Bracey (2007) found four over-arching attitudes towards single-sex education in his study:

1. *Those who believe that coeducation is best.* At least in the past, such groups as the AAUW and the Feminist Majority Foundation take the position that if girls are suffering in coeducation settings, then the appropriate target for reform is the coeducation setting. The AAUW reviewed the research literature and reached the conclusion that the qualities of single-sex classes that seemed to elevate achievement were the qualities that one would hope to find in any effective classroom (Bracey, 2007).
2. *Those who believe that coeducation is best but that sometimes the ideals of coeducational education cannot be realized and single-sex classes and schools are viable alternatives when we find ourselves to be in such situations*. For the most part, these people are interested in the matter of gender equity and concerned that girls do not receive it in a coeducational setting (Bracey, 2007).
3. *Those who believe that separate schools are best for some groups*. The most systematic theorist to be found in this arena is Cornelius Riordan, Professor at Providence College. Riordan believes that single-sex settings are needed only for students who are at risk. Such students, Riordan contends, are schooled in an atmosphere that is hostile to academic achievement: "The single-sex academy changes this" (Bracey, 2007).
4. *Those who believe that boys and girls learn so differently that the single-sex instructional settings maximize learning*. The leading advocate for this position is Leonard Sax. Sax lays out differences in the ways that girls and boys see, hear, and draw (Bracey, 2007).

Over time, many have set out to measure and clarify the effectiveness of single-sex schools. Researchers Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers and Smith's 2005 systematic review of single-sex schooling versus coeducational schooling was prepared for the U.S. Department of Education by the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development. These researchers found that analyses of results of prior studies in the private sector in the United States, or in the public sectors of other countries, have been hotly debated. As a result, policy recommendations have varied widely based on different interpretations of the same data. No evaluations on this topic had been conducted using a methodical approach similar to that of the Campbell Collaboration (CC) or the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). The purpose of their review was to document the outcome evidence for or against the efficacy of single-sex education as an option form of school organization using an impartial, clear, and objective selection process adapted from the standards of the CC and WWC to review quantitative studies (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). The following are the major research questions addressed by the systematic quantitative review:

1. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of concurrent, quantifiable academic accomplishments?

2. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of long-term, quantifiable academic accomplishment?

3. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of concurrent, quantifiable indicators of individual student adaptation and socio-emotional development?

4. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of long-term, quantifiable indicators of individual student adaptation and socio-emotional development?

5. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of addressing issues of procedural (e.g., classroom treatment) and outcome measures of gender inequity?

6. Are single-sex schools more or less effective than coeducational schools in terms of perceptual measures of the school climate or culture that may have an impact on performance?

Each study was coded independently by two reviewers through the use of quantitative coding guide (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). The broad issues on psychometric properties, effect, validity, bias and sample characteristics were the main focus of coding with several sets of criteria per category. To be retained, a study did not have to meet all criteria (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). There were forty studies in all that met the inclusion criteria and were included in the quantitative review. The review consisted of a table showing results of each study according to the six broad questions listed above and is broken into specific criteria within each larger category. Since most of the studies addressed several criteria, the total number of findings became greater than forty. In particular, 112 findings were considered from the forty quantitative studies (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005).

A few trends were apparent across all outcomes. The prevalence of studies in areas such as academic accomplishment and adjustment or socio-emotional development yielded results that lend support to single-sex schooling (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). There are

only a few studies throughout the review that provide support favoring coeducational schooling. Specifically, studies more commonly report outcomes with no differences between single-sex and coeducation schooling than to find outcomes that support the superiority of coeducation. In terms of outcomes that may be of most interest to the primary stakeholders (students and their parents) – such as academic achievement test scores, self-concept, and long-term indicators of success – there is a degree of support for single-sex schooling (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005).

The overwhelming majority of studies employ secondary school students, with a minority using primary school students. The preponderance of single-gendered schools' research has been conducted in Catholic schools in which students are separated by sex only when entering adolescence. Opportunities to study single-sex elementary or middle schools in either the public or private sector are therefore limited (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005).

There is also a distinct tendency to study girls' schools more than boys' schools: Seventy-six studies compared single-sex and coeducational female students, and twenty of these focused exclusively on girls. Of these twenty, eighteen were split evenly between support for single-sex schooling and no differences (nine pro-single-sex and nine no differences). Single-sex and coeducation schooling for boys was compared in fifty-five studies, of which only three were studies exclusively devoted to boys' schools (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005).

The general implications of this review provided a stepping-stone for future researchers through the extension of quality research on present outcomes, the improvement of methodology, better statistical reporting, and the expansion of the theoretical domain (Mael, Alonso, Gibson, Rogers & Smith, 2005). These implications in future studies can improve the generalizations made about single-sex schooling and coeducation.

Differences inside single-sex and coeducational classrooms

As educational researcher Kathleen Vail stated in 2002, "By far, the advantage most associated with schooling boys and girls separately is that it eliminates distraction. Freed from the worries of impressing the opposite sex, boys and girls can focus on their books." Class participation also increases as a result of the improved student behavior in single-sex classrooms (Vail, 2002). As Hughes states, "boys and girls, each in their own way, blossom in an environment free from the inhibiting factor contributed by the presence of the opposite sex." Specifically, a greater number of girls in a classroom without boys ask questions and more enthusiastically partake in discussions. Similarly, when girls are not present, boys are more likely to participate in topics about fine arts, or where emotions are expressed (Hughes, 2006). Studies indicate that there is also a direct link between positive self-concept and high motivation; therefore, teachers must try to meet these wants and needs. In order to build self-esteem, female students must feel good about themselves. Female students must experience success and be praised for their achievements. In contrast, male students do not benefit as greatly from praise (Hughes, 2006).

The data indicates that the most influential advantage of single-sex schools regarding socio-emotional development is that girls – or boys – assume leadership roles in school activities, whether it is in drama, athletics, student government or the debate team. Increased opportunities for leadership provide students additional space and applications to build confidence, self-esteem and structure, and enhance their behavior-modeling skills. In addition, research has shown that girls who attend single-sex secondary schools are significantly more likely to enter a field of math or science in college (Thompson, 2003). Myra and David Sadker, who conducted a ten-year study examining sexism in classroom teaching, found that girls stay

confident and learn more in single-sex schools, "where girls are the players, not the audience" (Sadker, 1994).

Stanworth (1983) stated that coeducation has been supported for many decades because of social grounds. Despite that, the debate over the effectiveness of single-sex versus coeducational schools for girls continues. This is very particular even in the wake of micro-analytic studies showing that in coeducational classrooms, teachers give girls less time, less attention, less encouragement, and less value than boys (Stanworth, 1983).

Belcher, Fray and Yankeelov (2006) demonstrate that students in single-sex classrooms view their classroom environment more favorably than students in coeducational classrooms. In their research findings, students in the single-sex classrooms were significantly more interested and attentive in classroom activities than their coeducational counterparts. Additionally, more are involved in their academic success and do additional work independently. These findings support the National Association of State Boards of Education's (2002) assertion that students in single-sex classrooms attend more to academics than those in coeducational environments. It also complements the converse as evidenced in Webb's (1984) study that found that girls in coeducational environments engage in more negative interactions with peers; receive less attention from instructors; and are less frequently called on to answer questions when working in coeducational classrooms. Students in single-sex classrooms also perceive their classroom environments to be more orderly, and other students to be more polite, than those in coeducational classrooms. Generally, these findings add support to earlier studies using the coeducation schools to examine the impact of single-sex classrooms on classroom environment.

In order to identify those students and parents in the United States who are more likely to opt for single-sex independent schools over other options, educational researchers Valerie Lee

and Helen Marks completed a 1992 research study entitled, *Who Goes Where? Choice of Single-Sex and Coeducational Independent Secondary Schools*. Specifically, these researchers studied whether or not students and families decide single-sex over coeducational schools for conventional reasons or because they value these schools as opportunity formations (Lee & Marks, 1992). Introducing a new population to single-sex school research, this sample consisted of the entire 1989 senior class (3,183 students) in each of sixty secondary schools selected as a stratified random sample of girls', boys', and coeducational independent schools (Lee & Marks, 1992). The study considered the personal, demographic, and educational characteristics of families and students, as well as their reasons for selecting the particular school they attended. Since boys and girls have different reasons for choosing schools, and because previous research on this topic documented differential gender effects, this study examined the question separately by gender. The results suggested that a family tradition of private schooling (mostly single-sex) and religious orientation generally characterize students who select the single-sex school option (Lee & Marks, 1992).

As a result of their research, Lee and Marks were also able to determine that some of the non-findings from their study were the most important of all. For independent schools that charge high tuition rates, and are attended by students from affluent families, variation in such traditional demographic measures of selection as social class, family income, or race-ethnicity are unimportant in choosing between single-sex and coeducational schooling, contrary to the findings from earlier research (Lee & Marks, 1992).

Girls' Schools in the Late-20th Century

Ransome and Moulton's 2001 publication, *Why Girls' Schools? The Difference in Girl-Centered Education*, identified the specific scientific findings that the National Coalition of Girls' Schools used over its existence to alter the educational debate on gender equity. For instance, since talk of innate differences in the behavior of men and women was considered politically incorrect the feminist revolution of the 1970's, social and cultural differences, rather than genetic origins, were held to explain gender disparities in professions like engineering and architecture (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). They declared, "these differences were also used to explain the tendency of boys to be more quantitative and spatially adept. Yet studies of the brain revealed that gender differences are rooted as much in the chemistry and structure of the brain as the manner in which girls and boys are raised. The tendencies of girls to be more contemplative, collaborative, intuitive, and verbal, and boys to be more physically active, aggressive, and independent in their learning style seemed to stem from brain function and development."

They stated – referring to the late 1970's through 1980's, "The driving question was no longer whether girls and women had equal access and equal opportunity. Instead the focus was on how equal their educational experiences and outcomes are" (2001). NCGS focused their attention on the work and recommendations Carol Gilligan – to provide girls a *different* education, and the operative question was no longer, "What is wrong with girls? Why aren't they more interested in non-traditional subjects?" Rather, the question became, "What is wrong with the way we are teaching and interacting with girls? Why are girls not achieving at levels commensurate with their abilities?" (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

Then in 1991, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) issued its first of many pointed publications regarding girls in American schools. Their initial report, *Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America*, highlighted some of the disparities between boys' and girls' attitudes in terms of achievements and self-esteem, particularly prevalent in the areas of math and science (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). In the executive summary of their 1995 report, *Growing Smart: What's Working for Girls in School*, AAUW documented innovative teaching techniques and strategies that aimed at correcting the inequities revealed in their previous work. "If girls are to grow up smart, schools need to get smarter and use creative strategies such as cooperative learning and single-sex classes," wrote Alice Ann Leidel, president of the AAUW Educational Foundation (1995). The AAUW Foundation report recommended that schools "reinforce girls individuality through single-sex classes that boost girls' lagging self-perceptions in areas such as math and science, foster girls involvement through cooperative learning groups that eliminate competitive classroom practices that often marginalize girls, provide girls with mentors and role models, give girls equal access to learning through hands-on experience with computers and lab equipment, empower girls to achieve goals by working with community groups and businesses to provide girls with routes to success" (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

However, during this time, NCGS member schools began to question many of the assumptions stemming from the growing list of national reports – mainly, on how schools were shortchanging girls and what was not working for them. As more and more families and policy makers sought educational options, a prime topic of consideration pitted coed schools against single-sex ones, but largely absent from the coed versus single sex debate was quantitative data assessing the defining characteristics of girls' schools: "their affirmation of females' abilities in

sex-typed subject areas such as math, science, and technology; their encouragement of female career aspirations; and their ability to foster self-esteem" (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). The member girls' schools were confident that their environments, and in turn product, were of value to a much broader audience than being recognized. They felt that "girls' school campuses and classrooms represented exciting laboratories for discovery and could serve as an invaluable asset to educators everywhere" (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). And until this time, the voices of girls' school *graduates* themselves had also been missing.

Apart from the earlier in-house studies conducted by NCGS, no one had systematically catalogued the opinions of the alumnae of a wide spectrum of girls' high schools. To provide such data, NCGS contracted with Goodman Research Group, an educational research firm in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to conduct a large-scale survey of girls' school alumnae. The six-page survey gathered information about graduates' girls' school experiences, their home lives, and related issues. Over 4,000 alumnae from sixty-four different girls' schools provided data quantifying their experiences (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

From all angles, the findings were clearly affirming to NCGS member schools – and girls' schools proponents, that alumnae placed an enormous value on their education at girls' schools. According to the findings, the alumnae "remained confident in their abilities; they identified themselves as academic achievers; and they credited their girls' schools as the places where they learned to recognize and harness their talents and potentials (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). A portion of the highlights from the study are provided below:

- 85% of alumnae assigned one of the top two ratings (very good or excellent) to their girls school overall, and to fourteen of sixteen specific aspects about their girls' school. Top-

rated were preparation for college academics and providing academic challenge; nearly all the respondents (91%) rated their schools as very good or excellent in these areas.

- 85% of alumnae believed girls' schools provide young women with more encouragement in science, math, and technology than coed schools, and 63% felt strongly that they were better prepared for the "real world" than their cohorts at coed schools.
- 88% of alumnae said they would repeat their girls' school experience again, and 84% would encourage their daughters to attend a girls' school.

Nearly all respondents either believed somewhat or strongly agreed that girls' schools provide more leadership opportunities than those available at coed schools (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

Inspiration through Publications

In addition to peer-reviewed educational research and neurological studies, many school founders – and existing school leaders, teachers, and parents supportive of the benefits of all-girls educational settings, refer to inspiration and assurances gained from several publications and declarations created by noteworthy researchers, psychologists, school founders, and women's rights advocates. A sampling of these books are listed below with their own provided descriptions:

1. *In a Different Voice*

   This is the little book that started a revolution, making women's voices heard, in their own right and with their own integrity, for virtually the first time in social scientific theorizing about women. Its impact was immediate and continues to this day, in the academic world and beyond. Translated into sixteen languages, with more than 700,000

copies sold around the world, *In a Different Voice* (1982) has inspired new research, new educational initiatives, and political debate – and helped many women and men to see themselves and each other in a different light. Author Carol Gilligan believes that psychology has persistently and systematically misunderstood women—their motives, their moral commitments, the course of their psychological growth, and their special view of what is important in life. Here she sets out to correct psychology's misperceptions and refocus its view of female personality.

2. *How Schools Shortchange Girls: A Study of Major Findings in Education*

   Published by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 1992, *How Schools Shortchange Girls* is an eye-opening study that served as a wake-up call, exposing the systematic bias that girls face in education. While girls and boys enter school roughly equal in measured ability, by age fifteen girls have poor self-images and constrained views of their futures. In addition to a wealth of data, the report also suggests specific strategies to effect changes. This book catalyzed local, state, and national action, and today few conversations about gender and education in the academic and research communities neglect to mention this watershed report.

3. *Meeting at the Crossroads: Women's Psychology and Girls' Development*

   For five years, Lyn Mikel Brown and Carol Gilligan, asked the question "On the way to womanhood, what does a girl give up?", and listened to one hundred girls who were negotiating the rough terrain of adolescence. *Meeting at the Crossroads* (1992) invites us to listen, too, and to hear in these girls' voices what is rarely spoken, often ignored, and generally misunderstood: how the passage out of girlhood is a journey into silence, disconnection, and dissembling, a troubled crossing that our culture has plotted with dead

ends and detours. This groundbreaking work offers major new insights into girls' development and women's psychology. But perhaps more importantly, it provides women with the means of meeting girls at the critical crossroads of adolescence, of harkening to the voices of girlhood and sustaining their sell-affirming notes.

4. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*

   A #1 New York Times Bestseller, this groundbreaking work posed one of the most provocative questions of a generation: what is happening to the selves of adolescent girls? As a therapist, Author Mary Pipher was becoming frustrated with the growing problems among adolescent girls. Why were so many of them turning to therapy in the first place? Why had these lovely and promising human beings fallen prey to depression, eating disorders, suicide attempts, and crushingly low self-esteem? The answer hit a nerve with Pipher, with parents, and with the girls themselves. Crashing and burning in a "developmental Bermuda Triangle," they were coming of age in a media-saturated culture preoccupied with unrealistic ideals of beauty and images of dehumanized sex, a culture rife with addictions and sexually transmitted diseases. Told in the brave, fearless, and honest voices of the girls themselves who are emerging from the chaos of adolescence, Reviving Ophelia (1994) is a call to arms, offering important tactics, empathy, and strength, and urging a change where young hearts can flourish again, and rediscover and reengage their sense of self.

5. *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem and the Confidence Gap*

   Inspired by a study by the American Association of University Women that showed girls' self-esteem plummeting as they reach adolescence, Author Peggy Orenstein spent months observing, interviewing, and getting know dozens of girls both inside and outside the

classroom at two very different schools in northern California. The result was a groundbreaking book (1994) in which she brought the disturbing statistics to life with skill and flair of an experienced journalist. Orenstein plumbs the minds of both boys and girls who have learned to equate masculinity with opportunity and assertiveness, and femininity with reserve and restraint. She demonstrates the cost of this insidious lesson, by taking us into the lives of real young women who are struggling with eating disorders, sexual harassment, and declining academic achievement, especially in math and science.

6. *For Girls Only: Making a Case for Single-Sex Schooling*

   In *For Girls Only* (1999), Janice Streitmatter examines research and public policy regarding single-sex schooling, especially girls-only classes in public, coeducational schools. Since the passage of Title IX in 1972, which calls for equal access and participation regardless of gender, educators have attempted to address gender equity issues in schools. Current research on the progress of female students in U.S. public schools suggests that efforts have not sufficiently addressed concerns such as academic under-achievement in the areas of math and science, lower self-esteem from the advent of early adolescence, and vulnerability to sexual harassment. Despite Title IX, some educators have turned to the creation of single-sex classes and programs for female students in order to better address these critical issues. This book examines the longitudinal results of one study, reviews other research, and considers policy implications in conflict with Title IX.

7. *Same, Different, Equal: Rethinking Single-Sex Schooling*

   Published in 2003, Rosemary Salomone, a professor at St. John's University, examines the history of women's education and exclusion, philosophical and psychological theories

of sameness and difference, findings on educational achievement and performance, the research evidence on single-sex schooling, and the legal questions that have arisen. Correcting many of the current misconceptions about single-sex education, she argues that it is a viable option and that the road to gender equality should be paved with diverse educational opportunities for all students – regardless of race, class, or gender.

8. *Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters*

   Mary Pipher told us about the problems girls face in Reviving Ophelia; now in *Girls Will Be Girls* (2002), JoAnn Deak gives us the solutions. Deak looks past the "scare" stories to those that enlighten parents and enable them to empower girls. She draws from the latest brain research on girls to illustrate the exciting new ways in which we can help our daughters learn and thrive. Most telling of all, she gives us the voices of girls themselves as they struggle with body image, self-esteem, intellectual growth, peer pressure, and media messages. The result is a masterly book that addresses the key issues for girls growing up; one that fulfills a desperate need for clear guiding principles to help mothers, fathers, and their daughters navigate this chaotic contemporary culture.

9. *All Girls, Single Sex Education and Why it Matters*

   In *All Girls* (2002), acclaimed journalist Karen Stabiner spends a pivotal year with the young women of two very different girls' schools: Marlborough, an elite prep school in Los Angeles, and The Young Women's Leadership School of East Harlem, an embattled, controversial experiment within the New York City public school system. On both coasts, Stabiner's subjects are fascinating young women on the brink of adulthood, whose choices and academic performance will affect the course of their lives. *All Girls* offers an

insider's perspective on the daily triumphs and frustrations of teachers and students, parents, and advocates of single-sex education.

CHAPTER IV:

CASE STUDY FINDINGS

1. Market Value Effect

Question: ***Was the school founded to fill a void in the educational market within the city?***

Independent schools, in many ways, are complex business organizations. While the majority exist to educate and nurture children, the factors that allow this to happen are concurrently operating in a competitive environment to ensure annual success and future sustainability. Here, the commercial definitions of business participants – owners, executives, sales force, consumers, products, customer satisfaction – are disguised as their educational counterparts: trustees, administrators, faculty, students and parents, curricula and school programming. The success of the "business," then, is measured in student achievement and college matriculation.

These successes are interrelated with: a) the school's ability to appeal to parents and to enroll, retain and graduate capable and willing students; and b) the school's ability to sufficiently – and perhaps, innovatively – educate, stimulate and motivate their students while guiding them to the next phase of their lives. Like in business, a consumer [student/parent] will not purchase [enroll and pay tuition] unless the products or services [school environment and instruction] are up to their standards. And because societal views on products and services vary greatly in all business fields – including education – it is optimal for regions to have a wide range of independent school options available to residents. Independent single-sex schools should simply be among those options, and if properly situated within the educational landscape of their

communities, should be able to maintain reasonably set enrollment goals year in and year out. However, the factors that determine the strength of a school's position in its market are multivalent and ever changing. As such, simply being an option is not enough.

In many communities, girls' schools have the pleasure of having their own market niche simply by being single-gendered. In these instances, it is the school's responsibility to educate their drawing communities on the benefits of such an educational setting, and in some cases, to address any misconceptions. In cities or suburban communities with two or more single-sex school options for girls, each schools must clearly communicate what sets them apart: their mission, their approach, their programming, their faculty, their college matriculation, etc.

The founders of the schools in this study, though confident, did not enter these projects certain of their success, but they did bring the drive, creativity, wisdom, resources and support to get them up and running. From there, it was the market – and the school's productivity, which cemented their long-term commitment to the cities and communities being served. These founders gave girls (and their parents) this unique educational option and found ways to succeed in attaining their enrollment and operational goals.

Los Angeles, California

As stated in founder Dr. Diana Meehan's *Learning Like a Girl* (2007), while a wide variety of social science studies seem to make a strong argument for single-sex schooling for girls, the option was only available to "less than nine percent of the population in the late twentieth century." In the mid-1990's, Meehan, along with co-founders Megan Callaway and Victoria Shorr, set out to increase that percentage, at least in Los Angeles County, California. "Fortified with convictions about girls thriving in certain educational settings, prime among

which are academic, innovative, girl-valuing girls' schools, we set out to find a single-sex school that met our expectations. We were, at this point, two stay-at-home writers, so the prospect of finding what we wanted in this wide world was increased by what I thought of as geographical flexibility. As it happened, however, there was resistance to relocation, which meant we went to 'plan two' which was to make the school we wanted," Meehan shared.

For its first three years of operation, Archer resided on a small – temporary – campus in the Pacific Palisades. After a multi-year battle to obtain and gain approval to use the former Eastern Star Home for Women, a 1931 Spanish Colonial Revival building on Sunset Boulevard in Brentwood, The Archer School for Girls now has a permanent home. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1989, the structure provides Archer girls with "a one-of-a-kind learning environment complete with dark wood beams, colorful mosaic fountains, and intricate architectural details around every corner. True to its origins, the building feels more like a 'home' than a school, and girls quickly grow attached to its unique charm," the school claims.

At the time of its founding in 1995, there were no independent single-sex schools on the west side of Los Angles, though there had been one until six years prior. In 1989, the former *Westlake School for Girls* agreed to a merger with *Harvard School*, a boys' day school whose enrollment had grown to exceed 800. Full coeducation began in September 1991, with an enrollment approaching 1,600; grades seven through nine occupy Westlake's North Faring Road location while grades ten through twelve are at Harvard's Coldwater Canyon campus.

Two existing girls' secondary schools, however, were operating within city limits. The first, the oldest independent girls' school in Southern California, Marlborough School, was located nearly thirty miles south of Archer's Sunset Boulevard location. Marlborough is a private, all-girls, college-preparatory high school for grades seven through twelve located in the

Hancock Park neighborhood of Los Angeles. While the Archer School founders did not consider this school suitable, it was operating successfully. Founded in 1889 by Mary Caswell, Marlborough considers itself one of the foremost college-preparatory schools in Los Angeles. The School has a $33.7 million endowment, the largest per student endowment among independent schools in Southern California. The second school was nine miles south, and is Roman Catholic affiliated. Notre Dame Academy Girls' High School serves approximately 450 students annually in grades nine through twelve. Regardless, whether the schools were to their liking or not, Meehan, Callaway and Shorr knew that the second largest city in the Unites States, as well as the second largest public school system, could benefit from an alternative independent girls' secondary school option.

Using such schools as Emma Willard (NY), Winsor (MA), and Castilleja (CA), as prototypes for their vision, the founding team was guided by principles of "innovation, community and diversity." As a result, Archer opened with just over thirty sixth and seventh grade students. Now, more than a decade and a half later, Archer's tremendous growth to 440 students on a seven-acre historic Sunset Boulevard campus is a "testament to its role as a model of the renaissance of girls' schools," the school states proudly on its website.

Seattle, Washington

The Lake Washington Girls' Middle School, founded in 1995, is a grassroots response to a community-identified need. As a result of the actions taken by a group of parents with a unique, shared vision of forming a middle school for early adolescent girls, LWGMS opened its doors in 1998 as the first secular girls' middle school in Seattle. At the time, there was a thriving parochial girls' high school in the city, Holy Name Academy, and a parochial girls' school

serving grades five through twelve on the east side. These religious-affiliated models, however, did not translate well for the LWGMS founding group.

Fortunately, to this date, committed to providing a positive and challenging learning environment that fosters self-esteem, respect and responsibility, LWGMS has proven to be a school that is exciting to students, teachers and parents. The school carries out its mission of providing educational opportunity for economically diverse girls by keeping tuition at a moderate level – about half of other Seattle private middle schools – and providing tuition assistance to those girls most in need. Because of this and other reasons, LWGMS has played a unique role in the Seattle community, beginning in its early days in a rented Catholic Church. As a result of their success, in 2012, LWGMS announced a significant expansion to their student body. To accommodate the growth, the board began exploring the purchase of their own building and laying the foundation for a capital campaign. The board affirms, "Our girls – students and alumnae alike – deserve a home of their own, and with careful stewardship of our operating budget and fundraising, we are planting the seeds of a building fund we hope to use within the next five years" (LWGMS, 2012).

Around the same time – and ultimately opening just three years later, the idea for the Seattle Girls' School was developed by Sharon Hamel, a local financial executive. Acknowledging the limited single-sex school options in Seattle (including LWGMS which was operating with low numbers at the time; and a Catholic school K-8 on the east side, Forest Ridge), she decided to start one, and recruited a team along the way. However, before she did, Sharon approached LWGMS and inquired about a merger to create a larger educational institution. Because, at the time, the LWGMS board was only interested in taking one class of sixth grade girls through eighth grade, they declined. Sharon moved forward on her own and

eventually opened SGS in 2001 with Founding Head of School Marja Brandon at the helm. Through word-of-mouth marketing, the vision became realization. SGS opened with five students and now averages one hundred students enrolled annually in grades five through eight, from all around the greater Seattle area. Over 35% of SGS students are girls of color, with nearly 20% identifying as multi-racial.

During the planning year, the school raised $900,000, including an early half-million-dollar grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. To achieve a diverse student body, they initiated an outreach team that spoke to families in public housing projects, and through other community sources. Now thirteen years later, at the heart of Seattle Girls' School is a dynamic and diverse community with a passion for empowering girls to reach their full potential. The board, administration, faculty, and parents all work together to ensure a joyful, curiosity-filled middle school experience that is safe and open to all voices. Girls from different racial, ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds and family configurations learn and grow alongside each other.

Brandon noted that "SWS reaches kids almost as far down as Tacoma all the way up to Lopez Island," a wide reach. There were some great coeducational independent schools that had middle schools at the time, but the market was ready for new single-sex options. "We were a cutting edge curriculum, using the brain and what we know about it, and using that to form how we teach and what we teach. So we were an entirely different model," she concluded regarding the immediate interest and future growth of SGS.

Silicon Valley, California

In 1996, founder Kathleen Bennett developed a prospectus and business plan for a girls' middle school that would "nurture and empower a diverse group of girls during their crucial adolescent years." That same year, The Girls' Middle School formed an advisory staff and received official 501(c)(3) non-profit status. After developing community support and acquiring funding, GMS opened in September 1998 with a sixth-grade class of thirty-five girls. Each successive year saw an additional subsequent grade until the pioneer class graduated in 2001. That year, GMS expanded to six full rooms. In 2008, GMS celebrated its 10th anniversary by opening two new modular buildings, adding four additional classrooms and an expanded library. Just three years later, after adding two new class sections per grade, in 2011, GMS moved to a new site in Palo Alto and now serves one-hundred and ninety total students with an average class size of sixteen.

Richmond, Virginia

Orchard House School in Richmond, Virginia, proudly boasts that its urban location affords girls unique opportunities to become involved with the city. These include visiting museums and libraries, participating in clean-up projects, and working with younger children and the elderly in neighboring schools and agencies. Since opening its doors to seventeen students in 1998, Orchard House has been "nurturing the hearts and minds of middle school girls and developing within them the strength and confidence to lead extraordinary lives." At the time of its founding, only two schools in the region offered secular educational options for girls: a) St. Catherine's, a K-12 independent, Episcopal, all-girls college-preparatory school, and b) Collegiate, a coeducational K-12 independent school that offers single-sex classes during the

middle school years. "So while there were other schools, each had a different emphasis than Orchard House," acknowledged Nancy Davies, founding and current Head of School.

Today, consistent with its original mission, Orchard House constantly develops, evaluates and implements cutting edge research and programs to achieve their objectives. The school feels that a five-year strategic plan that was established in 2004 strongly positioned Orchard House for the future. As a result, further renovations to the Orchard House building ensued and additional satellite buildings were added. With a fixed total enrollment of eighty students, each grade level is comprised of twenty students, and the student-to-teacher ratio is 10 to 1.

Oakland, California

In the fall 1996, a group of approximately ten parents came together with a shared goal of opening a new girls' school in Oakland, which would eventually become the Julia Morgan School for Girls. It claims to serve "confident, capable, creative and compassionate girls" in grades six through eight. Founder and author of *Where Girls Come First*, Ilana DeBare, explained, "Everybody had some reason for starting a girls' school, but none of us had ever started – or run – a school before. A lot of the people in the room had daughters who were in third or fourth grade at that point so they were interested in a middle school in particular." At the time, girls' middle schools existed in other sections of the Bay Area, but there were no other all-girl middle schools in Oakland. Julia Morgan's founding team chose to serve only girls for the middle school years as a result of research findings they came across that promotes secular educational settings for early adolescent girls. The team was discontent with the minimal independent school offerings in East Bay. A Catholic girls' high school existed, but there were no options at the elementary or middle school levels.

Today, JMSG is located in an exquisite Julia Morgan building built in 1924 and located on the Mills College campus in San Francisco's East Bay. This location affords the inspiration and synergy of the area with a renowned women's college, combined with theatres, art galleries, a concert hall, and a soccer field, swimming pool and sports complex. In addition to outstanding facilities, JMSG students have access to college events such as lectures, dance and theatre productions, concerts, health fairs, and special events such as *The Women's History Project* annual meeting.

Atlanta, Georgia

Female single-gender schools disappeared from the Atlanta landscape in the late 1960's. To fill the void, in August of 1997, AGS founders Emily Ellison, Brooke Weinmann, and Candace Springer, began research on the feasibility of establishing a single-gender school for girls in Atlanta. They believed there were serious psychological, social and physiological issues at stake based in research showing that girls learned differently and faced different challenges than boys.

Beginning in the summer of 1997, the women were relentless. Not a week passed without them visiting community and other leaders, identifying new people to add to their effort and learning the industry and the players. On June 10, 1998, the name "Atlanta Girls' School, Inc." was officially reserved with the Secretary of State, and the women were well on their way to realizing their vision. Throughout 1998, their calendars were packed with meetings, work on a business plan progressed, a board of trustees was formed, and initial fund-raising was underway. On March 29, 1999, Founding Head of School Patricia Crone was selected, and the pace of work accelerated. Fundraising continued, marketing to potential students began and, by

October, initial "open houses" were held. By January of 2000, teachers were hired and applications were accepted. In April, the first set of acceptance letters hit the mailboxes of students, and in June all faculty positions had been filled.

On August 28, 2000, the school opened its doors to students in grades six through nine, and Atlanta Girls' School had become a reality. In each of the next three years, an additional grade was added so that by the start of school in August 2003 the school opened its doors to a full complement of students, grades six through twelve. In June of 2004, the first group of girls walked across the stage to accept their diplomas, and the first graduation at AGS was in the history books. Today, AGS has graduated ten classes of young women that have gone on to a diverse array of colleges.

The founders were concerned not just with creating an environment where girls could thrive, but an environment that was nonsectarian, nondiscriminatory and ethics-based. They had the wisdom and vision to see that it was key to having the optimal learning environment to promote a religiously, racially, culturally and socioeconomically diverse environment that fostered learning as part of the community – whether local or global – and an environment where a diversity of thoughts and ideas would be the rule. To date, the school draws students from more than one hundred feeder schools across the greater Atlanta area.

"We simply didn't have the money to hire a professional firm," shared Weinmann, "so as Emily said, this effort was grassroots and based on our conversations with a lot of people. And I'll go beyond that. Our conversations were documented because we realized early on that we needed to collect the names of people who would be perspective parents; who would be perspective donors; who would be perspective teachers; and so we started the database that still exists today, collecting contact information, comments, anything that was pertinent to those

folks." Their diligence and persistence has paid off, as AGS' network continues to grow – and will hopefully gain a boost under a new head of school beginning July 1, 2014.

Austin, Texas

In 2002, The Girls' School of Austin became the first all-girls school in Austin when it opened a single door. At a small home in west Austin, the school began instruction with five students in fifth and sixth grades; the teachers outnumbered the students. Their academic success in the inaugural year convinced enrolled and interested families – as well as the school's faculty – of the success of their mission "to provide young girls an education that would prepare them to live distinguished and fulfilling lives." Before the school even opened, they had raised about 3.5 million dollars from members of the board, and the community's support.

Now on a beautiful property in the Tarrytown neighborhood of west Austin – a generous gift by a parent donor, The Girls' School takes advantage of its central location by integrating the nearby artistic, political, environmental, and social resources into the curriculum. The school established appropriate partnerships with local educational, corporate, non-profit and government organizations to supplement resources and opportunities. Currently serving one-hundred and twenty-five girls from elementary through middle school (K-8), the Girls' School grew in an organized, supported fashion to the full extent of its capacity at the current location while capping class sizes at sixteen. The school website boasts, "Facilities are designed to stimulate exceptional and creative instruction as well as mingling all ages at school community events while being well-sized, well-maintained, open to the outdoors, environmentally sound, technologically supported and energy efficient."

Online and International

"When we started with the idea of the Online School for Girls, it really was just four schools, their Heads of School and the founding board members. It started because we looked at the online learning landscape – and the landscape as it existed in the winter and spring of 2009 – and we didn't see anything within that landscape that looked like us. In fact at that point, we didn't see anything that looked like an independent school online," described Director Brad Rathgeber, regarding the early stages of OSG. He continued, "There were a lot of for-profit offerings that were analytics driven, and we saw a lot of universities starting to get into the field of online education for K-12 students, much as they had done in the previous five to ten years for university students. And yet, as we looked at the programs the universities were offering and the programs the for-profits were offering we didn't see anything we could identify as being an independent girls' school." That is how the idea for the Online School for Girls was born. The founding team moved into the online space to fill a void that was there, and then relied on research relating ways that girls use technology and computers best in order to find a founding pedagogy and mission.

The four independent girls' schools that formed a non-profit consortium to become the world's first single-gender online school and the world's first online independent school included: Harpeth Hall School (Nashville, TN), Holton-Arms School (Bethesda, MD), Laurel School (Cleveland, OH), and Westover School (Middlebury, CT). Their common belief that online education is "an increasingly powerful way to learn – and that there is great value in creating an online learning environment that is specifically geared toward the ways that girls learn best," proved to be supported by the dozens of independent girls' schools that joined the effort in OSG's developing years.

While the school is still young, it has been able to grow quickly without compromising quality and high standards because of the strength of the traditions of its *Member* and *Charter Affiliate* schools, and the ingenuity, thoughtfulness, and wisdom of the board, staff, and faculty of OSG, who have dedicated themselves to enhancing girls' education around the globe via the Online School for Girls' online classes and academic programming.

Monmouth County, NJ

In 2010, school founders – two couples, Victoria and Justin Gmelich and Mairead and Sean Clifford, compiled a group of dedicated parents and supporters with a shared goal of establishing an independent all-girls high school in Monmouth County, an educational option considered long overdue. The founders were captivated by the lack of educational options in this thriving NYC suburban community – especially the absence of an all-girls high school option, and particularly in comparison to the vast amount of single-sex options in Northern New Jersey, New York City, and Southern Connecticut. All four attended single-sex Catholic high schools themselves – and attribute much of their successes today to these vital years. They wanted the same opportunities for their (combined) seven daughters, and set out to create a school using three in-state NCGS member schools – Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child of Summit, Kent Place School of Summit, and Stuart Country Day School of Princeton, as its models.

To confirm interest and marketability, a professional educational consulting firm was hired to conduct a county-wide feasibility study which proved an overwhelming demand for a single-sex school to serve the young women of the region. Utilizing the working name Monmouth Girls Academy, the project gained much support and momentum demonstrated through the survey responses of nearly 2,000 families. In January 2012, the board of trustees

proudly announced that an all-girls high school would be built, and the school was named officially named Trinity Hall in April 2012. By December 2012, the school had its leadership team in place, and by spring, faculty and staff members were hired to implement a lofty plan regarding academic, artistic, athletic, and spiritual programming.

Though independently governed, Trinity Hall's mission purposely honors the values of Roman Catholicism, an objective valued by the school's founders from the start. As a result, the school strives to "assist in the spiritual, moral, and integral formation of every student while maintaining high standards of academic excellence." In accordance with its student-centric philosophy, "In a technology-rich learning environment, a superior faculty and a challenging interdisciplinary curricular program will foster leadership, respect, perseverance, and faith. Unique and exciting co-curricular learning opportunities will accommodate a diverse, yet a collectively passionate, creative, and caring student body. The young women of Trinity Hall will be empowered to take risks, pursue personal passions, network globally, and grow as learners – and as valued individuals." The school's inaugural class in 2013-2014 consists of thirty freshman students, and a new class will be added each year until a full high school program is offered in 2016-2017.

In summary, the answer to this perception question is yes – in all cases, the schools were founded to fill a void in the educational markets of their founding. However, the definition of "void" is arguable. In a few of the cities or regions, an all-girls option did exist, but did not suffice to the school founders for a variety of reasons: its mission, its distance from home, the ages served, and/or its religious affiliation.

Independent schools are complex businesses, so obtaining (and keeping) enough customers (students and their parents) to succeed in a competitive market is both an initial and

ongoing challenge. In some of the communities, new schools created their own market niche simply by being single-gendered. But this market factor was even clearer in communities with an existing all-girls option(s), where each new opening was forced to clearly communicate what set their school apart from its competitors (i.e. their mission, their approach, their programming, their faculty, etc.), and hope that it was significant enough to entice families to join them. Therefore, the founders of the schools in this study, though confident, did not enter these projects certain of their success – knowing they were fully dependent on the market at hand.

2. The "All-Girls" Effect

Question: ***Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings?***

"Simply put, girls' schools teach girls that there is enormous potential and power in being a girl." – National Coalition of Girls' Schools

The expansion of girls' schooling over the past two hundred years has brought a number of changes to the missions, philosophies and programming of established girls' schools in the United States, and has fueled the founding of many new independent girls' schools around the country. Proponents advocate that single-sex academic environments provide a stimulus for each student to reach their full academic, creative and physical potential. The most specific and highly publicized characteristic of single-sex classrooms is improved student behavior, because in coeducational classrooms, distraction among boys and girls is high (Mael, Smith, Alonso, Rogers & Gibson, 2004). Students in coeducation classrooms and schools often try to make an impression on each other and act out in ways that are unfavorable, not only to the individual learning, but to the class as a whole (Mael, Smith, Alonso, Rogers & Gibson, 2004).

Studies show that girls find it easier to excel and become more confident learners in an all-girl setting – believed to be a more comfortable environment that encourages girls to speak up in class, to express their opinions, and to take initiative in everything from academics to the arts to athletics. The all-girl environment creates a special, sister-like bond among students and a strong sense of community. To prove these assertions, member schools lean on the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) for cutting-edge research, studies and publications that

support the academic and social benefits of an all-girls school environment. For example, regarding the benefits of attending a girls' school, the following statistics were pulled the 2000 and 2005 studies conducted for NCGS by the Goodman Research Group of Cambridge, Massachusetts:

- 25% of the female representatives in Congress are girls' school graduates (Note: Less than 1% of girls in this country attend a single-sex school).
- One third of female corporate board members of Fortune 500 companies are girls' school graduates.
- 13% of girls' school graduates major in math, science and technology while only 2% of girls who attend coeducational schools major in those fields.
- Girls in single-gender schools score an average of 15-22% higher on standardized tests than their counterparts in coeducational schools.
- Girls who attend a girls' school are more than twice as likely to earn a doctoral degree.
- Three in five graduates of girls' schools say they believe they are better able to balance the demands of career and family than their peers.
- Nearly 75% of girls attending girls' schools say that the experience taught them that women can accomplish anything; girls' school graduates demonstrate more self-confidence and ambition.
- 90% of those attending girls' schools report belonging to a community organization such as a charitable, civic or educational group or arts association.
- Nearly 80% of girls' school graduates play competitive sports, and a majority play at least two or three sports.

- 83% of girls' school graduates perceive themselves to be better prepared for college than female counterparts from coeducational high schools.
- 80% of girls from girls' schools hold leadership positions after high school.
- 95% of recent girls' school graduates said that having a career and profession was very or extremely important to them.
- 94% of women who attend girls' schools report that their experience was positive.

In the previously mentioned Fordham Urban Law Journal publication, *Why Girls' Schools? The Difference in Girl Centered Education* (2001), two of NCGS' co-founders, Whitney Ransome and Meg Milne Moulton, determined that the professional experiences of girls' school educators informed their conviction that girls' schools had well served students of many abilities and backgrounds for generations. They found that the common among these schools was a long-standing commitment to learning environments that place girls first and foremost, and what set them apart from other schools was an in-depth understanding of how girls learn and succeed. They boasted, "Students at girls' schools enjoyed not just equal opportunity, but every opportunity. At girls' schools, all the speakers, players, writers, singers, and athletes were girls. All the doers and leaders were girls. Female mentors and role models were abundant. The 'chilly classroom climates' that permeated coeducational institutions were almost non-existent in girls' schools, and there were few signs of second-class citizenship" (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

The Archer School for Girls community is proud of the identifiable benefits of girls' schools they claim to witness daily. In their approach, they "begin with ambitious, exuberant, multitalented girls" and "surround them with expert teachers attuned to how girls learn best."

The young women are "offered a challenging curriculum of classical visual and performing arts program, competitive athletics, and experiential learning opportunities from community service to grade-specific, week-long trips to supplement on-campus learning." They see "their abilities accrue, their energy build, their confidence reach new heights. And we send them into the broader world where they become leaders and pursue productive, joyful lives" (Archer, 2012). These claims display a process and product that is undeniably positive, and can only be measured by the satisfaction of its customers – their graduates and their parents.

Because **Lake Washington Girls' Middle School** focuses on a time during an adolescent girl's life when personal and social issues can present difficult challenges – the middle school years, they set out to create a thriving environment that is caring and respectful, and in their words: "an atmosphere in which they are nurtured yet empowered." They feel they have created just that, and their graduates leave school "academically strong, self-assured, and articulate." The school references single-gender education research that indicates that girls' school environments "affirm and encourage young women in their capacities as confident individuals, leaders and agents of social change." They claim that this research shows that girls-only education is "not merely a matter of separating girls and boys. It is about making sure girls take center stage, while drawing upon all that we know about the way they grow and learn. It is not just the classroom. It is the combination of the community, the culture, and the climate girls schools offer that makes all-girl education such a powerful and transformative experience." It is difficult to argue these assumptions, but they stem from a subjective nature. Their website states, "Here, every leader is a girl. It is always a girl who answers the question in class. Girls speak up and stand up for themselves and others. At Lake Washington Girls Middle School, girls learn to change the world" (LWGMS, 2012).

In Mountain View, California, **Girls' Middle School** has asserted that over the last twenty years, research shows girls think, interact, display leadership and make decisions differently than boys. The school references studies that point to educational disparities between the sexes, and found that, in mixed schools, girls routinely are called upon less, receive less feedback, and display lower self-esteem than boys. Related research has also demonstrated that girls at single-sex schools are more likely to take non-traditional courses in subjects that run against gender stereotypes such as advanced math and physics. They firmly believe that their students benefit from fewer gender distractions, creating an atmosphere where the girls are increasingly competitive; where girls seek and accept leadership roles; and where girls spend more time on schoolwork and personal interests.

Orchard House School sites research conclusions that distinguish single-sex learning environments for girls as superior, especially at the middle school level. Therefore, their programs and practices are guided by what they believe works best for girls, "using a wealth of brain, gender specific research, along with developmental and social research and effective teaching strategies and methods are what the school was built on." They state their program is "developed, tailored, designed and revised specifically for girls in grades five through eight." Orchard House strives to inspire and educate their students to build powerful connections to the community, to learning, to themselves as individuals and as members of the larger world, and to provide them the skills and tools for future success.

The **Seattle Girls School** community is operating under the same system of beliefs. SGS asserts that Middle school is a critical time in the development of girls. They refer to the research showing that "as girls reach early adolescence, their self-esteem is likely to plummet. The result of being bombarded by conflicting messages about femininity and achievement from their

schools, the media, and their peers." They feel that it is in these crucial years that, more often than not, girls are directly or indirectly dissuaded from certain areas of study; the girls are pressured to make decisions they later regret, and feel powerless in charting a course for future achievements.

However, SGS is not discouraged by this knowing that research also proves that girls at single-sex schools have a greater opportunity to flourish academically. Like the other schools, SGS boats that "graduates of girls' schools are more motivated; more accomplished, and have higher aspirations than their peers at coeducational schools. They will typically score 30% higher on SAT tests than the national average for girls." None of this research is a surprise to SGS. They know when girls "feel safe and are challenged, they are more willing to explore their strengths and examine areas for growth." They feel that girls "are more likely to develop a healthy self-image, which means they'll be less likely to take unhealthy risks and will feel more empowered to pursue their dreams," as communicated on their website.

The **Julia Morgan School for Girls** is the first all-girls middle school in the East Bay in Oakland, California. The founding of the school was ignited by research which demonstrates that many girls attending coeducational schools do not receive equal opportunities to excel academically and socially. Founder DeBare was quick to reference both novels and academic studies, including works published by the American Association of University Women, which stated: "curricula continue to reflect inequities, as materials by and about women remain peripheral, and teaching approaches continue to favor predominantly male interactional styles. Girls' self-esteem and confidence in their competence, particularly with regard to math and science, drop precipitously during their middle school years, narrowing their later choices of course work and career path" (AAUW). The school works hard to avoid these disparagements.

Likewise, research published by The National Coalition of Girls' Schools shows that in coeducational classrooms, girls often contend with: fewer opportunities to participate; pressure to conform to stereotypes; lowered teacher expectations; limited encouragement in math & science; unequal sports opportunities; and insufficient female role models. In contrast, at a girls' school, girls seek and find not only equal opportunity, but every opportunity. "Girls experience the freedom to speak out, ask questions, debate issues, and defend points of view. Girls fill every role at an all-girls school; they are the speakers, thinkers, writers, singers, artists, scientists, athletes, actors, and leaders" (AAUW, 1995).

At **Atlanta Girls School**, the founders' believe that informed educators have benefitted from the increased knowledge and understanding of "how the mind takes in and processes information; the way our children respond to various stimuli; and the possibilities in teaching to these underlying differences," resulting from the dramatic expansion of research efforts in this field over the last twenty years. For instance, AGS acknowledges the physical differences in girls' and boys' hearing, and raises questions regarding the importance of thoughtful classroom seating designs. "Girls also see the world as nouns and boys are more likely to see it as verbs; girls use more varied parts of the brain in processing information, and they naturally bring to bear a variety of perspectives, surroundings and considerations on problems when they solve them," AGS contests.

Yet the opportunities for best educating girls with these issues in mind do not stop at the classroom door. AGS and other all-girls school recognize that many coed schools using single gender classrooms in limited settings are missing out on valuable social and developmental benefits of single-sex schools. AGS takes advantage of the all-girls environment by "reassuring that their girls have all of the leadership positions available to them – and that girls are the

celebrated athletes in the game." They guarantee them "highly formative environments of advisory, extracurricular activities and clubs incorporate this same understanding of how girls learn best and experience the world," and they afford "an empowering environment that assures that an AGS Graduate is ready for the world, with the skills, knowledge and strengths of character needed," according to their communications.

At the **Girls' School of Austin**, they claim a typical Girls' School student is smart, creative, and willing to "dig in." For them, in this past year, digging in included "laying sod on our bare fields, moving monstrous compost piles, and participating in robotics, speech, art, music and writing competitions." As a result, their students eagerly share their work at weekly community meetings, and participate in regional and state competitions in many of these curricular subjects and co-curricular programs. "Visitors often remark that our classrooms are very peaceful. Even when working on projects and large group activities (which is often), girls take their learning seriously—although not without considerable wit and enthusiasm," shared Head of School Lisa Schmitt. There is an overall feeling at GSA that children are being asked to "grow up too fast-exposed to media images that portray young girls as women." Therefore, GSA believes that girls should know a lot about the world and engage in real world issues," but reinforces that "everyone deserves a childhood which includes spending time outdoors and/or engaging in creative and free play… dreaming big dreams." Many parents value the exposure to the global world, but at the same time, appreciate their child's youth and want them to enjoy it to their fullest.

The **Online School for Girls** caps their classes at twenty students because they feel that is the number that allows each student to be known and appreciated. With their teacher, OSG students create a learning experience with their peers around the nation and the world, and above

all else, OSG works hard to create the best classroom experience specifically tailored to the ways that girls learn best. The school contests that in the 21st century, research shows that "girls interact with technology differently than boys; they have different experiences in technology-rich environments; and they literally see the technology landscape differently than boys." OSG concludes that coed online schools do not – and cannot – focus on these important differences. As a result, the Online School for Girls "stands alone as the online educational option that understands the unique position girls occupy in the online educational space," in their own words.

Trinity Hall's Founding Head of School Mary Sciarrillo was born and raised in the area of its founding – and even attended one of its now competing Catholic high schools. "For years we have known that young women in Monmouth County and the surrounding towns would benefit from a single-sex high school they can call their own," she explains. The students at this young school are now already immersed in a rigorous academic program complete with interactive technology, interdisciplinary projects, STEM courses, and global learning experiences that will prepare them for the demands of the 21st century. Sciarrillo confirms, "Trinity Hall students will learn to think critically and creatively, problem solve, collaborate effectively, communicate with strength, and adapt to the ever-changing technical demands of this century. Trinity Hall women will make a difference," and "By staying true to our core values of leadership, respect, perseverance, and faith, we are building a community of young women who will become leaders and living examples of the benefit of a faith and value-based learning environment." Like many of the other schools, Trinity Hall is small by design - but even as the school strives for growth towards its target enrollment, academic class sizes will be capped at sixteen students.

In addition to the primary differentiator of serving female students only, the secondary common identified differentiators among these all-girls schools include:

- Small class sizes: Anywhere between eight and twenty students. Small class sizes encourage faculty to establish a one-on-one relationship with each student, with ample opportunity to support students both in and out of the classroom.
- The removal of the distraction of boys in the classroom (academically), and in the school (socially).
- Increased confidence: All-girls settings encourage girls to speak up in class, to express their opinions, and to take initiative.
- Leadership opportunities: Girls play all of the roles – student council, clubs, arts, athletics, community service, etc.
- Teachers can focus on the specific educational needs of girls.
- Girls' schools tend to include more girls and women in their curriculum, and girls' schools can directly address the most difficult social issues facing young women.
- The all-girls environment is believed to create a special, sister-like bond among students and a strong sense of community.

3. Educational Policy Effect

Question: ***Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States?***

Principles inherent in twenty-first century girls' schools vastly oppose the late-eighteenth century academies from which they originated, where lessons emphasized women's distinct roles in society, preventing equality to men and maintaining them in positions of inferiority (Rogers, 2004). The initial growth occurred in the early nineteenth century, when primary schools for girls opened with a focus on stimulating female literacy, which in turn, opened professional opportunities for women as teachers. As a result, the feminization of the teaching profession and the spread of girls' schools were directly related. As girls' secondary schools began to open, often under the impetus of a feminist movement, they gradually aligned themselves with male standards of excellence, preparing girls for the same exams and offering opportunities to pursue higher education (Rogers, 2004).

Many would argue the success of the original girls' school movement resulted from the vision and dedication of pioneers such as Emma Hart Willard, an American woman's advocate who founded the renowned Troy Female Seminary – the first recognized institution for the education of girls – in Troy, New York, in 1821 (renamed the Emma Willard School in 1895). She believed young women deserve diverse subject matter and academic rigor in line with their ambitions and abilities. The school she founded champions individual opinion and instills confidence. Although many other advocates and pioneers opened girls' schools with ideals that parallel Willard's, few schools that opened doors in the 1800's had the stability to last through today. In fact, according to DeBare, Troy alumnae opened about approximately two-hundred

schools modeled on Willard's (DeBare, 2004). In total, the number of all-girls private secondary schools reached a peak of 1,132 in 1965-1966 (DeBare, 2004).

Ironically, the Women's Liberation Movement in the United States, which took place during the late 1960's and early 1970's, brought an end to the rise of all-girls schools and nearly brought them to extinction (DeBare, 2004). As a result of the movement, in 1972, the Federal Government passed the Title IX legislation, which was designed to prohibit discrimination based on gender in education programs and activities in federally funded institutions (Meyer, 2007). A few years later, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare issued Title IX regulations barring single-sex classes or programs in public schools. Therefore, what had been the norm then became the law; the single-sex education form in the U.S. public school system had been essentially outlawed. Despite all of the research available that showed both girls and boys benefit from single sex classrooms, organized political pressure prevented any further experiments (Hughes, 2006). Independent schools immediately felt the impact as declining enrollment and resources caused many to close their doors. This trend continued for two decades as the number of independent girls' schools continued to decline and few dared to enter this deteriorating market. The number of all-girls private secondary schools decreased over 40 percent, from 1,132 in 1965-1966 down to 470 in 1999-2000 (DeBare, 2004). By the mid-1990s, only two public girls' schools remained: the Philadelphia High School for Girls and Western High School in Baltimore (Ransome and Moulton, 2001).

However, now in the twenty-first century, with loosened Title IX regulations resulting from the controversial No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, these numbers are bound to rise, in both the private *and* public sectors. Public school districts now again have the legal right to create single-sex classes or single-sex schools if they deem it to be in the best interest of their

students (Meyer, 2007). Therefore, in a sense, NCLB has paved the way for an aggressive approach to educational reform (Hughes, 2006). The U.S. Senate included incentive grants for single-sex schools in NCLB, giving schools the opportunity to revisit the idea of single-sex classrooms or single-sex schools. In 2002, the Department of Education began revising Title IX provisions to make it easier for schools to adopt single-sex policies (Hughes, 2006).

Clearly, independent schools are not directly impacted by Title IX, NCLB or other educational reform legislations. However, the implementation and governance of these policies do shift public opinion on educational forms outside of the public realm. In this case, loosened laws related to single-sex education in the United States lead some to believe that single-sex education is a viable, potentially beneficial option. What was not anticipated during the Title IX prohibition of publicly funded single sex-schools, was the informed analysis of the positive role of girls' schools and the surge in private girls' school enrollments (Ransome and Moulton, 2001). Growing appreciation of girls' schools eventually spilled into the public sector. Since 1995, all-girls public schools have been established in several states, including California, Massachusetts, Illinois, New Jersey, and New York, and with many more coming.

In March 2002, when the National Association of Single-Sex Public Education (NASSPE) was founded, only about a dozen public schools offered single-gender classrooms. During the 2011-2012 school year, at least 506 public schools in the United States offered single-sex educational opportunities. About 390 of these schools, however, are coeducational, yet they offer single-sex classrooms, offering a blend of gender approaches. The NASSPE counts "116 of the 506 public schools . . . as single-sex *schools,* meaning that students attending any of those schools have most or all of their school activities in a setting which is all-boys or all-girls."

However, what has yet to be fully documented is the impact of the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) legislation on *independent* girls' schools in the 21st century. The sample provided in this research study, however, suggests that the impact is minimal. For example, of the ten schools in this study, only one interviewee shared a connection to government legislation, and that was on a state, not federal, level. Nancy Davies, founding head at the **Orchard House School** indicated that Virginia state education laws played a role initially in their decision to launch their school. The fundamental driver for the Orchard House founders was the idea of "open access" to girls of all socioeconomic classes. Originally the founders sought charter school status, but were stymied by the lack of support for charter schools and by anti-single-sex legislature on the grounds of gender discrimination by the state government of Virginia. These approaches both toward charter schools and single-sex education eventually were overturned, but not before Orchard House School was founded as an all-girls private school. When asked if they had plans for re-applying for charter status, Ms. Davies indicated that, "as long as the state is governing charter schools by the standards of learning – the SOL test – we think that would compromise how girls should be educated."

Brooke Weinmann, founding trustee of the **Atlanta Girls School**, also indicated that they had initially considered a charter school model. But added, "Quite frankly, we steered clear of that in Atlanta. We didn't want to have government rules imposed on us. I think it's fair to say 'red tape,' and it would be hard enough to start the school to begin with."

Patricia Hearn of the **Lake Washington Girls' Middle School**, recounted that they "were strictly an independent school from the beginning." While their demographic target did not oppose public school, ultimately the students and families recognized the developmental importance of the middle school years, particularly for girls. Hearn remembered, "In those 1995

to 1998 years – and the planning years – there wasn't anything that directly precipitated us. The families weren't looking to get away from the public schools, in fact, they were really public school people and were great supporters of public schools and struggled with the idea that they were going to take their kids out the public school but felt that these three years, particularly for their girls, were so important that they decided to do it."

For Marja Brandon and the other founders of **Seattle Girls' School**, there was not the option of becoming a charter school as she noted: "Washington State is one of only four states left that does not have charter schools… It has been voted down every single time, and as a result, our only option was to open an independent school."

The grassroots efforts to open **Julia Morgan School for Girls**, the **Girls' School of Austin**, and **Girls' Middle School** garnered significant community involvement that resulted in schools that would "nurture and empower a diverse group of girls during their crucial adolescent years," as stated in the GMS history statement, but is indicative of the attitudes at the other schools. The founders and early supporters of these schools valued independent education and sought to offer an "all-girls" option among the other educational possibilities in their communities. Governmental regulations did not factor into their visions, planning, nor decisions.

Brad Rathgeber, Director of the **Online School for Girls**, discussed that although the U.S. government's policy changes relating to single sex education did not play a role in OSG's founding, its research regarding online education did. According to Rathgeber, "The U.S. Department of Education in 2010 released its most comprehensive report of online education. Their takeaway was that courses that were taught with some kind of blend between online and face-to-face instruction were more effective for students than either face-to-face or online classes

alone." Rathgeber, citing the report further, commented that between the two, however, "online classes were typically more effective than face-to-face classes."

Trinity Hall experienced a different legislative challenge – but not from the US Government or the State of New Jersey. While always intending to be a self-governed independent school, the founders strived to complement their all-girls school vision with the ideals and values of Catholicism. As such, they sought support from the Archdiocese of Trenton and specifically, Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M. Their goal was to get the Bishop's "blessing" to open the school – much like the existing and thriving Catholic boys' high school in the county, Christian Brothers Academy, which is a non-diocesan school operating under the auspices of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Bishop O'Connell denied the founders request, and distributed a statement throughout the diocese that included the following rationale – while also acknowledging the school's potential impact on enrollment at existing diocesan high schools: "The Canon Law of the Catholic Church requires the consent of the "competent ecclesiastical authority (that is, the Diocesan Bishop)" for a school to bear the title "Catholic school." I did not give such consent or permission and so informed those interested in establishing the school. I was told by numerous individuals within the Diocese that those seeking to establish this new school were going to do so regardless of my consent or permission. And so they have."

He went on to clarify – correctly, that "the school's founders are using the expression "in the Catholic tradition" to describe Trinity Hall. That is not the same thing as being a "Catholic school" and I simply want to make clear that this new institution is not affiliated with the Diocese of Trenton or our Office of Catholic Education." And furthermore, "That individuals have the freedom to establish a school of whatever kind is not something that I question. People

have that right and I bear them no ill will. That they call it "Catholic," however, is subject to my consent according to Church Law and I have not given it. Catholics in the Diocese have the right to know that and I have the responsibility to tell them," O'Connell concluded.

Unsurprisingly, this decision and communication was met with mixed reviews by community members both for and against the school's opening. Fortunately, the founders continued on their journey and created Trinity Hall. "We use the term 'Catholic tradition' because our tradition will be Catholic. Our masses and prayer services will all hold to the tradition of the Catholic faith, in a richly diverse community where ALL persons are accepted, affirmed and appreciated," states Head of School Mary Sciarrillo.

Therefore, the sample schools in this case study would lead to a conclusion that independent schools are rarely founded as a direct result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States. But both new and longstanding girls' and boys' school enrollments may be indirectly impacted by the single-sex public and charter schools openings as a result of new legislation. If the single-gender learning environment is the primary factor in some families selecting independent schools – and paying tuition – over their public school options, this demand may decrease if the number of public or charter single-sex schools grow in metropolitan areas, and potentially suburban areas in the years to come.

4. The Gender and Learning Effect

Question: ***Was the school founded to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?***

Perception question two asked: *"Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings,"* igniting responses regarding the *behavioral* and *social* benefits of girls' schools. This question, specific to gender differences in learning styles, focuses on the *cognitive* benefits of girls' schools, and the related reasons for which the schools in this study were founded.

Gender equity in education is the elimination of sex role stereotyping and sex bias from the educational process, thus providing the opportunity and environment to validate and empower individuals as they make appropriate career and life choices (Owens, Smothers & Love, 2003; Hilke & Conway, 1994). Therefore, gender bias in education can be defined as treating boys and girls differently in schools. This includes how teachers respond to students, what students are encouraged to study and how textbooks and other resources represent gender roles.

A study commissioned by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 1992 entitled *Shortchanging Girls; Shortchanging America*, synthesized much earlier research and concluded that the average school is biased against girls in a number of ways. The study found that girls did not receive as much attention from teachers as boys, and boys were called upon to answer more abstract and complex questions than girls. Instead, all too often, female high school students focused on their bodies and neglected their minds (Owens, Smothers and Love, 2003).

Owens, Smothers and Love go on to state, "It is imperative to spotlight the cost of gender equity to society and to change the pedagogical strategies used in all schools. Educators must take the responsibility to expand and enhance commitments to gender equity. Presently, the need for qualified scientists and engineers cannot be met. Therefore, the norm in the schools must include enticing female students to pursue the sciences." To understand the position of girls and women in education requires an understanding of changing structures and complex processes and a commitment to breaking down the barriers that continue to result in female disadvantage. If America is to hold the best possible future for our people and civilization, she cannot afford to waste a primary resource – our nation's girls and women (Owens, Smothers & Love, 2003).

The National Coalition of Girls' Schools contests that, "in a single-sex school, a girl can comprehend her value and her capabilities in ways that have nothing to do with how she looks or whom she dates. She can be free to experiment and explore, trying out new things and trying on new roles. She can follow her ambitions without wasting a second thought or a backward glance on how her male counterparts might perceive her." The organization concludes, "By subtracting boys, an all-girls education adds opportunities. At a girls' school, a girl occupies every role: every part in the play, every seat on the student government, every position on every team. Not only does she have a wealth of avenues for self-exploration and development, she has a wealth of peer role models" (NCGS, 2012).

According to results from the NCGS executive summary of 2005, entitled *The Girls' School Experience: A Survey of Young Alumni of Girls' Schools*, there are five defining characteristics of the girls' school experience:

1. Girls put academics first.
2. Girls enjoy not just equal opportunity, but every opportunity.

3. Girls dare to take on – and succeed in – the real world.
4. Girls thrive when their learning styles take center stage.
5. Girls become leaders.

While all schools approach gender differences in various ways, **Orchard House School** most clearly identifies the research behind their founding and programming. Utilizing the brain and gender differences research from Dr. JoAnn Deak and Peggy Orenstein, among others, Orchard House School identifies an understanding and recognition of brain and human dynamic research that supports that all children – and girls in particular – learn best in an emotionally safe environment. Rather than dismiss or devalue differences, Orchard House girls "Learn to process differences directly and respectfully. Positive social and group skills are taught through their leadership program, the general curriculum, cross grade peer relationships, base groups, morning meetings, homerooms and sports teams. By having a healthy learning environment with curricular demands that are the same for all, Orchard House girls naturally take greater risks academically, athletically, socially, and creatively." For example, at OHS, all of the girls take Drama – even the shyest students learn to speak in front of an audience, and opting out is not an option. Also, many girls who have never played on a team sport previously, play them at Orchard House because the teams are open to all. They boast: "The school, through its community of openness, fosters risk, and excellence."

Orchard House is a research-based school, and as a result, serves as a resource to other educators and schools. The school uses "brain research, gender specific research, and developmental, social, psychological and curricular research" to develop all aspects of its academic program. Additionally, they monitor students from admissions past graduation – and

share their findings with the school community and beyond. Based on their findings, Orchard House is dedicated to helping girls develop "a strong, authentic sense of self" by acquiring confidence, people skills, problems solving ability and critical thinking.

Archer also utilizes research-based initiatives to drive their curriculum. The school website reports, "contrary to the claim that girls' schools do not prepare girls for the 'real world,' research continues to validate and quantify the advantages of single-sex education for girls." Archer feels "higher test scores, superior reading, writing and science skills, higher numbers of math and science majors, and higher numbers of doctorates," can quantify this research, and furthermore, highlights the additional STEM-related career paths chosen by girls' schools graduates.

The **Online School for Girls** leadership team and faculty also point to research that supports the notion that for girls to reach their highest academic potential, they: "need to feel strong connections with their peers and with their teachers; that girls need to work collaboratively in the classroom; that girls need to work creatively; and that girls learn best when applying their knowledge to real-world problems." Therefore, rather than simply providing a remote, individualized online curriculum, OSG classes are active, engaging classroom experiences. OSG instructors are encouraged to reach out to each student "personally, sincerely and respectfully, building confidence and inspiring a community of learners." Founded by administrators from several top-tier girls' schools nationwide, the people behind OSG are "dogged advocates for young women who will assume positions of leadership in the 21st century and beyond."

Director Brad Rathgeber also proudly acknowledged OSG's use of the Laurel School's Center for Research on Girls in Shaker Heights, Ohio. OSG requested a guiding research

document from the center to highlight the ways that girls learn best with technology and computers. The center suggested, "When building an educational platform for girls online, OSG must consider and attentively pursue the four defining factors for a great education: connection, collaboration, creativity and application." As a result, Brad and his OSG team have taken this philosophy to heart. They have committed themselves to incorporating these four principles in everything they do, including teaching and student evaluations, course designs and learning platforms. Brad acknowledged that technological advances, specifically the advent of web 2.0 technology, enabled OSG to pursue this agenda in the online space.

Patricia Hearn at **Lake Washington Girls' Middle School** shared, "I would say there's a lot of contextual learning, a lot of project-based learning and a lot of social learning. It was very hands-on and very collaborative and very project based, so that almost everything was designed around this idea that we'll work together to create the result – then you'll present it." Those at LWGMS see presentation and performance as a way to build confidence. As a result of this emphasis on building confidence, in everything that they do, the girls of LWGMS are taught to defend their research, talk about it clearly and present it to a larger group."

Marja Brandon of the **Seattle Girls' School** shared her own opinions about differing gender approaches in education: "There is very little supported research on girls learning one way and boys learning another. I mean, it has not been proven. There is, however, great research on things like the power of collaboration, which by the way works brilliantly for boys as well. There is nothing – and I've said this from the beginning – there is nothing that we are doing at SGS that wouldn't work brilliantly for boys as well." For Brandon, "the fact that it's all girls meant socially we were looking at that from a social perspective, not necessarily from a learning perspective." Therefore, in the case of SGS, the social and behavioral benefits of girls'

schools were more influential than the potential cognitive benefits. "It was not empowering, it was feminist. It was, of course you can do anything and of course we're going to present you with great role models and women who have done things in history. So it wasn't about keeping them segregated forever, it was about how to become the strongest learner and self-advocate you can be so in your next environment, be it a classroom, a college, university or work place you have the skills and can attain your goals, whatever those goals are." Additionally, Brandon pointed to the issue of gender from a faculty perspective (i.e., eliminating the opportunity for biased behaviors toward one sex over the other in the same room).

Ilana Debare, a founding trustee at the **Julia Morgan School for Girls**, identified many of the same influential of pieces of research previously mentioned, including the Pipher's *Reviving Ophelia*; the AAUW's *How Schools Shortchange Girls: A Study of Major Findings in Education*; as well as Sadker's 1994 book on gender inequities in education, *Failing at Fairness: How Our Schools Cheat Girls*. Debare and her JMSG team determined that all of this research points to the importance of the early adolescence and middle school period, when girls typically begin confronting social and academic problems. Lacking the resources to open an entire K-12 school, they opted instead to focus on the middle school years. From diverse backgrounds but united in a singular vision – to create an all-girls middle school – the creators came together in the fall of 1996 to initiate their plan to: a) Challenge girls' intellectual growth, b) Celebrate girls' strong identities, c) Connect girls to inspiring adults, d) Ensure girls' full participation, and e) Empower girls to realize their dreams.

Atlanta Girls' School founders, Emily Ellison and Brooke Weinmann, said, "The more we researched, the more we were emphatic that there needed to be a single-gender option for girls to have the opportunity to optimize their learning in school and build a basis for their lives

in a way that's geared to the way girls learn best." Just as building confidence is a key aspect of the curriculum at LWGMS, the founding team at AGS also sought to provide girls the opportunity to "develop confidence, leading towards successful learning, and in turn, successful lives." In their minds, boys in the classroom just were not part of the equation. "There's no testosterone overload, there's no hand raising just for bravado, whether they know or don't know the answer, and importantly, there is not temptation to impress the opposite sex or to conform intentionally or subtly to what a boy's expectation might be of what that girl should be," added Weinmann. "Every single girl can be a leader – and be recognized as a leader and a role model – in an all-girls school. The founders also commented on the high percentage of highly successful women in business, government and society who attended girls' schools and women's colleges, who "simply get the 'it' of why a single-gender school is so important."

While some schools were founded primarily with gender-difference research in mind, others were not necessarily motivated with this research in mind. At the **Girls' School of Austin**, Amy Lowrey, founding trustee and current faculty member answered the question regarding whether or not gender-difference research impacted the school's opening: "It did and it didn't," she admitted. "I think we wanted girls to contribute more in leadership roles in areas where participation is not traditionally female: Math, Science and Technology. The idea was to provide an environment where girls felt empowered to choose their paths, where every leader, athlete, academic role within the student body was female. We wanted the girls to have strong role models." She concluded, "So although we did research on the learning styles of boys and girls, I don't think that was our focus."

And some schools use direct programming to counteract the traditionally-negative outcomes of girls educated in coeducational settings. For example, administrators at the **Girls'**

Middle School concluded that even though girls surpass boys in nearly every measure of academic success, there is still a significant gender gap in the number of young women pursuing college degrees and careers in STEM fields. Their signature programming is not intended to steer girls toward any particular career, but rather to level the playing field so that girls feel confident and well prepared to delve further into these studies. They make the claim that they "incorporate STEM throughout the curriculum and into co-curricular and extra-curricular activities" and provide a list of specific examples." For example, Math classes at GMS emphasize collaboration and problem solving, with a discovery-based approach to learning concepts (as opposed to memorizing equations). Science classes are inquiry based, with students practicing real science in the form of experiments, research, and field studies. Engineering applications enrich and extend their understanding of concepts, and computer science is taught all three years at GMS – all students' complete units in robotics, web page design, Flash animation, and several levels of computer programming.

The youngest school in the case study, **Trinity Hall**, was able to benefit by learning from the outcomes of the school start-ups before them. To clearly differentiate how their education of young women would be different from existing school options in the region, Trinity Hall committed itself to several core academic foundations: 1. Operating small class sizes (fewer than sixteen) where students are expected to master information, use technology effectively, and develop the critical thinking skills that support life-long learning; 2. Hiring and supporting dedicated teachers who exhibit rigorous academic preparation, enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and concern and appreciation for each student; 3. Implementing a college-preparatory curriculum that blends traditional instruction with thoughtful innovation, and cherishes both individual achievement and successful collaboration; and 4. Recognizing the importance of

parents who are involved with their daughters' education and encouraging them to work in partnership with the school. To help make learning connections for its students, Trinity Hall dedicates schedule time and faculty energy to interdisciplinary instruction. Specifically, a four-year humanities emphasis that intertwines history, English, and theology curricular objectives, and an instructional design and engineering course load – beginning Freshman year alongside physics, and combines elements of science, mathematics, visual arts, and technology.

As evidenced by these sample schools, all-girls independent schools, in striving to best serve female learning styles, are employing academic programming and flexible scheduling that promotes interdisciplinary learning. The collaboration of interrelated school subjects – and faculty expertise – is encouraged to promote connections in learning, and in turn, deeper comprehension and use of subject matter. In the humanities and social science courses, this often includes collaboratively-designed units, co-teaching, and interdisciplinary student projects, that make connections between time periods (and cultures) in history, literary works, arts, world religions, and world languages. In the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) courses, this often includes an interdisciplinary problem-solving based approach – and a plethora of hands-on learning activities, that combine to reinforce subject matter by allowing Math skills to support Science discoveries; Engineering tasks that require sound Math knowledge; etc. These approaches are – or should be – the future of school design and instruction, and girls' schools (especially new ones) are simply taking advantage of the opportunity to stay (or get) ahead of the curve.

Other findings include similarities in school design, curriculum, pedagogy and learning objectives, and technology and tools believed to best support female learning, including:

- Being small schools by design, and maintaining small class sizes.
- Encouraging (appropriate) individualized faculty-student relationships, with ample opportunity for support students both in and out of the classroom.
- Training both new and experienced school faculty on instructional styles that most commonly support female learning.
- Providing learning environments that are rich in technology and artwork representing student creativity.

5. The Ideals of 21st Century Independent Schools

Question: ***Are there additional founding reasons shared by schools in this study that may be worthy of further analysis?***

A common thread among all ten schools in this study included a mission-driven commitment to serving a diverse population of students and families. Diversity factors include socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, and geographic regions. Independent schools strive for a widespread enrollment reach, often boasting about the number of communities represented in their student body.

Below, each school's "commitment to diversity" is provided, each of which was taken from their websites, marketing materials, application and enrollment documents, and their mission statements. Also provided, where possible, is the amount of financial aid dollars allocated to achieve success in their commitment. By providing both sets of data, one is able to discern the degree of commitment to their stated goals of creating a socioeconomically diverse student body and school community.

> **Archer School for Girls: "**Archer is committed to ensuring socio-economic diversity in the student body and recognizes that tuition and fees are a large financial commitment for families. For many, it's a significant barrier for entry. While it is the school's philosophy that a family bears the primary responsibility for supporting the education of their daughter, Archer has tuition assistance in place in the form of the Flexible Tuition Program" (2013).

And the school stands true to its word. For example, in 2010, Archer provided financial aid awards to 111 students, totaling over $2.5 million in support, clearly displaying admirable efforts – and achievement – of their goals.

Lake Washington Girls' Middle School: "Lake Washington Girls Middle School believes that a diverse school community is essential to learning. As one of the most diverse independent schools in Seattle, we are proud that at LWGMS, students and staff from different racial, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds and family configurations learn from and with each other. Our curriculum encourages students to view the world from multiple perspectives, is designed to use multicultural resources, and provides diverse learning opportunities. LWGMS students develop a positive regard for differences and learn to be active citizens who use their voices to affect change" (2013).

In 2010, LWGMS funded the enrollment thirteen students, totaling a financial aid expenditure of approximately $76,948 – nearly 10% of their total operating budget.

Girls' Middle School: "Our school was founded on the principle of diversity, and it continues to be central to our core mission. GMS strives to close the opportunity gaps associated with ethnicity, gender, race and socioeconomic factors, and offers a curriculum that allows students to learn from different heritages and cultures" (2013).

GMS has been successful in providing educational opportunities to students whose families would not otherwise be able to afford their school. Specifically, in 2010, $506,020 in financial aid was awarded to help fund tuition for thirty-three students.

Orchard House School: "Orchard House School is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where girls learn to use their personal and collective voices for the good of all. The wealth of individual differences is the heart of the school community. The many variables of diversity develop our capacity for understanding and in turn build and strengthen our humanity. At the core of an Orchard House education is the cultivation of respect both for one's self and for all others. An Orchard House education aspires to create a culture where respect, encouragement, and care distinguish interactions both inside and outside of the classroom" (2013).

In 2010, Orchard House helped to fund the tuition of twelve of their eighty students – 15%, by providing $126,569 in financial aid awards.

Julia Morgan School for Girls: "In order to effectuate our Mission, philosophy, and history of the School to honor the diversity of the East Bay and serve our diverse community, it is imperative that all at Julia Morgan—its faculty, staff, parent body and Board of Directors—identify and address the areas of equity and inclusion. The School is committed to participate in the in-depth exploration and understanding of key equity concepts and practice, including those of diversity, cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching and practice, social justice and social dominance, power and privilege, and ally-ship" (2013).

Atlanta Girls School: "The Atlanta Girls' School is committed to helping girls and young women develop their fullest potential intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. The school provides a safe, ethics-based environment, where

community members encourage and support one another, are respectful of one another's unique talents and interests, and are aware of and accepting of cultural, racial, religious and economic backgrounds that may be different from their own" (2013).

As a larger school – second only to Archer, AGS steps up to supporting families from diverse economic backgrounds. In 2010, AGS provided a total of $630,435 financial aid dollars, helping to fund the education of seventy-one of their students.

Seattle Girls' School: "At the heart of Seattle Girls' School is a dynamic and diverse community with a passion for empowering girls to reach their full potential. The Board, administration, staff, faculty and parents all work together to ensure a joyful, curiosity-filled middle school experience that is safe and open to all voices. At SGS, girls from different racial, ethnic, religious, economic backgrounds and family configurations learn and grow alongside each other, respecting and building understanding for the complexities of living in our diverse world" (2013).

Girls' School of Austin: "The Girls' School of Austin values the diversity of our community and our world, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national origin. In addition, The Girls' School of Austin seeks to provide a superior education to students of all socio-economic backgrounds, and it offers financial assistance to families demonstrating need."

Online School for Girls: "The Online School for Girls provides an exceptional all-girls educational experience by connecting girls worldwide through relevant and engaging coursework in a dynamic online learning community" (2013).

Trinity Hall: Even in its first year of operation, Trinity Hall made a commitment to assisting families with the increasing cost of education by making a Trinity Hall education accessible to families at all income levels. Thanks to a generous financial aid budget provided by the school founders and board of trustees, a significant amount of financial aid dollars have already been pledged to assist the members of Trinity Hall's inaugural class in 2013-14.

Oftentimes, financial aid not only helps to bring in lower-income families, it helps to bring in an increase in non-White families. Specifically, many new and historic schools alike strive to have a significant "percentage of students of color." For instance, Lake Washington Girls' Middle School has 60% students of color, the highest percentage in this sample, and a number of which they are very proud. Other schools, some of which have substantial tuition obligations, boast high percentages of students of color as well: Archer, 34%; Julia Morgan, 40%; and Seattle Girls' School, 36%. Besides the obvious benefits of fostering a diverse and tolerant school community, this initiative stems from leadership provided by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS).

In 2001, NAIS founded the *National People of Color Conference* (PoCC), to provide a safe space for networking and a professional development opportunity for people, who, by virtue of their race or ethnicity, comprise the "people of color" category in independent schools. The

NAIS board affirms, "PoCC is a conference by and about people of color and inclusive of all. PoCC serves as an energizing, revitalizing gathering for people who experience independent schools differently" (NAIS). A priority objective of this initiative is to encourage schools and educators to see PoCC less as a diversity conference for newcomers to diversity work, but to help participants understand their roles in advancing their school's equity and justice around racial and ethnic identity. In November 2006, the NAIS board "reaffirmed the mission and purpose of PoCC," by stating: "PoCC should be designed for people of color as it relates to their roles in independent schools. Its programming should include offerings that support people of color as they pursue strategies for success and leadership. Its focus should be on providing a sanctuary and networking opportunity for people of color and allies in independent schools as we build and sustain inclusive school communities" (NAIS).

Coinciding with the *People of Color Conference* is the *Student Diversity Leadership Conference* (SDLC), which is geared toward students. SDLC is a multiracial, multicultural gathering of upper school student leaders (Grades Nine through Twelve) from across the United States. SDLC focuses on "self-reflecting, forming allies, and building community." Led by a diverse team of trained adult and peer facilitators, participants develop "effective cross-cultural communication skills, better understand the nature and development of effective strategies for social justice, practice expression through the arts and learn networking principles and strategies," according to NAIS (2012).

During the 2004-05 academic year, more than 1,000 NAIS member schools reported 106,492 students of color, representing 21.1 percent of their total enrollment. Among the six ethnic groups classified as students of color, Asian American students constituted the largest group at 7 percent of total enrollment, followed by African Americans at 5.8 percent (NAIS).

That year, at the national level, schools in the West concentrated the majority of students of color with more than 34,000 students, representing about 41 percent of the enrollment, whereas an analysis by grade denotes that the largest group of students of color was registered at preschool programs.

According to NAIS' *StatsOnline* database, total enrollment diversity in NAIS schools grew by 26.5 percent during the last 10 years. A breakdown of students of color by ethnic group reveals that the multiracial group has experienced the fastest growth during the last five years, reporting an increase of 112.4 percent. The second largest growth during the same period was experienced by Middle Eastern students at 25.4 percent, followed by Hispanic Americans at 24.2 percent (NAIS, 2012).

Regionally, schools in the Southeast experienced the fastest increase in the ratio of students of color at a percent of total enrollment at 40.6 percent from 1994-95 to 2004-05. In addition, the distribution of students of color by grades shows that the preschoolers and students enrolled in kindergarten registered the fastest increases. For instance, whereas in 1994-95, 1,303 students of color attended preschool, by 1999-00, their number had increased by 93.4 percent (2,520 students), and by 28.1 percent (3,229 students) in 2004-05 (NAIS, 2012).

A second common and noteworthy – but incalculable – theme among the school founders was their desire to provide a single-sex educational experience for their children, resulting from their positive experiences in all-girls or all-boys independent or parochial schools during their youth. This connection was noted in nearly every interview, where at least one significant member of each school's founding team accepted the challenge of building a new school in order

to provide their child(ren) an extremely positive educational experience – in comparison to their own valued experiences attending single-sex schools during their youth.

CHAPTER V:

CONCLUSION

Research Question:

For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the United States?

Girls' schools' founders in the late-twentieth and early-twenty first centuries have desired, envisioned, built, and governed schools, for communities of young women – including their own daughters – which were not previously provided by the conventional educational in which they lived. These parents and founders – many inspired by their own educational backgrounds at single-sex schools, by existing thriving girls' schools, and by research and literary works, developed the idea of creating a different school experience for their daughters. They believed a girls' school would enable them to best develop their individual voices. Combining the latest research on how girls learn best, with both innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to pedagogy, technology and social issues, these ten young independent girls' schools provide more than a girl-centric learning environment. These schools visionaries set lofty, mission-driven goals to prepare young women for empowerment, self-reflection, leadership opportunities, and overall success in our ever-emerging global world. They committed to providing a positive and challenging learning environment that fosters self-esteem, respect, and responsibility, therefore bypassing gender difference that traditionally favors boys in the classroom.

These grassroots responses to community-identified needs have resulted in high-achieving schools that are exciting to students, teachers, and parents alike. Though founded and

operating to serve students of various ages, the schools' academics are purposely challenging and their integrated programs are designed to educate the whole girl – intellectually, socially and emotionally. For the most part, the faculty at these schools are committed to teaching with culturally responsive principles, providing students with multiple perspectives and encouraging the girls to form and articulate their own opinions. Generally, speaking, the schools celebrate affection among "sisters" who grow up together.

With the vision intact, admission and outreach meetings were held throughout the cities of origin – including at the homes of founders – or any free or affordable space that was available at the time. Various marketing efforts were used to increase interest from potential students and families. One school proudly shared, "It is noteworthy that our founders were concerned not just about creating an environment where girls could thrive, but an environment that was nonsectarian, nondiscriminatory and ethics-based. They had the wisdom and vision to see that this was necessary in order to have the optimal learning environment, promoting a religiously, racially, culturally and socioeconomically diverse environment." Such an environment fosters learning that is part of a greater community – whether defined locally or globally – and an environment where a diversity of thoughts and ideas would be the rule. Only in such inspiring environments did founders and parents see the optimal setting for learning – and for students to experience the many documented benefits of the "all-girls" educational experience. They were often prepared to function in their community and give back to it.

Plans were made for schools to open – then thrive. Careful and intentional thought was given to every aspect of the curricula and learning environments. Educators, volunteers, philanthropists, and community leaders were summoned together. The creators of the schools brought a wide range of expertise, including finance, marketing, legal, political, education,

gender equity, child psychology, art, science, and journalism, among others. Starting with meager means, the schools aligned their visions to justify the findings of their research and preparation. As a result, many opened to challenge girls' intellectual growth and promote strong identities by connecting them with female leaders and role models, encouraging full participation and empowering girls to realize their dreams.

In comparison to public and larger independent and parochial schools, all ten schools would be considered small – but by design. Having said that, some schools started *very* small, including one with as few as eight students in the first year (then growing ten times this number to its intended capacity after only a few years). While these new small schools are still young, they have the ability to grow quickly without compromising quality and high standards. In many cases, this is because of the strength, traditions, ingenuity, thoughtfulness and care of the teachers and administrators who have tirelessly worked to make these schools for girls a great success. Furthermore, in the most successful of cases, they operate most strongly when they are well endowed financially, and stand true to their missions. The growing enrollments of such independent schools allow them to achieve other goals as well. Higher enrollments provide increased tuition and program revenues, helping schools plan for a brighter future, and in turn, a permanent place in their communities. Many schools that had originally rented classroom spaces, were able to secure longer leases, purchase buildings or even construct new campuses from scratch. The founders and their supporters proved relentless – and the need for fundraising was aggressive and non-stop.

How They Fared: Enrollment and Financial Results

After a short planning period beginning in 1994, **The Archer School for Girls** opened in 1995 and provided Los Angeles area families an alternative to existing educational options. In the first year, the school enrolled thirty-three total students for grades six and seven. Currently, in 2012-13, Archer has four-hundred and thirty enrolled students in grades six through twelve. While the annual tuition has reached $30,925 (and fees), Archer serves a diverse population through a flexible tuition program and a significant financial aid commitment. Specifically, students come from 141 different elementary and secondary schools and from eighty-six zip codes throughout the city. Twenty-eight percent of students receive some form of financial assistance, utilizing nearly $2.9 million in financial aid awarded for the 2011-2012 school year. Archer is well prepared for continued success in the years to come.

When **Lake Washington Girls Middle School** opened its doors in 1998 as the first secular girls' middle school in Seattle, the school carried out its mission of providing educational opportunities for economically diverse girls by keeping tuition at a lower level (about half of other Seattle private middle schools, and providing tuition assistance to those girls most in need). LWGMS opened with grade six only the first year, and grew to six through eight by the third year, educating 18 girls per grade level. Regarding target enrollment for year one, "the critical mass number we decided was 12 kids and the tuition was really, really low at that point; I think it was $4,000 or $4,500. We desired to keep tuition low so that it was accessible to a whole broad range of families, particularly ones who weren't going to apply for financial aid, people going to other independent schools or who might not qualify but were going to struggle to make that $4,000," shared Hearn. The LWGMS board fixed that initial tuition at a rate they thought most

families could reach for and make it work. The result was fourteen students; two above their goal. Their success grew in the years to follow. "Really, really, quickly it became obvious that people needed a girls' school and people were lining up to be here," Hearn boasted.

Today, LWGMS is currently educating their maximum of 100 students, while collecting approximately eighty-five applications for their eighteen grade-level openings each year. This is certainly a high level of interest for a small school. LWGMS resides in its third building since opening, currently renting from a Catholic parish. Because of their consistent and manageable enrollment, the board is considering purchasing land and constructing a facility by 2016 when their current lease ends.

In 1996, Kathleen Bennett developed the prospectus and business plan for a school in Mountain View, California that would "nurture and empower a diverse group of girls during their crucial adolescent years." After developing community support and acquiring funding, **The Girls' Middle School** opened in September 1998 with a sixth-grade class of 35 girls. Each successive year saw an additional next grade until the pioneer class graduated in 2001. Currently, GMS enrolls 180 total students with an average class size of 16. Tuition has reached $24,000-$28,000 annually; however, ten percent of GMS' operating budget is dedicated to tuition assistance. Like other schools, The Girls' Middle School financial aid program is supported, in part, by endowed funds provided through the generosity of parents, alumnae, and members of the community.

After hiring Ms. Davies as the Founding Head of School, **Orchard House School** opened in a temporary, rented facility in the fall of 1998 with twelve sixth graders and five

seventh graders. In its second year OHS added the fifth and eighth grades aligning with its vision and research – and grew 47 students. By 2002, enrollment reached the School's intended capacity of 80 girls. In 2004, Orchard House successfully purchased and renovated an exceptional historic building in Richmond. "We're very much an urban school and so we rent satellite spaces for a gymnasium and other needs. And that was part of the original mission of the school; to be urban-located, research-based, and girl-friendly," shared Davies.

Orchard House School's mission and unique environment are funded through tuition payments as well as annual fund contributions, scholarship fund contributions, and other fundraising efforts. The Board of Trustees meets monthly and ensures the financial health of the school. Tuition for the 2012-2013 school year is $16,950 (and fees). Like at GMS, Orchard House maintains an annual commitment to financial aid: "10% of the Orchard House operating budget is dedicated to funding students who fit the mission of our school and who are unable to attend without financial support. Tuition assistance awards range from 100% of tuition and fees to 30% of tuition. Tuition assistance students come from throughout the metropolitan Richmond area" (Orchard House, 2012).

Julia Morgan School for Girls was created by a group of educators, parents and members of the community at large who believed that East Bay girls would be well served by the existence of a girls' middle school. They came together in the fall of 1996 from diverse backgrounds but united in a singular vision – to create an all-girls' middle school that would: a) Challenge girls' intellectual growth, b) Celebrate girls' strong identities, c) Connect girls to inspiring adults, d) Ensure girls' full participation, and e) Empower girls to realize their dreams. In 1999, JMSG opened with a sixth grade only, en route to a full middle school division, grades sixth through eighth. "We expanded the number of students; we opened with 35 girls in sixth

grade and then the second year we had seventh grade and the third year we had eighth grade – which we hadn't planned to open," shared Debare. Currently, in 2012-13, JMSG serves 190 students with an average class size of twenty. While tuition has reached $23,500 annually, JMSG supports 40% of attending students with aid provided through their flexible tuition program.

Founding Trustee Emily Ellison began working on the **Atlanta Girls' School** project in the summer of 1997 - and was later joined by Brooke Weinmann and Candace Springer in early '98, becoming the three primary co-founders of the school. AGS opened in late-August 2000 with 98 girls in grades six through nine, eventually growing to grades six through twelve by the 2003-2004 school year. The first graduating class, 8 girls, graduated in the spring of 2004. Since, the average graduating class size is between 20 and 25 students, reaching a maximum of 30 students on year. "I think it's fair to say that we've seen some fluctuation and one of the goals is obviously to even that out; that's being tackled right now," provided Weinmann.

At AGS, the Founders and their supporters raised the seed money through individual donations, including a $250,000 gift from a local family foundation. They "casted a wider net" once other board members were added and other foundations were contacted. Before opening, AGS had raised about $3.5 million, but Weinmann warned, "If we had to do it again, it would be nice to quadruple that amount." AGS' original site was leased space in the classroom building of a Protestant church. In 2002, they later co-purchased another building with another school but were eventually bought out, and now lease the same site. The School has been resourceful in finding adequate off-site facilities for Athletics and other programs. "I have to say, with two daughters here, and wanting them to be raised with the right values and the right skills, I have

totally rationalized the non-existent, silver spoon facilities right at our doorstep," one founder shared. And their resourcefulness has paid off. Currently, in 2012-13, AGS has grown to 220 students in grades six through twelve, and their tuition has reached nearly $20,000 – poised for success in the years ahead.

Seattle Girls' School became officially incorporated in 1999 with a three person board seeking start-up funding beyond what they were able to offer as seed money. Thankfully, diligent persistence from lead founder Sharon Hamel and her team led to a $250,000 grant from the Gates Foundation – along with a promise of $250,000 if the School hit the specific goals outlines within a 12-month time period. "We not only hit the goals… we exceeded them, and we couldn't have done it without them," commented Marja Brandon, "and we had a volunteer force of instantly 50 to 100 people." To date, the school remains in its founding location and modular building, though the campus size has expanded significantly over time.

After a widespread building search throughout Seattle, the SGS team ended up leasing an unused corner of land in a tough neighborhood, resulting in the use of a modular building structure to open the school. Opening with Grade 6 only, SGS enrolled 31 girls in its 2001 founding year. The goal was 36. However, by the fourth year, SGS reached their current grade span of five through eight. At largest, SGS enrolled 130 students, with that number dipping following the 2008 economy crash. As of 2012, SGS maintained an enrollment of 110 students, reaching their desired enrollment of 105-110 students per academic year. The school is not interested in growing at this time. Most interestingly, the founding team at SGS committed to a 30-50% need-based financial aid system from the very beginning. "We have hit those numbers every single year without fail," Brandon stated proudly.

The founding team of the **Girls' School of Austin** first began communicating in 1996, but did not formally unite until 1999, and finally opened in 2002 with only five girls in the fifth and sixth grades. The schoolhouse was just that, the girls, outnumbered by their instructors, meeting in a residential home. That inaugural year, however, was a great success and convinced everyone involved that the goal of providing girls a superb education that would equip them to live distinguished lives of their choosing was within reach. As a result, the school now has a student community of over 100 girls in grades K-8, reaching their goal of approximately 12 students per class year. The current school building, purchased in 2003, is in the Tarrytown section of west Austin, an attractive neighborhood readily accessible from all parts of Austin. "Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of a parent donor, we own our campus, which was formerly part of the Austin Independent School District. The faculty no longer outnumbers the students, and it is difficult to imagine a more committed, talented group of educators," the school boasts.

Planning for the **Online School for Girls** began in the winter of 2009, and amazingly, opened just months later in the fall of 2009. Two pilot courses were taught that semester, growing to five courses in the spring of 2010. Fortunately, during the 2009-2010 year, six additional schools joined the School as consortium members, making a large commitment to the development of the School and the ability for the School to grow in its critical early years: Atlanta Girls' School (Atlanta, GA), The Ellis School (Pittsburgh, PA), Hockaday School (Dallas, TX), Marlborough School (Los Angeles, CA), St. Mary's Episcopal School (Memphis, TN), and St. Paul's School for Girls (Baltimore, MD). In addition, the School began expanding its consortium through a Charter Affiliate program, and that year, twelve schools joined the

School as Charter Affiliates, helping the network stretch to Massachusetts, Virginia, Minnesota, Louisiana, New York, and New Jersey.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the School expanded much further, including two consortium member schools and twenty-four charter affiliates. During the fall of 2010, the School began to offer its first professional development course to great success and accolades. By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, more than two-hundred teachers from four countries and twenty states had taken professional development courses – then doubled again in 2011-2012 as the School expanded student course offerings even further, adding its first Foreign Language course as well as additional arts, science, and social science courses. The School also launched OSG Summer and OSG Extension, and expanded professional development courses, including successful collaborations with the National Association of Independent Schools and the Broadway Teaching Group. And, in October of 2011, the School was given full accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

OSG expected participating from ten girls' schools and a total enrollment of 40 students to take the first six semesters worth of classes – offered at no cost – but ended up well beyond their projections. In the second year, OSG projected "90 to 100 semesters of enrollment," according to Brad, "and even lower than that to begin with because we didn't quite know how it would work as we moved to a pay model." They ended up having 135 semesters of enrollment that year. In 2011-12, OSG projected 210 enrollments and ended with well over 300; a clear success. During this time, OSG's network of school's grew to sixty. "We budgeted conservatively, but planned for aggressive growth so we could have the capacity to take on the growth that we've seen," added Rathgeber. OSG's network has exceeded eighty schools as of the conclusion of this study.

At the time of this study, **Trinity Hall** is early in its first year of operation, educating thirty young women in a leased – and renovated – campus facility appropriately meeting its needs for a limited number of years. Under direction of the founders' vision, the school strives to grow in an organized manner, eventually maintaining an enrollment of 350-400 high school students, approximately 75-100 girls per class year. Aspirations are high for a larger freshman class beginning in year two, and expanding each year. To accommodate the school's growth, in September 2013, the founders and board of trustees announced the purchase of a 63 acre farm to build out the school campus in a multi-phased project – including design plans and renderings for the academic building, gymnasium, and exterior spaces to be included in phase one. The school desires to create a bucolic campus that will adequately meet the needs and desires of their emerging community.

Fiscal Health: Operating & Endowment

To become sustainable independent schools, new school start-ups must first identify adequate funding sources – and quickly learn the strategic relationship between pricing, aid, and their consumers. Then, in a short manner of time, begin to effectively integrate the best practices of student recruitment and retention, financial aid, communication management, educational research, and marketing. They need to be disciplined; hire quality faculty and staff; annually meet enrollment goals; and have appropriate marketing strategies in operation. The degree to which the case study schools are operating in accordance with their initial business plan – and eventual strategic plan(s), is a true sign of their health.

Most independent schools maintain 501(c)(3) status from the IRS once they have been incorporated (Kennedy, 2008). This is the non-profit status that exempts the entity from federal, state and local taxes. It also permits the school to accept contributions that are, in turn, tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Some schools are set up so that parents own shares in the corporation. The ownership formulae vary, but most seem to depend on the number of children enrolled in the school (Kennedy, 2008). Most not-for-profit schools have an active board of trustees. The trustees are the mechanism by which the school is governed. Depending on how the charter is set up, its powers will be quite extensive. The Head of School at such a school is hired by the board of trustees. This governance mechanism allows the school to outlive its founder, and, all things being equal, last for generations (Kennedy, 2008).

As tax-exempt non-profit organizations, independent schools are required by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to file an income tax return annually. Form 990 is the IRS tax return form that non-profits use to report their charitable receipts for the year, allowing the IRS and the public to evaluate nonprofits and how they operate. Recent 990 updates require organizations to provide more disclosure of potential conflicts of interest, compensation of board members and staff, and other details having to do with financial accountability in an effort to eliminate fraud. However, 990's also provide insight into the fiscal health of the each school.

The most current viewable returns filed by these schools were filed in 2011 displaying all financial information related to fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011). For comparison purposes, the following indicators were measured:

A. Fiscal Year:

- Total Revenue (Form 990, Part VIII, Column (A), Line 12)
- Total Expenses (Form 990, Part IX, Column (A), Line 25)

- Excess (or Deficit) for the year (Form 990, Part XI, Line 3)
- Private Contributions / Fundraising Proceeds (Form 990, Part VIII, Column (A)
- Financial Aid Grants Amount (Form 990, Schedule I, Part III, Line 1)

B. Overall:

- Total Assets (Form 990, Part I, Line 20)
- Total Liabilities (Form 990, Part I, Line 21)
- Net Assets or Fund Balances (Form 990, Part I, Line 22)
- Endowment (Form 990, Scheduled D, Part V, Line G, Column (A))

A. Fiscal Year 2010:

	School / Employees	2010 Revenue	2010 Expenses	Excess / Deficit	Private Donations	Financial Aid / Grants
1	Archer (152)	17,044,831	17,093,647	-48,816	2,343,068	2,553,426 (111)
2	Lake Washington (15)	809,409	828,833	-19,424	142,796	76,948 (13)
3	Girls' MS (48)	4,554,287	4,790,268	-235,981	913,895	506,020 (33)
4	Orchard House (38)	1,481,559	1,524,409	-42,850	194,153	126,569 (12)
5	Julia Morgan (42)	3,420,740	3,377,740	43,000	278,403	N/A
6	Atlanta Girls' (109)	5,284,917	5,251,308	33,609	1,016,817	630,435 (71)
7	Seattle Girls' (58)	2,816,156	2,723,585	92,571	888,745	N/A
8	Girls' Austin (22)	1,532,822	1,479,026	53,796	185,542	N/A
9	Online School (1)	324,549	278,919	45,630	89,500	N/A
10	Trinity Hall (0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Average:	**$4,141,030**	**$4,149,748**	**-$8,718**	**$672,546**	**$778,680**

With 430 students and 152 employees, Archer has clearly grown to become the largest school in this study. Fittingly, their revenue, expenses, donations, and grants awarded, are at the top of every list. However, despite a healthy enrollment and an impressive commitment to

financial aid (11 grants awarded), Archer ended the 2010 fiscal year at a financial loss (of $48,816) – as did three other schools reviewed. Ending each year with a positively balanced budget is a common struggle for independent schools as well as colleges and universities, for that matter. Girls' Middle School ended with a deficit of $235,981 in 2010, the highest in this sample. On the other side, Seattle Girls' School ended 2010 with a surplus of $92,571, a great feat for a school at their maximum desired enrollment of approximately 110 students. The second largest school, Atlanta Girls' School (220 students, 109 employees) had a fiscally sound year, ending with a surplus $33,609 after providing 71 financial aid grants totaling $630,435.

B. Overall:

	School / Employees	Total Assets	Total Liabilities	Net Assets or Balances	Endowment
1	Archer (152)	43,669,493	23,860,793	19,808,700	5,271,919
2	Lake Washington (15)	318,526	134,285	184,241	N/A
3	Girls' MS (48)	7,523,275	4,454,071	3,069,204	1,783,193
4	Orchard House (38)	2,338,106	1,051,606	1,286,500	N/A
5	Julia Morgan (42)	5,633,816	1,926,509	3,707,307	371,390
6	Atlanta Girls' (109)	5,433,693	4,053,161	1,380,532	935,127
7	Seattle Girls' (58)	7,698,247	1,140,294	6,557,953	4,234,935
8	Girls' Austin (22)	4,349,830	1,206,274	3,143,556	N/A
9	Online School (1)	285,464	0	285,464	N/A
10	Trinity Hall (0)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Average:	**$8,583,383**	**$4,202,999**	**$4,380,384**	**$2,519,313**

Resulting from its beautiful and historic building and campus on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, Archer's 2010 asset total of $43,669,493 (and net asset total of $19,808,700) dwarfs the reporting figures of the other eight schools in this sample. To support their continued growth

and fiscal health, the endowment has reached $5,271,919, a high number for a still young independent school. In contrast, Lake Washington Girls Middle School, the smallest traditional school in this sample at fifteen employees, has a 2010 asset total of $318,526 (and net asset total of $184,241).

Implications

*The Bigger Picture: National Girls' Schools Data**

*Single-Sex Education Profile Comparison between 1995 to 2011***

INDICATORS PROFILE	1995	2011
School Count	68	85
Total Enrollment	25,346	40,736
Average Enrollment	373	479
Median Enrollment	342	439
Total Enrollment of Students of Color	4,250	11,291
Enrollment of Students of Color as % Total Enrollment	18.0%	28.5%
Percentage of African American Students	6.3%	7.4%
Percentage of Hispanic American Students	3.0%	5.2%
Percentage of Asian American Students	8.5%	8.3%
Percentage of Native American Students	0.2%	0.1%
Percentage of Pacific Islander American Students	-	0.5%
Percentage of Multiracial American Students	-	5.9%
Percentage of Middle Eastern American Students	-	1.1%
Percentage of International Students	3.1%	2.2%
Percentage of Unsure about diversity	-	3.4%
Percentage of European American Students	78.9%	65.8%
Median % of Students on Financial Aid	18.1%	24.3%
Median Financial Aid Grant	$ 6,335	$ 13,954
Median Financial Aid as % of budget expense	8.7%	13.6%
Median Financial Aid as % of budget income	11.1%	14.6%
Average Median Tuition (All Grades) Day	$ 9,135	$ 23,119
Average Median Tuition (All Grades) Boarding	$ 19,567	$ 43,300
Median Total Expenses per student	$ 12,736	$ 25,655
Median Total Income per student	$ 12,787	$ 26,330

Median Endowment per student	$ 12,102	$ 29,915
Median Annual Giving per student	$ 1,023	$ 1,905
Median Capital Giving per student	$ -	$ 4,448
Admissions Funnel Ratios: Inquiries per Enrollee	8.3	6.6
Admissions Funnel Ratios: Applications per Enrollee	2.2	2.6
Admissions Funnel Ratios: Acceptances per Enrollee	1.4	1.6
Median Acceptances per Applications	1.4	1.5
Median Student Attrition Rate	-	6.10
Median Class Size Grades: Pre-School	14	15
Median Class Size Grades: K – 5	18	16
Median Class Size Grades: 6 – 8	15	15
Median Class Size Grades: 9 – 12	14	14
Median Class Size: Grades: Total Average	15	15
Median Student/Full-Time Equivalence Teacher Ratio	8.8	8.3
Median Student/Full-Time Equivalence Instructional Support	76.4	59.2
Median Student/Full-Time Equivalence Administrator Ratio	40.2	25.9
Median Student/Full-Time Equivalence Other Staff Ratio	0.0	20.5
Median Student/Full-Time Equivalence Total Staff Ratio	6.7	4.4
Average Number of Faculty	45	61
Average Number of Instructional Support	7	11
Average Number of Administrative Staff	10	21
Average Number of Other Staff	22	33
Average Number of Staff	83	123

** Independent School facts for NAIS Member girls' schools that responded to the Annual StatsOnline Statistics Survey from the 1989-90 to 2010-11 academic years.*

*** Statistics are based upon the schools that provided information for each specific survey. Not all schools responded to every single category. Blanks represent data not collected or not available. Dashes indicate data not submitted or collected. Extreme data outliers have been removed.*

In 2011, the average enrollment of the eighty-five schools sampled reached a near-high of 479 (three fewer than the 2010 record high of 482). This compared to an average of 373 in 1995, totaling an increase of over one-hundred students per school over this sixteen-year period (22% of enrollment). Girls' schools enrollment is on the rise, and as a result, schools are increasing

faculty and staff. The average number of employees at girls' schools in 1995 was eighty-three, but has reached one hundred and twenty three employees per school in 2011.

In alignment with the commitment to diversity every school in this study has emphasized, the enrollment of students of color in independent girls' schools has increased dramatically, from 18.0% of total enrollment in 1995 to 28.5% of total enrollment in 2011, a jump of 10.5% in the schools sampled. Part of this growth stems from many schools' emphasis on affordability, with the median percentage of students on financial aid having increased by 6.2% (18.1% to 24.3%). However, since median annual tuitions have increased from $9,135 to $23,119 per school year, the median financial aid grant has more than doubled, from $6,335 to $13,954.

What to Expect

As they have since the inception of formal schooling in our country, single-sex schools will remain a significant and available educational option in the United States. Interestingly, contrary to the majority of girls' schools being independently operated in the 20th century, the 21st century will bring a greater number of public (district and charter) single-sex schools, primarily in metropolitan areas. This shift is already being observed in New York, Newark, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles, and will continue in these cities and elsewhere as brain research and satisfaction studies continue to support gender-separated instruction and the all-girls learning environment.

As previously noted, according to the National Association of Single-Sex Public Education (NASSPE), in March 2002 when the organization was founded only a dozen or so public schools offered single-gender classrooms. Then, in a ten year span, at least approximately

500 additional public schools in the United States offered single-sex educational opportunities. The majority of those schools are coed schools which offer single-sex classrooms, but which retain at least some coed activities." NASSPE admits that in some cases, the only coeducational activities were "lunch and one or two electives," so as they say, "the distinction between a single-sex school, and a coed school with single-sex classrooms, can become a matter for debate" (NASSPE, 2012). Therefore though legislation has not had a significant impact on the growth of independent all-girls or all-boys schools, it certainly has – and will continue – to promote growth in the public sector. Single-sex schools and single-gender programs in schools are legal and often effective, and as a result, we will continue to see growth during the 21st century.

As Ilana DeBare eloquently and appropriately documents in the final chapter titled "Girls' Schools Today" in *Where Girls Come First: The Rise, Fall, and Surprising Revival of Girls' Schools*, the following defining characteristics of contemporary girls' schools feed into the reasons why many students and parents will continue to select all-girls schools over coeducational options well into the future:

1. Girls play all the roles.
2. Girls are freed from the constant pressure to please boys.
3. Girls are valued for brains and heart, not just looks.
4. Girls' schools allow their students to stay girls a little longer.
5. Teachers can focus on the specific educational needs of girls.
6. Girls' schools tend to include more girls and women in their curriculum.
7. Girls' schools can directly address the most difficult social issues facing young women.
8. Girls can build strong female friendships, free from competition over boys.

The advantage that new 21st century girls' schools have over longstanding institutions is highlighted in DeBare's *Trade-offs and Pitfalls* chapter: "Some schools still carry cultural legacies from their past that are at cross-purposes with their goal of preparing girls for a twenty-first century world." New schools do not have to live up to past legacies of finishing schools and polite accomplishments, and instead strive to turn out "smart, capable young women who have the confidence to be leaders" (DeBare, 2004).

She summarizes, "There's more to girls' school counterculture than just building self-esteem, teaching calculus, or turning out basketball stars. Girls' schools and women's colleges turn the world on its head. In this one very small place and time, women are the center. This is a world where the pronoun of default is *she*, not *he*. It's a world where the president is a woman, the editor is a woman, the team captain is a woman. It's a world where female friendships are valued and important. This is all profoundly different from everyday life in the rest of America" (DeBare, 2004).

In summary, the data analysis in this study has enabled me to identify the following assumptions for the decades ahead:

- Single-sex schools (and single-gender programs in schools) are legal and often effective, and as a result, we will continue to see growth during the 21st century.
- Though recent legislation has not had a significant impact on the growth of independent all-girls or all-boys schools, it certainly has – and will continue – to promote growth in the public sector.

- The continued revival of independent girls' schools will be supported by further brain research and satisfaction studies continuing to support gender-separated instruction and the all-girls learning environment.
- Girls' schools will be a leader in the innovation of effective instruction, learning, and school design, among all categories of schools.
- These new girls' schools will inspire other capable leaders to follow in their footsteps – and make it happen in their communities.

All school founders talk about the "energy" behind the opening of a new school. Through this research, and through firsthand experiences during the opening of Trinity Hall, I have come to learn, see, and feel the variety of simultaneous variables that make up this energy – a combination of drive, excitement, collaboration, and resiliency, with the necessities of wisdom, talent, and generosity. It takes remarkable people and immeasurable time, but the outcomes are undeniably worthwhile. The possibility to educate a lifetime of children under a mission and philosophy you believe in, exists. The possibility of transforming the educational landscape of a city or community, is a reality. In girls' schools, students are taught to learn and grow without ceilings. During girls' schools start-ups, founders are forced to operate with persistency – and without a plan B, keeping their eye on the goal at all times. They feel it is an honor to be building an institution meant to outlast their own lifetimes – something bigger than themselves as individuals. It's a lesson, really. Girls' schools foster leadership through opportunities and exposure. And when exposing students to great women (and men) leaders, they should start no further than their own founders.

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4. Orchard House School, Richmond, VA – 1998; http://orchardhouse.org/
5. Julia Morgan School, Oakland, CA – 1999; http://www.juliamorganschool.org/
6. Atlanta Girls School, Atlanta, GA – 2000; http://www.atlantagirlsschool.org/
7. Seattle Girls' School, Seattle, WA – 2001; http://www.seattlegirlsschool.org/
8. Girls' School of Austin, Austin, TX – 2002; http://www.thegirlsschool.org/
9. Online School for Girls, Bethesda, MD – 2009; http://www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/
10. Trinity Hall, Middletown, NJ – 2013; http://www.trinityhallnj.org/

Interview Subjects

1. Marja Brandon, Founding Head, Seattle Girls' School

   Interview Date, 2/15/12 *Consent Received: 2/7/12*

2. Brad Rathgeber, Founding Head, Online School for Girls

   Interview Date, 2/16/12 *Consent Received: 2/4/12*

3. Emily Ellison and Brooke Weinmann, Founding Trustees, Atlanta Girls School

   Interview Date, 2/16/12 *Consent Received: 2/10/12 (E.E) & 2/15/12 (B.W)*

4. Amy Lowrey, Founding Trustee, Girls' School of Austin

   Interview Date, 2/23/12 *Consent Received: 2/23/12*

5. Ilana DeBare, Founding Trustee, Julia Morgan School for Girls

   Interview Date, 2/28/12 Consent Received: 2/28/12

6. Patricia Hearn, Founding Head, Lake Washington Girls' Middle School

   Interview Date, 3/8/12 Consent Received: 3/8/12

7. Nancy Davies, Founding Head, Orchard House School

   Interview Date, 3/19/12 Consent Received: 3/20/12

8. Diana Meehan, Founding Trustee, Archer School for Girls

   Written Interview Date, 2/17/12, Consent Received: 2/14/12

***** *No interview occurred for* ***Girls' Middle School****. Phone calls/emails not returned.*

** *No formal interview for* ***Trinity Hall****. First-hand accounts noted and shared by researcher James Palmieri, Founding Consultant and Assistant Head of School, including documented quotes by Mary Sciarrillo, Founding Head of School.*

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APPENDIX A

Notice of Exemption from IRB Review

Including Approved Participant Assent and Consent Forms

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza, Cook Campus
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

December 5, 2011

P.I. Name: Palmieri
Protocol #: E12-315

James Ryan Palmieri
843 Mountain Ave
New Providence NJ 07974

Dear James Ryan Palmieri:

Notice of Exemption from IRB Review

Protocol Title: "21st Century Girls' Schools: For What Reasons Are New Independent Girls' Schools Opening in the U.S.?"

The project identified above has been approved for exemption under one of the six categories noted in 45 CFR 46, and as noted below:

Exemption Date: 11/21/2011 **Exempt Category:** 2,4

This exemption is based on the following assumptions:

- **This Approval** - The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted.
- **Reporting** – ORSP must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or problems that arise, in the course of your research;
- **Modifications** – Any proposed changes MUST be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation;
- **Consent Form (s)** – Each person who signs a consent document will be given a copy of that document, if you are using such documents in your research. The Principal Investigator must retain all signed documents for at least three years after the conclusion of the research;

Additional Notes: **None**

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.

The Federalwide Assurance (FWA) number for Rutgers University IRB is FWA00003913; this number may be requested on funding applications or by collaborators.

Sincerely yours,

acting for

Sheryl Goldberg
Director of Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
gibel@grants.rutgers.edu

cc: Bruce Baker

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Graduate School of Education: Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration

21st Century Girls' Schools:
For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the US?

Primary Investigator: James R. Palmieri, Ed.D. Student
Committee Chair: Dr. Bruce Baker, Associate Professor

ASSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by James Palmieri, who is a doctoral student in the Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration Department at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research study is to determine of how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years.

In addition to taking notes, I will be tape recording this session in an effort to maintain accuracy in my transcription of the dialogue. However, only my faculty chair and I will have access to this tape. This discussion is confidential and any information will be solely used for research purposes. Because the questions posed during the research project are strictly focused on the school – not the interviewee – your identity is only pertinent to the extent you feel that it is important for conveying information regarding your institution's origins, and may remain confidential if you so choose. Any quotations from the interview to be used in the final dissertation document or subsequent publications and any identifying information will be provided to you for your approval prior to use.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. In addition, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact me by email (jpalmi04@yahoo.com) or by phone (516-330-7299). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

ASSENT

You will be given a copy of this assent form for your records.

_____ Yes, I agree to be a study subject based on these procedures.

_____ No, I do not agree with the consent form and wish not to participate in this project.

APPROVED
Date: 11/21/11

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Graduate School of Education: Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration

21st Century Girls' Schools:
For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the US?

Primary Investigator: James R. Palmieri, Ed.D. Student
Committee Chair: Dr. Bruce Baker, Associate Professor

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by James Palmieri, who is a doctoral student in the Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration Department at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research study is to determine of how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States.

A founding board member - or a founding head of school - of each of the ten schools identified for this study will be requested for an interview in order to determine similarities and differences behind the reasoning for opening new girls' schools. The study procedures include one 20-30 minute interview. I will be asking you some questions regarding the founding process and any knowledge you might have regarding the challenges faced both before and after opening day.

In addition to taking notes, I will be tape recording this session in an effort to maintain accuracy in my transcription of the dialogue. However, only my faculty chair and I will have access to this tape. This discussion is confidential and any information will be solely used for research purposes. Because the questions posed during the research project are strictly focused on the school – not the interviewee – your identity is only pertinent to the extent you feel that it is important for conveying information regarding your institution's origins, and may remain confidential if you so choose. Any quotations from the interview to be used in the final dissertation document or subsequent publications and any identifying information will be provided to you for your approval prior to use.

The goal of the questions will be to help determine if your school fits in any, some or all of the following categories:

1. Was the school founded to fill a void in the educational market within the city?
2. Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings?
3. Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States?
4. Was the school founded to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?
5. Are there additional founding reasons shared by school in this study that may be worth of further analysis?

This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes your name, connection to the school – including years, as well as a personal commentary on the school's founding process (resulting from the questions posed).

Subject Initials & Date _____

APPROVED
Date: 11/21/11

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All data will be stored in a locked safe and will be kept for three years.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. In addition, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact me by email (jpalmi04@yahoo.com) or by phone (516-330-7299). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Subject (Print) _____

Subject Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator _____ Date _____

APPROVED
Date: 11/21/11

AUDIO TAPE ADDENDUM TO CONSENT FORM

You have already agreed to participate in a research study entitled: *21st Century Girls' Schools: For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the US*, being conducted by James Palmieri. I am asking for your permission to allow me to use audiotape (sound) as part of that research study. You do not have to agree to be recorded in order to participate.

As you are now aware, the purpose of this study is to gain a better of understanding of how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States. In addition to taking notes, I will be tape recording this session in an effort to maintain accuracy in my transcription of the dialogue. However, only my faculty chair and I will have access to this tape. This discussion is confidential and any information will be solely used for research purposes. Because the questions posed during the research project are strictly focused on the school – not the interviewee – your identity is only pertinent to the extent you feel that it is important for conveying information regarding your institution's origins, and may remain confidential if you so choose. Any quotations from the interview to be used in the final dissertation document or subsequent publications and any identifying information will be provided to you for your approval prior to use.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years.

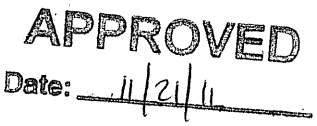
There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. In addition, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

Your signature on this form grants the investigator named above permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced study. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

Subject (Print) _____

Subject Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator _____ Date _____



APPENDIX B

Dissertation Research Interview Guide

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Graduate School of Education
Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration

DISSERTATION RESEARCH INTERVIEW GUIDE

21st Century Girls' Schools:
For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the United States?

Primary Investigator: James R. Palmieri, Ed.D. Student

Committee Chair: Dr. Bruce Baker

Introductory Comments:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. As you are now aware, the purpose of this study is to gain a better of understanding of how and for what reasons new independent elementary and secondary girls' schools are opening in the United States. As a participant in the founding of a new and accredited independent girls' school within the last two decades, I will be asking you some questions regarding the founding process and any knowledge you might have regarding the challenges faced both before and after opening day. Please answer these questions honestly and to the best of your ability, there are no wrong answers. If you find any of these questions difficult or discomforting, you may chose not to answer.

Confidentiality Statement:

In addition to taking notes, I will be tape recording this session in an effort to maintain accuracy in my transcription of the dialogue. However, only my faculty chair and I will have access to this tape. This discussion is confidential and any information will be solely used for research purposes. Because the questions posed during the research project are strictly focused on the school – not the interviewee – your identity is only pertinent to the extent you feel that it is important for conveying information regarding your institution's origins, and may remain confidential if you so choose. Any quotations from the interview to be used in the final dissertation document or subsequent publications and any identifying information will be provided to you for your approval prior to use.

Opening Question:

- Please state the name of the school at which you participated as a founding member.

General Questions:

- What year did the planning begin? What year did the school open?
- What grade levels does the school serve? What this always the case?

Guided Domain Questions:

- Who was involved in the opening of this school? Names are not important.
- Why a girls school in _____ (city, state)?
- Was research on gender differences a driving force? If so, why did the founders find all-girls' schooling so appealing? Were any established girls schools used as a model for this school? What factors were the driving force behind the original mission statement?
- Was the educational market of _____ (city, state) and its surrounding communities reviewed and considered when opening the school? If so, who conducted the research and what information was found to help determine a need? If not, how did the founders plan on enrolling students during the school's first years of existence?
- What were the biggest challenges faced in opening the school? Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the United States?
- How was the original curriculum developed and approved? Were any specific measures taken to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?
- Who were the heroes of the school opening? What were their roles in making the school a reality?
- How was the school name selected and approved?

Additional Questions:

- How did the school fare in the first few years? Was this better, worse or as expected?
- Were there specific enrollment, financial and operational goals set to determine the success of the opening?

APPENDIX C

Methodology Chart (Extended)

Methodology Chart (Extended)

Question: **For what reasons are new independent girls' schools opening in the US?**					
DATA	**Sub-Question 1** **Was the school founded to fill a void in the educational market within the city?**	**Sub-Question 2** **Was the school founded based on research highlighting the benefits of all-girls educational settings?**	**Sub-Question 3** **Was the school founded as a result of policy changes related to the governance of single-sex education in the US?**	**Sub-Question 4** **Was the school founded to accommodate gender differences in learning styles?**	**Sub-Question 5** **Are there additional founding reasons shared by schools in this study that may be worthy of further analysis?**
A. **Mission and Philosophy** ***Source*** **School Websites**	**The Archer School for Girls** A1: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127149 **Lake Washington Girls Middle School** A2: www.lwgms.org/mission-vision/ **Girls' Middle School** A3: www.girlsms.org/about/philosophy **Orchard House School** A4: www.orchardhouse.org/about/philosophy.php **Julia Morgan School for Girls** A5: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Our-Mission.html **Atlanta Girls School** A6: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/mission_and_vision **Seattle Girls' School** A7: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/mission.php **Girls' School of Austin** A8: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/vision.php **Online School for Girls** A9: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/about/our-mission **Trinity Hall** A10: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/missionandvision				
B. **History & Founders Interviews** ***Sources Listed***	**The Archer School for Girls** B1: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127149 Interview with Diana Meehan, School Founder **Lake Washington Girls Middle School** B2: www.lwgms.org/our-history/ Interview with Patricia Hearn, Founding Head of School				

	Girls' Middle School B3: www.girlsms.org/about/our-history No interview conducted. All required information obtained from the school's website and related materials. **Orchard House School** B4: www.orchardhouse.org/about/history.php Interview with Nancy Davies, Founding Head of School **Julia Morgan School for Girls** B5: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/History.html Interview with Ilana DeBare, Founding Trustee **Atlanta Girls' School** B6: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/podium/default.aspx?t=119498 Interview with Emily Ellison and Brook Weinmann, School Founders **Seattle Girls' School** B7: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/history.php Interview with Marja Brandon, Founding Head of School **Girls' School of Austin** B8: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/history.php Interview with Amy Lowrey, Founding Trustee **Online School for Girls** B9: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/community/our-schools Interview with Brad Rathgeber, Founding Head of School (Director) **Trinity Hall** B10: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/ourstory No formal interview conducted. First-hand accounts by researcher James Palmieri, Founding Consultant and Assistant Head of School.
C. Marketing Materials ***Sources Listed***	**The Archer School for Girls** C1a: Why a Girls' School: www.archer.org/podium/default.aspx?t=127153 C1b: Admissions Site: www.archer.org/admissions C1c: Viewbook: www.danielin.com/archer/emagz/viewbook/ **Lake Washington Girls' Middle School** C2a: Why a Girls' School: www.lwgms.org/why-a-girls-school/ C2b: Admissions Site: www.lwgms.org/admissions/ C2c: Viewbook: www.lwgms.org/storage/admissions/ViewbookPROOF.swf **Girls' Middle School** C3a: All Girls Education: www.girlsms.org/about/all-girls-schools C3b: Admissions Site: www.girlsms.org/admission C3c: STEM: www.girlsms.org/about/stem-program C3d: Uniquely GMS: www.girlsms.org/uniquely-gms **Orchard House School** C4a: Why a Girls' School: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/whygirls.php C4b: Admissions Site: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/index.php C4c: Viewbook: www.orchardhouse.org/admissions/index.php **Julia Morgan School for Girls** C5a: Why a Girls' School: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Why-a-Girls-School.html

	C5b: Admissions Site: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/Admission-Category/How-to-Apply.html C5c: Video Doc: www.juliamorganschool.org/index.php/About-the-School/Video-Documentary-no-editor.html **Atlanta Girls' School** C6a: Why a Girls' School: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/why_a_girls_school C6b: Admissions: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/podium/default.aspx?t=111127 C6c: AGS411: http://ags411.org/ C6d: Portrait of the AGS Graduate: www.atlantagirlsschool.org/portrait **Seattle Girls' School** C7a: Why Girls' Education: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/why-girls-education.php C7b: Admissions Site: www.seattlegirlsschool.org/admissions.php **Girls' School of Austin** C8a: Why a Girls' School: www.thegirlsschool.org/about/why.php C8b: Admissions Site: www.thegirlsschool.org/admissions/ **Online School for Girls** C9a: Why a Girls' School: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/about C9b: Admissions: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/admissions/admissions-process-apply-now C9c: What Our Students Say: www.onlineschoolforgirls.org/community/our-students/video-test-page **Trinity Hall** C10a: Why an all-girls school: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/why-an-all-girls-school C10b: In the Catholic tradition: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/catholic-tradition C10c: Admissions: http://www.trinityhallnj.org/admissions
D. Financial Statements ***Source*** **2010 Form 990's**	**The Archer School for Girls** D1: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/954/463/2010-954463705-06c2860d-9.pdf **Lake Washington Girls Middle School** D2: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments//2010/911/835/2008-911835055-047a88a0-9.pdf **Girls' Middle School** D3: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/943/253/2009-943253594-061427ee-9.pdf **Orchard House School** D4: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/541/902/2010-541902937-06cdeae6-9.pdf **Julia Morgan School for Girls** D5: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments//2010/943/285/2010-943285524-06cde1a8-9.pdf **Atlanta Girls' School** D6: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/582/408/2010-582408353-0743c3c9-9.pdf **Seattle Girls' School** D7: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/912/007/2010-912007300-073c74bb-9.pdf **Girls' School of Austin** D8: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/742/963/2009-742963379-060afc33-9.pdf **Online School for Girls** D9: http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/270/417/2010-270417089-069b4373-9.pdf **Trinity Hall** Not yet published.

E. Contextual Data	National Association of Independent Schools: *Annual StatsOnline Statistics Survey* (All academic years between 1989-1990 and 2010-2011)