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Abstract

This mixed-methods study began with a survey sent to all CSI superintendents followed up by interviews with a purposeful sample of six school leaders to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families. Analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data was done with the intention of gaining a deeper understanding of the current relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families and to understand the benefits and barriers of the given relationship models. The results of the study suggest that nearly 60% of Christian schools surveyed are choosing some form of relationship with homeschool families, and for many of those schools, the benefits that come with the relationship outweigh the barriers. While the study does not give enough evidence to prove that having an inclusive relationship between Christian schools and home school families is a best practice, it does offer many recommendations for schools who would like to explore the possibility of an inclusive or partially inclusive relationship.

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Action Research Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

Christian School Relationships with Homeschool Families

By

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B.A. Dordt University, 2002

Action Research Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Education

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Dordt College
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Table of Contents

Title Page	1
Table of Contents	2
List of Tables	3
List of Figures	4
Abstract	5
Introduction	6
Literature Review	9
Methodology	21
Results	24
Discussion	49
References	61
Appendixes	65
Appendix A: Online Survey	65
Appendix B: Interview Questions	68
Appendix C: Research-Based Benefits and Barriers	69

List of Tables

Table	Page
1. Research Participant Demographics	22
2. Depiction of Participating Schools.....	26
3. Depiction of Fully Inclusive Schools	27
4. Depiction of Partially Inclusive Schools	28
5. Depiction of Exclusive Schools	29
6. Relationship Model Percentages Based on Types of School Systems	30
7. Relationship Model Percentages Based on Numbers of Students.....	30
8. Relationship Model Percentages Based on Locations.....	31
9. Mean Response to Benefits of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship	33
10. Mean Response to Barriers of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship.....	34

List of Figures

Figure	Page
1. Satisfaction Level with Current Relationship Model	35

Abstract

This mixed-methods study began with a survey sent to all CSI superintendents followed up by interviews with a purposeful sample of six school leaders to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families. Analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data was done with the intention of gaining a deeper understanding of the current relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families and to understand the benefits and barriers of the given relationship models. The results of the study suggest that nearly 60% of Christian schools surveyed are choosing some form of relationship with homeschool families, and for many of those schools, the benefits that come with the relationship outweigh the barriers. While the study does not give enough evidence to prove that having an inclusive relationship between Christian schools and home school families is a best practice, it does offer many recommendations for schools who would like to explore the possibility of an inclusive or partially inclusive relationship.

“Schools today are increasingly market driven, and public schools are competing for students with numerous other educational options” (Dahlquist et al., 2006, p. 354). Included in these options are charter schools, partial day schools, micro schools, homeschool coops, and dual enrollment. Many of these options developed from the homeschool movement which has seen significant growth over the past five decades. A movement that began with a small group of families in the 60s that hid their children in their houses for fear of being caught grew to over one million students by 1998 and 2.4 million students by 2020 (Cooper & Sureau, 2007; Farris & Woodruff, 2000; Tilhou, 2020).

Researchers have studied this homeschool movement to understand why families are choosing this educational option and what makes it so successful. The success of the homeschool movement is evident in research results which revealed that homeschool families were often distinguished by high academic achievement and family characteristics (Farris & Woodruff, 2000, p. 238). A study done by Rudner in 1998 indicated that homeschool students not only compared favorably with other forms of private education, but also achieved scores surpassing those of students in private or Catholic schools at every level (Farris & Woodruff, 2000, p. 238; Rudner, 1999).

This success led researchers to recognize that “the homeschool movement—frequently left out of the conversation about education—has much to teach us about creating more customized and effective school systems aimed at producing better outcomes for students” (Hirsh, 2019, p. 1). These diverse homeschooling families shaped society as they took “innovative approaches to redesigning education—forming partnerships with districts, organizing themselves into collaboratives, and finding ways to promote equity” (Hirsh, 2019, p. 1).

Statement of the Problem

With the success of the homeschool movement, traditional day schools must decide what type of relationship they want to have with this community. History shows that the relationship between homeschool families and public schools has gone through contentions that have led to cooperation and the forming of partnerships (Knowles, 1989). Although homeschool policies vary from state to state, cooperation is evident in districts that offer programs such as dual enrollment, extracurricular participation, and homeschool assistance programs (Hirsh, 2019). While there are many studies that give evidence of this relationship, there is little information available regarding the relationship between homeschool families and Christian schools. The purpose of this study was to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families.

Research Questions

The questions that shaped this study included the following:

1. What relationship models exist between Christian schools and homeschool families?
2. What are the perceived benefits of these models for Christian schools?
3. What are the perceived benefits of these models for homeschool families?
4. What are the perceived barriers to these models for Christian schools?
5. What are the perceived barriers to these models for homeschool families?

Definition of Terms

To understand the current literature, a basic understanding of key terms is necessary. Unless otherwise stated, all definitions are from the author of the current study.

Charter School – “Independently-operated public schools that have the freedom to design classrooms that meet their students’ needs” (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, n.d.).

District Extracurricular Participation – Policies for the availability of public-school opportunities vary by state, but in many states students can participate in sports, theater, arts, and other extracurricular activities and complete core curriculum at home (Hirsh, 2019, p. 3).

Dual Enrollment Program – A program that allows families to “make decisions about curriculum (choosing to use either district materials or their own), assessment, visits with supervising teachers, and the type of support desired” (Johnson, 2013, p. 304).

Enrichment Program – A program that is designed to challenge students who excel with typical classroom material.

Exclusive Relationship Model – Classes, sports and extracurriculars, and school events are reserved for those who are enrolled as students at the school.

Fully Inclusive Relationship Model – Homeschool students are invited to be involved in all aspects of school including signing up for individual classes, taking part in sports and extracurriculars, and participating in school events such as retreats and field trips.

Home Instruction – “Instruction provided in the home, by educational personnel, for children with special needs” (Wearne, 2019, p. 298).

Home Study – A full time program where curriculum is prescribed by the district and teachers give assistance (Johnson, 2013, p. 303).

Homeschool Assistance Program – This program allows homeschool families to “access district resources on an a la carte basis” (Hirsh, 2019, p. 4).

Homeschool Co-op – Collaboration by homeschool families to provide enrichment activities for students and support groups for parents (Hirsh, 2019, p. 3).

Homeschooling – “The parent-directed practice of educating one’s own children rather than attending formal schooling” (Tilhou, 2020, p. 75).

Hybrid School – A blending of the parent teaching at home with formal schooling that can take place in cooperative meeting places, church buildings, homes, and other places (Thomas, 2019).

Micro School – A small school that creates a customized experience for students by blending home instruction with technology, personalized instruction, and a high level of family and community engagement (Hirsh, 2019, p. 4).

Partial Day School – Also referred to as a hybrid model, it allows students to attend school one or two days a week and be homeschooled the rest of the week giving students the best of both worlds—the flexibility of homeschooling along with opportunities of traditional school (Hirsh, 2019, p. 3).

Partially Inclusive Relationship Model – Homeschool students are invited to be involved in some aspects of school whether it is individual classes, sports and extracurriculars, or school events.

Literature Review

As of 2020, approximately 2.4 million children were involved in homeschooling (Tilhou, 2020). “It appears that homeschooling is continuing to grow and will do so into the foreseeable future,” and with “the positive outcomes that empirical research shows are related to homeschooling, the movement and school choice is likely to continue to expand” (Ray, 2017, p. 617). The growth of homeschooling has led educators to consider the motivators behind other educational options to determine if they want to take an “inclusive or exclusive stance toward homeschool children and their families” (Dahlquist et al., 2006, p. 354). With the growth of the homeschool movement as a customized and effective school system, it is important for Christian schools to consider what relationship they want to have with homeschool families. The following literature review will examine the relationships that homeschool entities have had with other organizations in the past.

Homeschooling has become a more accepted and less controversial form of education that many people have chosen for a variety of reasons (Gaither, 2009). While the reasons can be complex, Mayberry and Knowles (1989) reported frequently cited reasons were that parents did not want the public school to be in control of their child's education, they desired to protect children from unwanted ideologies and influences, and they desired family unity (p. 221). While the study by Knowles is dated, the findings have been corroborated by others many times during the last three decades (Dahlquist et al., 2006; Jolly et al., 2013; Webb, 1997). Webb (1997) shared that homeschooling parents continue to be motivated by concerns about public schools including the quality of instruction, curriculum chosen, textbooks used, and values taught. A study by Dahlquist et al. (2006) reported that along with these reasons, parents were also motivated by a flexible lifestyle, family closeness, more opportunities for hands-on learning, the ability to accommodate individual learning needs, and advances in technology which allowed access to a world of information and support. Jolly et al. (2013) added that many families with gifted students ended up homeschooling after failed attempts to work in collaboration with the school. For many conservative Christians, private schools were not the answer due to issues of cost, disagreeing with the theology, negative experiences with principals or teachers, and a feeling that the private school could not meet their needs (Gaither, 2009).

Regardless of the reasons that have led families to choose homeschooling, numerous studies over the past 35 years show that these parents and children have experienced many benefits and successes. A nationwide study completed by Rudner in 1998 indicated that homeschool students' scores were at or above the level of peers in public and private schools with the median in the 70th to 80th percentile (Rudner, 1999). A similar result was recognized by Ray (2010) who also found that, along with academic benefits, homeschool children experienced

social and emotional benefits in ways that could not be experienced in a traditional school setting. The Ray (2004) study of homeschool adults found adults who were active in their local communities and churches, civically engaged, tolerant of other viewpoints, and “very positive about their homeschool experiences” (p. 9). The most recent longitudinal study completed by Harvard researchers focused on outcomes beyond academics found that homeschoolers “were more likely to report subsequently greater character strengths and fewer risky health behaviors” as compared to public school students including volunteering more often, being quicker to forgive, and attending religious services more frequently (Chen et al., 2021, p. 11). Each of these studies had limitations due to not being controlled experiments, but as Rudner (1999) wrote, this “simply shows that those parents choosing to make a commitment to home schooling are able to provide a very successful academic environment” (p. 34).

Other benefits of homeschooling reported by Romanowski (2001) included close family relationships, the ability to adjust curriculum and instruction, flexibility with no time constraint, opportunities to teach values and character, and the ability to embrace teachable moments. The homeschool educators surveyed by Dahlquist et al. (2006) also enjoyed flexibility, increased time with children, freedom to choose the curriculum, ability to teach values and morals, and freedom to pace instruction based on a child’s needs.

While many benefits of homeschooling have been realized, there are also drawbacks. In the study done by Dahlquist et al. (2006), parent educators indicated that the biggest disadvantages of homeschooling included the sacrifice of time, the cost to educate at home, and handling self-discipline. Critics of homeschooling suggested that homeschooled students lacked exposure to diverse beliefs, they had a sheltered social environment, there was not enough emphasis on study skills, and the home educator was not able to provide a well-rounded

education (Romanowski, 2001). Ray (2013) countered critics by saying that none of the people who actively opposed homeschooling or promoted state control over homeschooling offered any empirically based evidence that home education is bad for the children, families, neighborhoods, or the collective good. Research does not show that the home educated are disadvantaged—compared to those in institutional schools—academically, socially, emotionally, or psychologically, or in terms of thriving in adulthood. (p. 333)

Understanding the reasons why families choose to homeschool helps shed light on the history of the relationship between homeschoolers and other entities. The very first form of homeschooling during the early pioneer days of America started out of necessity (Johnson, 2013). In contrast, Gaither (2009) explained that homeschooling which emerged in the 70s was “the use of the home to educate as a deliberate act of political protest against, and alternative to, formal educational institutions” (p. 332).

Throughout its history, homeschooling has had changing relationships with existing educational options. The type of relationship at each point in history has been significant in impacting both homeschooling and the existing educational options. During the reemergence of homeschooling in the 70s, a relationship between homeschools and other educational entities like public and private schools did not exist. Knowles (1989) described this lack of relationship as contention, the first of four states that early homeschools went through in relationship to other entities. The remaining three states included confrontation, cooperation, and consolidation. These four states were evident when Knowles completed his study in 1989, and they continued to be evident in the following years.

Contention was evident as many people chose homeschooling throughout the years to find a better way to educate their child and to resist the imposing of educational norms (Gaither,

2009). Contentions came from a variety of families both rich and poor, intellectual and non-intellectual, and conservative and liberal (Knowles, 1989). These families were concerned with the integrity of their children being in danger as they remembered problems they had in public schools when they were children. To them, schools represented coercion, repressing individuality, and pushing conformity. Fiscal problems in education in the 70s gave some families another reason to withdraw. Most evidence pointed to parents perceiving “that the public-school experience would harm their children in some way, or that the parents could provide a superior learning environment” (Knowles, 1989, p. 400).

Confrontations began as schools who had been caught off guard had to find a way to respond. Some responded with court action because “in the view of school administrators, to question the public schools to the extent that home school parents were doing was to question the very fabric of society” (Knowles, 1989). Cooper and Sureau (2007) shared that political resistance came from those who thought homeschooling was harmful to the common good and to the quality of education for all people. Homeschooling was an attack on publicly supported universal education and took away money from the school for religious materials.

Cooperation began as home educators were spurred on by the opposition to work together through the 80s to make homeschooling legal again (Johnson, 2013). As homeschooling became more popular and socially accepted, the goal of home educators was achieved in 1993 when homeschooling became legal in all 50 states (Gaither, 2009). Johnson (2013) shared that “the initial clash between public schools and homeschoolers over the legality of homeschooling in America” had ended (p. 306).

Consolidation of homes and schools was characterized by growth and public acceptance (Knowles, 1989). An example of this growth was found in the dual enrollment program passed

by the Iowa legislature which allowed homeschool families the opportunity to enroll in the public school district for academic or instructional programs, extracurricular activities, and the use of the area education agencies (Terpstra, 1995). Another example was the Home-Based Education Program developed in the Ames school district which offered homeschool students the opportunity to participate in “specials” like art, music, PE, and band. They could also participate in sports, have free standardized testing, and have access to textbooks, resources, and enrichment programs. In Arizona, the Kyrene School District developed the CASA (Community Assisted Schooling Alternatives) Center for its 350 homeschooled students. For six hours a week, the center provided classes and other public-school resources to students who received their core instruction at home (Eley, 2002).

A study done by Dahlquist et al. (2006) reported that many states now have legislation that allow for dual or part-time enrollment and reimbursement options. They also found that many respondents (71%) felt at least somewhat supported by school districts. The most utilized resource was athletics, but homeschooled students were also able to receive curriculum support and participate in art, PE, and after-school classes. When asked how schools could better support homeschool families, the most frequent response was that they felt supported. This corroborated with previous studies by Eley (2002) and Terpstra (1995) which reported positive examples of cooperation between homeschools and public schools.

Caruana (1999) reported that with homeschooling now being a part of mainstream society, schools should be more intentional about building positive relationships with homeschool families. Those families come from all backgrounds with a common desire provide the best education for their children (Caruana, 1999). Johnson (2013) highlighted how school administrators have historically played a significant role in the confrontation and cooperation

stages as they used their understanding of school law to make recommendations to the school board. Evidence of this significant role was demonstrated by a public-school administrator in Phoenix who was not concerned when homeschooling families began leaving his school as he assumed they would return. When the families did not return, his assumptions were challenged, and his beliefs began to change. He became convinced that public schools should offer resources to homeschoolers to help them out and that his role should be to provide “educational opportunities to any and all students who wanted to be part of the public-school milieu” (Johnson, 2013, p. 302). The research done by Dahlquist et al. (2006) echoed similar ideas:

With the incidence of homeschooling on the rise, forward-looking public-school administrators need to consider new forms of partnerships between public schools and homeschools. . . We posit that by adopting a more inclusive stance and by attending to some of the reasons for homeschooling identified by participants in this study, the potential for mutually beneficial partnerships can be realized, having the dual effect of increasing revenue and increasing shared experiences for public school and homeschool children. (p. 380)

Van Galen (1988) suggested that this mutual, cooperative relationship could lead to future enrollment.

By 2007, homeschooling gained ground legally, politically, and socially. It grew from a small, isolated effort by a group of parents to a legalized form in all 50 states (Cooper & Sureau, 2007). Cooper and Sureau (2007) commented that “it is odd that homeschooling, perhaps the ultimate form of privatization and withdrawal from—if not rejection of—the public education system, has now reached a level of unprecedented visibility, politicization, and publicization” (p. 100). Homeschooling looked different as it was no longer drawing attention but instead was less

controversial and more familiar. More options such as co-ops, sports teams, clubs, bands, and hybrid options were available, and there was more cooperation from public schools who began to give tax dollars and offer enrichment or dual enrollment programs along with increased participation in after school activities (Gaither, 2009). New reasons for homeschooling included having a flexible schedule allowing for activities like music, dance, sports and acting; having a home environment better suited to meet the needs of children with special needs; and the ability for creative families to integrate homeschooling with telecommuting and globetrotting lives (Gaither, 2009).

Homeschool families today utilize a variety of models including partial day schools, homeschool assistance programs, micro schools, and coops (Hirsch, 2019). Partial day schools and hybrid models are available where students attend school one or two days a week and are homeschooled the rest of the week giving students the best of both worlds—flexibility of homeschooling along with opportunities of traditional schools. Homeschool assistance programs allow homeschool families to enroll in classes taught by licensed teachers on an a la carte basis. Micro schools create a customized experience that blends home instruction with technology, personalized instruction, and a high level of family and community engagement. Co-ops provide support, supplement home instruction in a flexible environment, and allow children to socialize and work with others. In Tilhou’s (2020) research of homeschool groups, he found that these groups consisted of parents who wanted to collaborate with the shared desire to provide quality education for their child at home.

While there are many options available to homeschoolers today, the homeschool policies vary greatly from state to state (Hirsh, 2019). One example of this is evident in policies related to extracurricular participation. While the specific policies for district extracurricular participation

vary by state, in many states, students can participate in sports, theater, and arts, and complete core curriculum at home. Wearne (2019) explained that this diversification of policies, technologies, and school models has made it more difficult to classify school models. It is no longer simply homeschooling – now, home instruction, home study, and homeschooling all exist.

There is limited research regarding the benefits for the traditional schools and homeschool families engaging with these models; however, a few observations can be made. With the team approach between school districts and homeschools, Terpstra (1995) reported that in Ames, Iowa, the district could receive state aid for the homeschool children who were a part of the community. She observed that “home educators who feel connected to their schools will support these schools more fully—and support of the community is critical to public schools” (Terpstra, 1995, p. 58). Volunteering in classes was one way home educators could support the school. Schools who worked with home educators recognized that everyone was working towards the same goal of helping each child reach their educational goals (Terpstra, 1995). Similarly, Eley (2002) shared benefits experienced by the Kyrene District in Arizona. A relationship between the district and homeschool families that used to be grounded in distrust now experienced a new sense of partnership and trust due to the starting of CASA Vida. The district was excited for the opportunity to reach 120 students through this partnership that it would not have had contact with otherwise.

Another benefit for traditional schools could come from studying what makes homeschooling successful. One such study conducted by Thomas (2016) identified what Christian families and educators could learn by observing the routines of homeschool families. Many meaningful observations of homeschoolers came out of Thomas’ research. He saw homeschool education that naturally unfolded throughout the day where learning became part of

life. He learned how homeschoolers collaborated with other educational entities, blended resources outside of the home, and joined educational groups and coops. Community resources were also utilized by homeschoolers for service learning, special studies, internships, tutors, 4-H, piano, and volunteering. A high amount of parental involvement was observed as homeschooling families utilized a flexible school structure, tailor-made schedules, and individualized instruction with faith as a focus (Thomas, 2016).

Thomas (2016) recognized that observing the non-traditional methods that make homeschooling successful provided one avenue for Christian schools to deepen their practices as they sought to provide the best learning environment for their students. Based on his research, one suggestion Thomas (2016) had for private schools was to ensure that they were collaborating with other educational entities including public schools, homeschool coops, and local community colleges. They could check whether they were maximizing community resources such as libraries, museums, and guest speakers, taking advantage of the resources that were available. As the private schools evaluated how they incorporated faith, Thomas (2016) suggested that they allow an elective where students were taught faith matters by a community member or family member. They could also provide independent studies where students learned from church leaders and find ways to unite schools with parents and families to be part of the child's spiritual growth.

Other suggestions made by Thomas (2016) included putting more energy into creating individualized learning plans for students, equipping each student, and educating with their best interest in mind. To ensure a quality educational system, Thomas (2016) encouraged educators to continue to listen to parents and understand their needs and values.

Further encouragement was given to educators by Patterson et al. (2007) who urged them to look closely at the practices of home educators and use the knowledge gained to adjust practices in their own classrooms and schools. Anthony and Burrough's (2012) study concluded that public schools could become more relevant in their communities by adopting features of homeschooling. They described homeschooling as selecting methods from a variety of choices that were available based on their educational goals, much like one would choose food from a restaurant menu. Unlike public school students, homeschool students had a variety of options; education was not linked to a place or institution. Based on this idea, Anthony and Burroughs (2012) proposed that traditional schools could choose to be a resource that supported individual learning goals instead of being the sole distributor of knowledge in a community. They could open the school to the larger world and provide more opportunities and choices for the students they served.

Along with the private school experiencing the benefits of a relationship with homeschool families, research also showed that the homeschool families also benefitted from the team approach. One benefit for all stakeholders was increased opportunities and shared experiences for public and homeschooled students (Dahlquist et al., 2006). Eley (2002) added that the CASA Vida Homeschool Enrichment Center provided students with large group educational activities along with opportunities for students to interact with other students. Parent benefits experienced at the center included being able to consult with teachers about curriculum and having a day to plan meaningful instruction for their children (Eley, 2002). Similar benefits were noted by Lines (2000) who found that partnerships between public schools and homeschool families included curriculum consultation along with a variety of other supports such as loaning materials, tutoring, online classes, and testing.

While many benefits of an inclusive relationship between traditional schools and homeschools have been recognized, there have also been a few barriers identified. Terpstra (1995) reported that problems with dual enrollment revolved around money, time, and personal reasons. One issue was determining whether there was enough state aid to cover the expense of dual-enrolled students. Another issue was determining how much time students could spend in school and still be homeschoolers. Concerns were also raised about the extra burden a relationship between traditional schools and homeschools would present for teachers and school schedules (Terpstra, 1995). Johnson (2013) found that administrators had concerns about the cost and management of running these dual enrollment programs for homeschoolers. Barriers for homeschool families related to critics questioning whether homeschooled students even had a place in the building (Terpstra, 1995).

History paints a picture of contentions, confrontations, cooperation and consolidation between homeschoolers and public schools. While there is a gap in literature related to the type of relationship homeschool families have with private schools, it is evident through this literature review that the homeschool movement as a customized and effective school system has grown. Homeschool parents have joined together to provide enrichment activities for their children and collaboration with other parents as they seek to provide the best education possible for their children. A wide range of partnerships have formed between public school districts and homeschool families that have been mutually beneficial. With the growth of the homeschool movement as a customized and effective school system, it is important for Christian schools to consider what relationship they want to have with homeschool families—one that is inclusive or one that is exclusive.

Methodology

Participants

The research participants invited to be part of this study included the superintendent from each of the 213 Christian Schools International (CSI) Schools in the United States. CSI is an organization that supports Christian education by providing “Christian schools with curriculum, leadership training, accreditation, and employee benefits services” (Christian Schools International, n.d.). Fifty-one percent (108 out of 213) of the CSI superintendents participated.

Following the initial survey, a purposeful sample of six school leaders was chosen to participate in a semi-structured interview. To determine the interview participants, the completed surveys were grouped into six categories based on the type of relationship model that was identified on the survey (inclusive, partially inclusive, or exclusive) along with school size (under 500 or over 500). After the six groups were made, the researcher considered two more identifiers: school location (rural, urban, suburban) and the level of satisfaction with the current relationship model used. This was done so that the final six superintendents selected for interviews would represent the greatest variety of schools and experiences to provide the most complete results.

Of the six initially selected superintendents, three agreed to participate in the interview process. For the remaining three interviews, new selections were made. Because the researcher needed to solicit participation a second time, the interview pool was not as diverse as the researcher had hoped; however, it still provided a variety of experiences. Table 1 represents the demographics of the final six superintendents who were willing to participate. The names of these superintendents were changed in this study to maintain anonymity.

Table 1*Research Participant Demographics*

Pseudonym	Relationship Model	School Size	School Location	Level of Satisfaction
Hannah	Inclusive	Over 500	Suburban	5
Emma	Inclusive	Under 500	Urban	5
Nelson	Partially Inclusive	Over 500	Urban	2
Peter	Partially Inclusive	Under 500	Rural	4
Matthew	Exclusive	Over 500	Suburban	4
Cody	Exclusive	Under 500	Rural	3

Note. Level of satisfaction was based on a Likert Scale with 1 being not at all satisfied and 5 being completely satisfied.

Materials

Superintendents were asked to fill out an on-line survey created by the researcher (see Appendix A) that gathered information about the school, the type of relationship it has with the homeschool families in the local community, and the research-based benefits and barriers associated with that relationship (see Appendix C). The survey was piloted by two principals not associated with the study to ensure that it was usable and clear as well as a valid tool. Based on feedback from the pilot study, modifications were made to the phrasing of a few benefits and barriers and three additional benefits and barriers were added.

To ensure reliability of the survey, the Likert Scale was used which allowed the researcher to look for internal consistency to determine if schools that adapted a similar relationship model had similar results. The validity of the survey was strengthened by triangulating with a follow-up semi-structured interview in which each of the six selected participants were asked the same set of non-leading questions (see Appendix B).

Design

A mixed methods design was used for this study to explore the relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families. Quantitative data was initially collected using a closed-response survey that addressed the research questions. Following the survey, qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interview questions which elicited further explanations of survey responses. This mixed methods design offered the benefits of providing a broad base of data to look for themes and patterns as well as increasing internal validity.

Procedure

To conduct the quantitative portion of this study, a survey was developed (see Appendix A) based on the purpose statement and research questions. This online survey was sent to the heads of all CSI schools in the United States via e-mail. A spreadsheet was used to monitor the receipt of surveys as they were completed. One week after the initial e-mail was sent out, an additional e-mail was sent to all participants who had not yet responded to encourage participation in the survey. At the end of the survey period, a comparison was made of those who responded and those who did not to identify any potential response bias. No common factors were found to connect those who did not respond.

Following the initial survey, a purposeful sample of six school leaders was chosen to participate in a semi-structured interview. An e-mail was sent to the chosen superintendents to request their participation and to share information about the interview. The information included the same set of non-leading interview questions (see Appendix B) that were used to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the given school and homeschool families in the area, why the school chose a particular relationship model, and any benefits or

barriers that have affected their relationship with homeschool families. A follow-up phone call was made to determine if each superintendent would be willing to participate, and if so, an interview time was set.

Data Analysis Design

The data gathered from the online surveys was transferred to a spreadsheet. In this format, the researcher was able to enter formulas and develop graphs to better conceptualize any themes that existed between the schools' sizes, locations, identified relationships with homeschool families, and the benefits and barriers that are experienced.

Interviews with the six school leaders were held on zoom due to location proximity which also allowed them to be recorded and then transcribed. From the transcriptions, the researcher engaged in a coding process using initial coding followed by descriptive codes and in vivo to better identify themes.

At the conclusion of the interviews, the quantitative data from the surveys and qualitative data from the interviews was analyzed to better understand the relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families.

Results

The purpose of this study was to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families throughout the United States. Quantitative data was collected with a closed-response survey while qualitative data was collected using a semi-structured interview. The data collection focused on discovering what relationship models were utilized at each school, the perceived benefits and barriers that were experienced with the given relationship model, and the overall satisfaction the school had with their current model.

Quantitative Results

Demographic Findings

Table 2 depicts the schools that responded to the survey. Most of the respondents came from school systems that included Kindergarten through 12th grade. The most common school size was schools that had 250 or fewer students. The largest group of participating schools came from suburban areas with the next largest group being rural schools. Of the 108 respondents, 11% indicated they had a fully inclusive relationship with homeschool families, 49% had a partially inclusive relationship, and 40% had an exclusive relationship.

Table 2*Depiction of Participating Schools*

Characteristic	%
Grades Included in the School Systems	
K – 5	1.9
K – 8	37.4
6 – 8	1.9
9 – 12	5.6
K – 12	53.3
Student Body Populations	
0 – 250	46.7
250 – 500	27.1
500 – 1,000	17.8
More than 1,000	8.4
School Locations	
Rural	37.4
Urban	22.4
Suburban	40.2
Relationship Models Utilized	
Fully Inclusive	11.2
Partially Inclusive	48.6
Exclusive	40.2

Relationship Model. Tables 3 – 5 represent the data when organized by the type of relationship model (fully inclusive, partially inclusive, or exclusive) schools engaged in with homeschool families. Table 3 shows that a majority of fully inclusive schools include Kindergarten through 12th grade, are located in urban areas and have fewer than 250 students.

Table 3*Depiction of Fully Inclusive Schools*

Characteristic	%
Types of School Systems	
K – 5	0
K – 8	33.3
6 – 8	0
9 – 12	0
K – 12	66.7
Student Body Populations	
0 – 250	58.3
250 – 500	16.7
500 – 1,000	8.3
More than 1,000	16.7
School Locations	
Rural	25.0
Urban	50.0
Suburban	25.0

Table 4 depicts partially inclusive schools. Similarities to inclusive schools can be seen as a majority of partially inclusive schools also include Kindergarten through 12th grade and have fewer than 250 students. While the majority of the inclusive schools are in urban areas, a majority of partially inclusive schools are in rural areas.

Table 4*Depiction of Partially Inclusive Schools*

Characteristic	%
Types of School Systems	
K – 5	1.9
K – 8	26.9
6 – 8	1.9
9 – 12	9.6
K – 12	59.6
Student Body Populations	
0 – 250	51.9
250 – 500	28.8
500 – 1,000	9.6
More than 1,000	9.6
School Locations	
Rural	50.0
Urban	19.2
Suburban	30.8

Table 5 represents schools that indicated they are exclusive. While the Kindergarten through 12th grade systems were prominent in the inclusive and partially inclusive schools, school systems with grades K through 8 were dominant in exclusive schools. The most common location of exclusive schools was suburban, unlike inclusive schools which were mostly urban and partially inclusive schools which were mostly rural. While the school population for inclusive schools was somewhat evenly spread among three categories (0 – 250 students, 250 – 500 students, 500 – 1,000 students), like inclusive and partially inclusive schools, those schools with fewer than 250 students were dominant.

Table 5*Depiction of Exclusive Schools*

Characteristic	%
Types of School Systems	
K – 5	0
K – 8	51.2
6 – 8	2.3
9 – 12	2.3
K – 12	41.9
Student Body Populations	
0 – 250	37.2
250 – 500	27.9
500 – 1,000	30.2
More than 1,000	4.7
School Locations	
Rural	25.6
Urban	18.6
Suburban	55.8

School System. Table 6 presents the data based on the type of school system to determine whether the type of school system has any effect on the relationship model that Christian schools have with homeschool families. Exclusive schools were most common among school systems that only include younger grades with 50% of K – 5 and 6 – 8 school systems being exclusive and 55% of K – 8 school systems being exclusive. School systems that include older grades (9 – 12, K – 12) had a much higher percentage (68 – 83%) of partially inclusive or inclusive schools. Also, the schools that were fully inclusive were limited to the school systems that included a wider range of grades (K – 8, K – 12).

Table 6*Relationship Model Percentages Based on Types of School Systems*

Types of School Systems	Fully Inclusive %	Partially Inclusive %	Exclusive %
K – 5	0	50.0	50.0
K – 8	10.0	35.0	55.0
6 – 8	0	50.0	50.0
9 – 12	0	83.3	16.7
K – 12	14.0	54.4	31.6

School Size. Table 7 presents the data based on the size of the school to determine whether the school size has any effect on the relationship model that Christian schools have with homeschool families. The number of schools which consider themselves to be exclusive increased along with the size of the school until the size of the school surpasses 1,000 students. At this point, the percentage of exclusive schools drops significantly. The smaller schools (populations of 500 or less) along with the largest schools (populations over 1,000) have the highest percentage of inclusive and partially inclusive schools.

Table 7*Relationship Model Percentages Based on Numbers of Students*

Numbers of Students	Fully Inclusive %	Partially Inclusive %	Exclusive %
0 – 250	14.0	54.0	32.0
250 – 500	6.9	51.7	41.4
500 – 1,000	5.3	26.3	68.4
More than 1,000	22.2	55.5	22.2

School Location. Table 8 presents the data based on the location of the school to determine whether the school location has any effect on the relationship model that Christian schools have with homeschool families. Schools located in urban areas have the highest percentage of fully inclusive schools, rural schools have the highest percentage of partially inclusive schools, while schools in suburban areas have the highest percentage of exclusive schools.

Table 8

Relationship Model Percentages Based on Locations

Locations	Fully Inclusive %	Partially Inclusive %	Exclusive %
Rural	7.5	65.0	27.5
Urban	25.0	41.7	33.3
Suburban	7.0	37.2	55.8

Benefits and Barriers

While the first section of the survey asked respondents for basic information about their school type, size, and location, the next section of the survey gave them an opportunity to share whether they agreed with specific, research-based benefits and barriers that were observed with Christian schools having relationships with homeschool families. Using a Likert Scale, respondents ranked their level of agreement with each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 9 provides a list of the research-based benefits that were included in the survey along with the average mean response. The benefits that had the highest level of agreement with mean responses over 4 included homeschool students being able to be a part of large group activities (4.42), being able to interact with other students (4.56) and being able to receive

instruction in areas that the parent might not be competent to teach (4.49). This level of agreement was strengthened by the low standard deviations of 0.66, 0.63, and 0.62 which indicate that the overall responses to these benefits were not widespread but instead were clustered around the mean. Two benefits that had the lowest mean and therefore the lowest levels of agreement include the benefit of parents being able to consult with teachers about curriculum (3.53) and the benefit for schools to deepen their practices by observing what makes homeschooling successful (3.27). These benefits had higher standard deviations of 1.08 and 1.06 which indicate that the overall responses were more spread out from the mean. The lower mean response to these benefits along with a higher standard deviation gives evidence of a wider variety of opinions.

Table 9*Mean Response to Benefits of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship*

Benefits of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship	Mean	SD
The potential for mutually beneficial relationships can be realized by schools that adopt an inclusive stance towards homeschool families.	3.81	0.91
A benefit of this partnership for the school is that home educators who feel connected to the school will support the school more fully.	3.78	0.95
A benefit of this partnership for the school is the potential to reach students that it would not have had contact with otherwise.	4.16	0.95
A benefit of this partnership for the school is that observing what makes homeschooling successful could provide one avenue for Christian schools to deepen their practices as they seek to provide the best learning environment for their students.	3.27	1.06
A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to be part of large group educational activities.	4.42	0.66
A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to interact with other students.	4.56	0.63
A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the ability for parents to consult with teachers about curriculum.	3.53	1.08
A benefit to the homeschool parent is it allows their children to receive instruction in areas that the homeschool parent may not be competent to teach.	4.49	0.62

Note. This table portrays the mean response and standard deviation per Likert Scale questions ranked from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) about benefits to Christian schools having relationships with homeschool families

Table 10 provides a list of the research-based barriers that were included in the survey along with the average mean response. The barrier that received the highest level of agreement as shown by the highest mean response (3.86) and the lowest standard deviation (0.99) related to the difficulty of positively assimilating the homeschool student into the ethos and culture of the classroom in ways that are beneficial to the homeschool student and the school. The barrier which stated that a partnership with homeschoolers could place a burden on the schoolteachers also had a mean response of 3.86, but the higher standard deviation of 1.04 indicates that the

responses were a little more widespread. The barrier related to the burden a relationship with homeschoolers could place on the school schedule was the barrier that had the lowest level of agreement with a mean of 3.24 and the highest standard deviation of 1.27.

Table 10

Mean Response to Barriers of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship

Barriers of a Christian School/Homeschool Relationship	Mean	SD
A barrier of this partnership for the school is trying to determine how much time students can spend in school and still be homeschoolers.	3.44	1.06
A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it could present for teachers.	3.86	1.04
A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it places on school schedules.	3.24	1.27
A barrier for the school is to positively assimilate the homeschool student into the ethos and culture of the classroom/school in ways that are beneficial to the homeschool student and the classroom/school.	3.86	0.99
A barrier in this partnership is that full-time school families may feel that their children's instructional or teacher time is being diverted to part-time students.	3.36	1.16
A barrier of this partnership for the homeschool families is critics who question whether homeschooled students have a place in the building.	2.71	1.16

Note. This table portrays the mean response and standard deviation per Likert Scale questions ranked from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) about barriers to Christian schools having relationships with homeschool families.

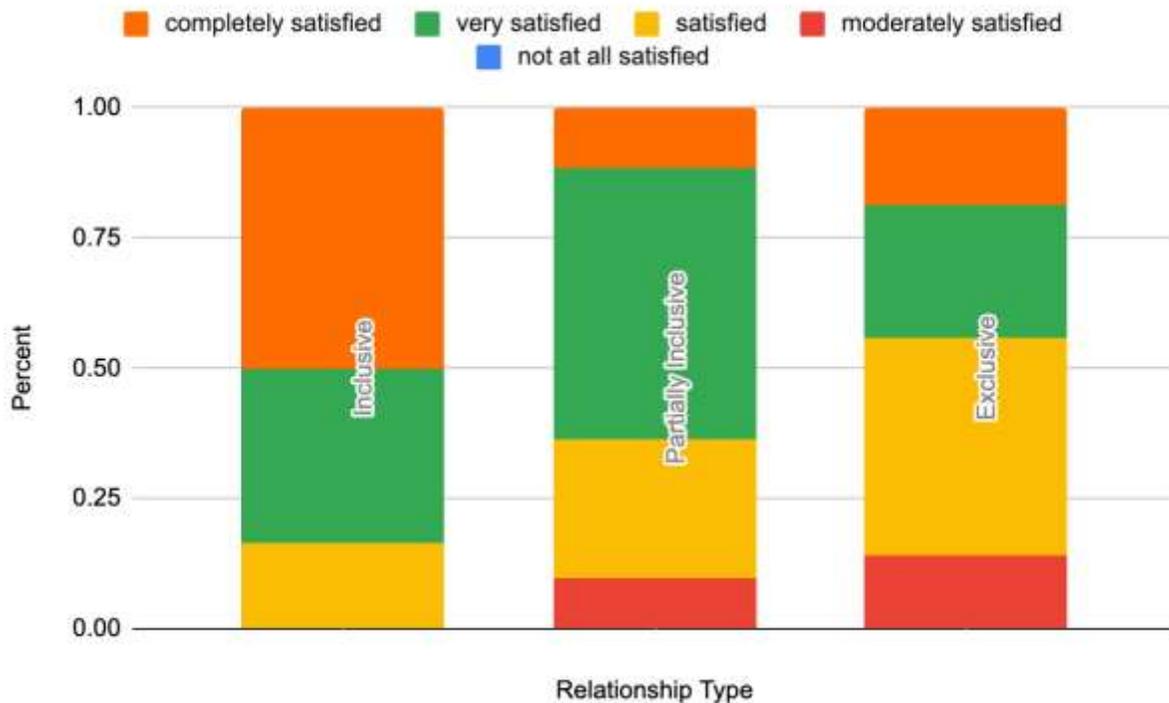
Satisfaction Level

The final section of the survey asked respondents to rank their level of satisfaction with the current relationship model they utilized with homeschool families. A Likert Scale was utilized allowing respondents to share how satisfied they were on a scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (completely satisfied). Figure 1 breaks down these results based on the type of relationship the school has with homeschool families. Inclusive schools had the highest overall

satisfaction level as over 80% indicated they were very satisfied or completely satisfied. In exclusive schools, over 50% indicated they were satisfied or moderately satisfied.

Figure 1

Satisfaction Level with Current Relationship Model



Note. This figure portrays how satisfied schools are with their current relationship model with homeschool families using a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (completely satisfied). Results were stacked to show a comparison of the three relationship types.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative data was collected using a semi-structured interview. The survey questions focused on gaining a more in depth understanding of what relationship models were utilized at each school, the benefits and barriers that were experienced with the given relationship model, and the overall satisfaction the school had with their current model.

Relationship Model

The results of this section were led by questions that helped the researcher gain an understanding of the current relationship each school had with homeschool families, starting with, “What does that relationship look like?” Of the six school leaders that were interviewed, two came from schools that identified themselves as inclusive, two came from schools that identified themselves as partially inclusive, and two came from schools that identified themselves as exclusive.

The first school, led by Emma, is a fully inclusive, small school of fewer than 100 students located in an urban area that has a large homeschool community. In Emma’s school, homeschool students are invited to choose what they would like to participate in. Most of them do their core studies at home, but are looking for other experiences like music, performing groups, sports, Latin, PE, and art. They are welcome to do any of those experiences, along with coming to chapel, field trips, and any other school activity with no stipulations. “We accommodate them as much as we can. We want them to be part of our community” (Emma, personal communication, March 3, 2022).

To participate in any of these experiences at Emma’s school, homeschool students go through an admission process like any other student. This includes registering, getting a handbook, being part of orientation, and being vetted. Expectations of respect, cooperation, and Christian character are emphasized. “They join our community. That’s very much impressed on them” (Emma, personal communication, March 3, 2022). Policies are in place to strengthen this commitment between school and family. Homeschool families pay the same fees for application and registration as do full-time students. To pay for classes and activities, the number of hours

they participate in is divided by 35 (the total number of school hours), and they pay that percentage of tuition.

Hannah's school, which is home to around 700 students, is also fully inclusive, but it is in a suburban area that has a large homeschool population. In this school, homeschool students have the option of enrolling in traditional classes, but there is also a well-developed homeschool program. The elementary homeschool program allows students to come in for one day of enrichment activities. In the middle school program, homeschool students come to school two days a week to do five core classes, and they spend the other three days at home doing homework. The high school program also offers five core classes, but it does not include specials like language or science labs. Homeschool students are invited to take these in the traditional program. This results in many high schoolers in the homeschool program doing a hybrid that includes some classes in the homeschool program and some in the traditional program. The middle school and high school programs require commitment from homeschoolers to be in attendance each time the class meets.

If homeschool students at Hannah's school want to be involved in extracurriculars such as the play, musicals, and band or choir, they need to be part of either a traditional class or the homeschool program. To participate in sports specifically, high schoolers must be a part of five classes and middle schoolers must be in four classes per state athletic association requirements. Homeschool families need to register for classes or activities like any other family. To help these families feel welcome in the community, they go through orientation, the students regularly go to chapels with full-time students, they are a part of teams and activities, and they mingle in the halls and at lunch. "They pretty quickly assimilate" (Hannah, personal communication, March 11, 2022).

Peter is the superintendent of a partially inclusive, rural school with under 500 students and few homeschooling families in the area. This school has not had many homeschool cases, and often those who begin as homeschooling participants transition to full time students. “We’ve always said that we’re confident that once we have a family in our building. . . any family that has even come for one or two classes, the following year they have immediately went to full time because they’ve seen the benefits of full-time education” (Peter, personal communication, February 24, 2022). For the few homeschool families that have inquired in the past, it is often for classes like music and band since parents cannot offer that at home. They also come for upper-level courses that the parent does not feel qualified to teach. The administration at Peter’s school approaches these requests by homeschool families on a case-by-case basis by considering if there is room in the class in which the family is interested.

While there has not been a need to make any hard policies regarding enrollment in individual classes, Peter’s school does have a policy for participating in extracurricular activities. Homeschool students must be enrolled at least 50% to participate in sports and extracurriculars. Peter’s school has so many students who participate in sports and extracurriculars that they “didn’t feel it was fair that someone who was coming in and maybe not paying the full tuition or close to it. . . would take a spot away from maybe a family that was here paying full time tuition” (Peter, personal communication, February 24, 2022). Peter continued, “Sports by us are usually very strong, so if we opened up to homeschool families, I think we would run into a lot of problems from our tuition paying parents. . . Now if it was something like soccer, not a big deal. But if I did it during basketball season, I’d probably get fired” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022). While they have not had someone enroll part time to be in athletics, if they

did, those families would pay 17% per class with no extra fee for sports because no other students pays a fee for sports.

Nelson is the superintendent of a partially inclusive school in an urban setting with over 500 students. They are a covenantal school that is “unapologetically reformed” (Nelson, personal communication, February 24, 2022). There is a significant homeschool community and homeschool association in the area. As far as their policy regarding homeschoolers, Nelson commented that “if you would have had barely inclusive, I would have checked that one. . . We could do better. I know we could do better” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022). Currently, homeschooled high school students can take a class if there is room, and they can participate in sports but only on the freshman and junior varsity levels. “It doesn’t seem very welcoming at all, so we definitely have some room for improvement” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022).

Cody leads a smaller, rural school with just under 500 students that classifies its relationship with homeschoolers as exclusive. They currently have no active homeschool partnership in part because they have no space; both campuses are full. Cody explained that it is currently “the space, resources, and finances that would make it impossible for our school. . . We really have no more room for anybody” (Personal communication, March 29, 2022).

The final interviewee, Matthew, comes from a larger, exclusive school with over 500 students. It is in a suburban area with a small homeschool population. They have only had a few cases of homeschoolers inquiring in the past. Their school’s current policy, which was likely established at a time when there was no need, states that they will help constituents of the school who find they need to homeschool for a time but plan to come back. Help comes in the form of letting homeschool families know what curriculum is used, allowing participation in special

projects and field trips, and providing testing help. This is the extent of the homeschool connection, but Matthew shared, "If you want to be part of our community, come and join us! If not, that is okay, too!" (Personal communication, March 18, 2022)

Benefits

The results of this section were led by questions that helped the researcher gain an understanding of the benefits each school experienced with homeschool families. The questions for each interviewee varied based on their survey responses. Because this was a semi-structured discussion, the respondents were encouraged to share benefits from the survey that resonated the most with them; therefore, not every respondent commented on every survey statement.

One benefit that garnered a positive response from five respondents was that the potential for mutually beneficial relationships can be realized by schools that adopt an inclusive stance towards homeschool families. Several benefits for both the school and the homeschool families were named. Emma saw the benefit for full time school students to have more classmates and like-minded friends. Cody mentioned the benefit of increased enrollment for the school. Hannah shared that these relationships brought more familiarity with the school, improved relationships in the community, and more revenue because of increased enrollment. She added that with homeschool partnerships, "there's more people in your community that feel good about your school," and these positive community relationships can have far reaching effects because when these kids grow up and have kids, they will keep your school in mind (Personal communication, March 11, 2022). Peter recognized that there are "definitely beneficial relationships that can be realized by schools that adopt an inclusive stance . . . because anything we're doing is built on relationships" (Personal communication, February 24, 2022). Nelson added that it's a valuable

partnership “because we share a common goal for our children, our covenantal children” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022).

Another benefit that garnered a response from five school leaders was the benefit that home educators who feel connected to the school will support the school more fully. There was some discrepancy in the response as two out of the five strongly agreed while the other three remained neutral. The leaders of the inclusive schools both felt strongly that there would be more support by the homeschool families that felt connected. Hannah shared how these families go to events, games and fundraisers that are going on at the school. “They become part of the community, and for most of us, we want to be part of the community [and meet] others with similar beliefs and values” (Personal communication, March 11, 2022).

While Emma and Hannah have seen more support from homeschool families that feel connected, Peter shared that he has not had that experience. In Nelson’s experience, homeschool families had their children in school because the school had something they needed – not because they wanted to volunteer. Cody agreed that homeschool families have more of a consumer mentality than a loyalty mentality, but that mentality is not limited to homeschool families. He shared that “it used to be that Christian school people were very loyal to the school, but now I’ve seen a shift in the last 30 years that I’ve been in Christian education that it’s more – what can you do for me?” (Personal communication, March 29, 2022).

Regarding the benefit for schools to reach students it would not have had contact with otherwise, three school leaders strongly agreed. Hannah shared that “if you don’t offer classes for them, then you don’t have a good way of knowing, is there a way we can invite you into our community to help your child grow academically?” (Personal communication, March 11, 2022).

Four school leaders agreed that it is a benefit for the homeschool parent to be able to receive instruction in areas that the parent may not be competent to teach. Hannah shared that homeschool parents look for ways to outsource some of the classes they can no longer teach for various reasons relating to skill level, patience level, and needing to teach other children in their home. Matthew added that homeschool students can have access to a science lab or other classes that would be hard to do at home.

Two school leaders agreed that a benefit for schools is the ability to deepen their practices by observing what makes homeschooling successful. Peter shared that homeschool families “are able to help us see how they do things and how they look at it” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022). In contrast, Nelson strongly disagreed with this benefit because traditional schools and homeschools are so very different pedagogically with having only a few students compared to a whole class. Because of this, he felt the school has nothing to gain by having a homeschooler in their classroom.

Two final benefits that were mentioned by four respondents were the opportunities for homeschool students to be part of large group activities and interact with other students. Emma and Matthew felt these were the biggest benefits for homeschool students. This reiterates the survey results in Table 9 which revealed a high level of agreement from all participants for those two benefits as indicated by a mean response of 4.42 and 4.56 respectively. Cody was neutral on this benefit as he felt that it was hard to “be part of the spirit of the school” when you only come for a short time (Personal communication, March 29, 2022).

Barriers

The results of this section were led by questions that helped the researcher gain an understanding of the barriers each school faced with homeschool families. The questions for

each school leader varied based on their survey responses. Because this was a semi-structured discussion, the respondents were encouraged to share barriers from the survey that resonated the most with them; therefore, not every respondent commented on every survey statement.

One barrier that all school leaders responded to was that a partnership between Christian schools and homeschool families could present a burden for teachers. The responses were varied with four out of six leaders saying they somewhat agreed or strongly agreed, and the other two were neutral and somewhat disagree. Those who agreed shared that it is hard to see students for only 45 minutes with little opportunity for follow up if needed. It is also challenging for teachers who must deal with homeschool students missing class, coming late, leaving early, and/or not getting their work done. Emma shared an experience of a homeschool parent who decided to punish their student by keeping them out of band which ended up hurting the band teacher and the band program. Respondents have also observed parents who tried to micromanage or push their system on the school by suggesting what books should be used or how much homework there should be. In contrast, Nelson shared that it is not a burden for teachers to have homeschoolers in the room. In his school's context, teachers could continue to do what they do with no adjustments for homeschoolers.

Related to this barrier is that a partnership with homeschool families could place a burden on school schedules. This time, the responses from the five who mentioned this barrier ranged from being neutral to strongly disagreeing which matches the more mixed survey responses presented in Table 10. The mean response from the survey was 3.24, and the higher standard deviation of 1.04 indicates that the survey responses were more widespread from this mean. The two school leaders who are part of inclusive schools mentioned that while it can be tricky, they do what they can to accommodate homeschool schedules. Hannah shared that she has each

family pick their biggest rock – the one thing that cannot be moved – and then they work around that. Both leaders from the partially inclusive schools shared that they will not cater their schedules for homeschool families. Nelson mentioned that this burden is on the homeschool family, not the school. Peter mentioned that it is tricky enough trying to make the schedule work with teachers who must move between campuses, much less trying to accommodate for homeschool schedules.

Another barrier cited in five interviews with almost 100% agreement was the barrier of trying to positively assimilate the homeschool student into the ethos and culture of the classroom in ways that are beneficial to the homeschool student and the school. Four out of five respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with this barrier which lines up with overall survey responses in Table 10 where the mean was 3.86. A standard deviation of 0.99 indicates that the overall responses fell somewhat close to the mean. Hannah said that assimilating into the community is not a barrier because they work hard to include homeschool families in orientation and other school activities, but assimilating into the classroom can be challenging because “kids are kids and they’re cliquy” (Personal communication, March 11, 2022). It is difficult for homeschool students to break into groups built on long-standing friendships. Matthew shared that his school emphasizes being part of a community by “building relationships between faculty and students across all grade levels, but especially at the high school. Having students jump in and out of school would make that very difficult” (Personal communication, March 18, 2022). Nelson added that whether the student can come in for a short time and plug in depends on their personality. In contrast to these thoughts, Emma does not see assimilation as a barrier. She says, “If they don’t fit as a full-time student, they wouldn’t fit as a homeschooling student” (Personal communication, March 10, 2022).

Other barriers addressed in the survey received fewer comments from interviewees. Both leaders of inclusive schools mentioned that the barrier of full-time families feeling like their children's instructional time is being diverted to part-time students was not an issue. These same leaders were also not concerned with critics who might oppose having homeschooled students participate. In contrast, Peter shared that he thinks schools will always have critics of homeschoolers.

Cody shared other barriers that were not listed on the survey. For his school, working with homeschoolers "is tough at times since it requires a lot of commitment on a school's part for time and financial" (Personal communication, March 29, 2022). He clarified this by sharing that any program needs someone in charge, that person must be paid, and in his experience, homeschool parents were unwilling to pay. These barriers made it impossible for his school to have a relationship with homeschoolers presently.

Other Factors

Throughout the interviews, other factors not listed on the survey that might affect a school's relationship with homeschoolers were identified. One factor mentioned by three school leaders during interviews was that some states offer vouchers or tax credits to full time students which, according to Matthew, might affect how many families choose to homeschool. Matthew explained that tax credit scholarships allow some families to attend the Christian school who could not otherwise afford to do so. He shared that voucher programs also provide access as they pay for a portion of private school education. Cody believes vouchers make a difference in how many families choose to homeschool because his enrollment increased by 75 students last year when his state began a voucher program. He says that the vouchers affect families that want a Christian education and would choose either Christian school or homeschool. While they

previously chose homeschooling because of the low-cost incentive, they are now choosing the Christian school because it is affordable.

Along with voucher and tax credit programs, two school leaders mentioned that state rules affect what type of relationship Christian schools can have with homeschool families. In Peter's state, homeschoolers cannot participate outside of the district they live in. Therefore, if a homeschool family lives outside the district the Christian school is in, they cannot participate. In Hannah's state, homeschoolers in high school must be enrolled in five classes and middle schoolers in four to be able to participate in sports.

Satisfaction

The results of this section were led by questions that helped the researcher gain an understanding of how satisfied the school leaders were with their current relationship with homeschoolers. These questions were based on their response to the final question of the survey which allowed them to rank their satisfaction on a Likert scale. Participant responses to this statement ranged from two (moderately satisfied) to five (completely satisfied).

Emma and Hannah, the leaders of the inclusive schools, were both completely satisfied with their current relationship with homeschoolers. Emma shared that "if the school gets bigger, if we can't wrap our head around it, . . . you'd have to go through some growing pains when there's a system change. I don't see the school discontinuing the program" (Personal communication, March 10, 2022). Hannah summed up her satisfaction by saying, "It's kind of a win, win" (Personal communication, March 11, 2022).

Peter, one of the leaders of a partially inclusive school, was very satisfied with his current relationship with homeschoolers. He stated that "I think some of the policies and stuff we're content with. We are at that aspect of looking at homeschool. I mean, we realize for us to

continue to grow that's probably an area where we have the potential of growth" (Personal communication, February 24, 2022).

In contrast, Nelson, another leader of a partially inclusive school, indicated that his satisfaction level was low. He mentioned that his school does not have any part time students right now. He questions, "Why is that? It's because what we currently offer is kind of garbage to be honest." He has not been at his current school long, and his frame of reference is two positive experiences he previously had in more inclusive schools.

Cody leads one of the schools that currently does not have a relationship with homeschoolers, and he does not see that it would be possible any time soon. He ranks his current satisfaction with this relationship as a three which is satisfied. He stated:

I'm not against homeschooling at all, and if we had the resources and somebody that would be committed to helping, I would be open to that. I'm always up for helping fellow believers . . . but it's just so much work [for the teachers]. And how do I add something else to their plate? I'm trying to take things away from their plates right now because these last two years taught us, if anything, our staff is overworked. (Personal communication, March 29, 2022)

Matthew, the other leader of an exclusive school, was very satisfied with his school's policy. He believes that "a large part of our school is being part of a community. That community and relationships are created in the building throughout the day." He stated that this is the current policy, but it might be something that would have to be revisited due to the world we live in – homeschool trends, political influence, and the divide of our country. If the public school system gets so bad that Christian families decide they can't stay there anymore, they will be looking for other options. Is there something we would

need to do at that point to partner together to make education possible for these families?

(Personal communication, March 18, 2022)

Best Practice

A final portion of the interview allowed school leaders to share if they thought there was a best practice that could be utilized when considering relationships between Christian schools and homeschool families. Depending on their experience, each leader viewed best practices differently. A few leaders believed various factors affect what a best practice could look like, while two others believed being inclusive was the best practice.

Peter was one leader who felt that a best practice would look different for each school. One factor that affects his school is the low number of homeschoolers in the area. He commented, “If we saw more families in our specific area choosing to homeschool, we would probably be more intentional to see how we could partner resources” (Peter, personal communication, February 24, 2022).

For Nelson, it was challenging to identify a best practice because he believes school size is an influential factor. He commented:

Obviously, [a previous school] was beautiful. It was a beautiful picture of what it could look like. But [it] had everything going for it to allow that to happen. You had the size, you had the schedule where you could plug kids in multiple places, and they had someone dedicated to kinda run that [. . .] program . . . But there’s not a lot of [those schools] out there. So, more schools are going to be more like our size . . . I really liked [a former school’s model] and I think it was fair. I think it provided opportunity and it provided access. It did require some commitment from the homeschool and I didn’t have

a problem with that. But it was fair financially. (Nelson, personal communication, February 24, 2022)

Cody also believed various factors including space, resources, and finances affected a potential best practice with homeschool families. He said, “It would almost have to be a separate, almost a completely separate program funded by the homeschoolers and all that. That’s the only way I could see it would work without burning us out” (Cody, personal communication, March 29, 2022).

While Peter, Nelson, and Cody all concurred that a best practice depended on various factors at the school, Emma and Hannah both agreed that having an inclusive relationship with homeschool families was a best practice. Hannah explains that an inclusive relationship model is “a win, win situation” (Personal communication, March 10, 2022). She encourages school leaders to “marry the homeschool community to the Christian school in whatever makes sense in that community” (Personal communication, March 10, 2022). Similarly, Emma stated that an inclusive model

just makes sense to me. It’s just common sense! Empathetically, when you look at what a homeschooling family might need, I feel like this would fit. If I were homeschooling, this is what I would want. And they are consumers. They are shopping around for the right experiences for their students. I get that. So, this is a viable option. It’s a service. It’s a ministry. It’s a service to these families. In my mind, that’s why we do it. (Personal communication, March 10, 2022)

Discussion

The homeschool movement, which has seen great success and experienced much growth in the past couple decades, now exceeds 2.4 million students (Cooper & Sureau, 2007; Farris &

Woodruff, 2000; Tilhou, 2020). As the homeschool families observe this success, traditional schools must decide what type of relationship they want to have with homeschools – inclusive or exclusive. While many studies give evidence of the journey public schools have gone through to form partnerships and cooperation with homeschoolers, there is little evidence regarding the relationship between homeschool families and Christian schools. The purpose of this study was to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families by looking at what relationship models currently exist and what benefits and barriers are experienced with these models.

Relationship Models

Many observations about the relationships that currently exist between Christian schools and homeschool families can be made from an analysis of the data collected through surveys and interviews. One conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that a partnership between Christian schools and homeschooling families is more common in the upper grades. From the survey, at least 50% of the schools that only included younger grades (K – 5 or K – 8) were exclusive. When the older grades were included (K – 12), 68% of schools were partially inclusive or fully inclusive. School systems that only had older students (6 – 8 and 9 – 12 systems) were 100% partially inclusive or fully inclusive. According to several of the school leaders that were interviewed, relationships with homeschoolers are more common during these stages because that is when homeschool parents may find that they cannot teach a certain subject for various reasons, so they start looking for ways to outsource some classes. Currently, the homeschool families are also looking for other experiences like music, sports, languages, and performing groups which are more commonly offered in upper-level grades.

While it seems conclusive that the type of school system that is established affects the partnership that is found with homeschoolers, a look at the size of the school in relationship to the partnership is not as conclusive. The survey results in Table 7 show that small schools of 500 students or fewer and large schools with over 1,000 have the highest percentages of partially inclusive and fully inclusive schools – at least 58% in each category. However, the schools in the middle with between 500 and 1,000 students shift as they are 68% exclusive. The highest number of schools that have a fully inclusive partnership is 22% in the schools that have over 1,000 students.

Several school leaders commented that the size of the school affects the partnership it can have with homeschool families. Interestingly, both leaders from fully inclusive schools that were interviewed, one from a large school and one from a small school, believed that size did not matter. Hannah, a leader from a large, fully inclusive school, believed a smaller school could have a strong homeschool program as well, if they had enough students to be able to pay a teacher. Nelson, a leader from a large, partially inclusive school, had a differing opinion as he thought that the size of the school affected the relationship it could have with homeschoolers. He believed it would be easier for a larger school to have a fully inclusive partnership with homeschoolers because they have the space and staff. He thought for a medium-sized school like his, it was more realistic to be partially inclusive and offer some programs to homeschoolers.

One observation that can be made from the interviews with school leaders that have successful relationships with homeschool families is that they require homeschoolers to abide by the same policies and standards as everyone else. Homeschoolers go through an admission process where they are vetted like everyone else. They are included in orientations and other

school events to help them learn of expectations and to help them assimilate. Homeschoolers must be committed to the programs they join.

Throughout the interviews, several factors were mentioned that might influence the type of relationship Christian schools can have with homeschool families. One factor that was evident for one of the leaders from an exclusive school is that his school has no space. It is not possible to invite homeschoolers in. Another factor to consider is what the homeschool population looks like in the area. Two leaders who were interviewed mentioned that there were not many homeschoolers in the area, and they received few requests about being able to participate. In contrast, both leaders from inclusive schools have large homeschooling populations around them. One leader from a partially inclusive school said there is a significant homeschool community in his area, but his school is not meeting the need.

State rules also affect homeschool and Christian school relationships. Some states have rules regarding sports that require students to be enrolled at least part time to play, or they must live in the district that the Christian school is in to play. Other state policies include voucher programs and tax credits which might draw families who might normally homeschool into the Christian school because it is now affordable.

A final observation that affects the homeschool and Christian school relationships is the financial aspect. A common theme among interviewees was that the charges for homeschool families make sense financially. While the exact amount varied, the goal for the school leaders was to be fair and make their programs accessible. There was no extra fee for sports because no other students had to pay an extra fee for sports.

Benefits

One common theme that was brought up in interviews regarding benefits was the importance of community. For some school leaders, the idea of community is why they include homeschoolers. They believe that building these positive relationships in the community breeds familiarity. This can also have long term effects because when these students grow up, they will keep the school in mind. For others, community is why they do not have homeschoolers in their building. One school emphasizes being a part of a community by building relationships between students across grade levels, and they think it would be hard for students to jump in and out and fully experience this community. For another interviewee, the community support for the school is so strong that he says families desire to be in school; they do not want to be home.

Many of the observed benefits stem from this idea of community. It was noted by two school leaders that families who feel connected will support the school more. When they go to events, games, and fundraisers, they become part of the community which is what everyone wants. One school leader mentioned that building these relationships helps increase enrollment and revenue. Three leaders strongly agreed that building relationships with homeschoolers helps the school reach other students it might not have had contact with otherwise. This supports research done by Dahlquist et al. (2006) who noted that when schools adopt an inclusive stance towards homeschool families, the potential for mutually beneficial partnerships are possible as the schools can increase revenue and increase shared experiences for public school and homeschool children. Most school leaders that were interviewed agreed that relationships between Christian schools and homeschool families were mutually beneficially.

Several school leaders observed that students and parents both benefit from these relationships. Homeschool parents have the benefit of being able to outsource some of the

classes and activities that they cannot provide for their children. Interviews and surveys both supported the ideas presented by Dahlquist et al. (2006) and Eley (2002) that homeschool students benefit greatly from being able to interact with other students and be part of large group activities. One school leader mentioned that traditional students also benefit because they gain more classmates and like-minded friends.

Another idea that arose during the discussions of benefits is the idea of consumerism. For some school leaders, it was a simple fact that homeschoolers are shopping around for the right experiences for their students and the Christian school is a viable option. Other leaders believed the consumeristic mindset is what draws homeschool parents to the school. They do not come to the school because they want to volunteer; they come because they need something. However, one school leader brought up that this idea of consumerism is not contained only to homeschoolers. He believes that there has been a shift in all Christian education over the last 30 years from a loyalty mentality to a consumer mentality. “It used to be that Christian people were very loyal to the school. But now. . . it’s more – what can you do for me?” (Personal communication, March 29, 2022).

Barriers

While many benefits of a relationship between Christian schools and homeschool families centered around the idea of community, one of the common barriers that was brought up was the idea that assimilating into a school community can be hard. One aspect of this relates to the school at large. Emma admitted that it can be a challenge to assimilate into a school community, so they work harder to include homeschoolers. Hannah said that assimilating into the school community was not a barrier. To help families feel welcome, they go through

orientation, kids all go to chapel together, they mingle in the hall, and they have recess together. “They pretty quickly assimilate” (Personal communication, Hannah, March 11, 2022).

Even though the school can be intentional about helping students assimilate into the larger school community, several school leaders agreed that assimilating into a classroom is harder because “kids are kids and they’re cliquy” (Personal communication, Hannah, March 11, 2022). Nelson agreed that assimilating is hard to do, but it depends on the child’s personality. It might be hard for some but easier for others. Matthew and Cody both agreed that with the emphasis of community in the school, it is hard for students who jump in and out to feel a part of the community.

Another barrier that was observed by most school leaders and by survey respondents is the idea noted by Terpstra (1995) that a relationship between Christian schools and homeschool families can be a burden for the teachers. Due to the nature of homeschooling being more relaxed with parents having to fit in different schedules and appointments, Hannah observed that homeschoolers sometimes come late, leave early, or miss class all together. Since they are not as used to firm deadlines in their flexible environment, they also tend to have missing work or fail to complete work on time. This can create more work for teachers who must try and help these students stay caught up. Another burden for teachers that was mentioned by two school leaders are homeschool parents who micromanage by suggesting to teachers what books they should use and how much homework they should give.

Along with being a burden for teachers, Terpstra (1995) noted that a homeschool partnership could also be a burden for school schedules. In this study, this benefit had the lowest level of agreement. Two school leaders were willing to accommodate homeschool schedules as much as they could even though it was a bit of a challenge. Hannah encouraged her homeschool

families to identify their “rocks” – things they must work around (Personal communication, March 11, 2022). Then she has them pick their biggest rock, and they try to work around it together. Two other leaders believed that the schedule burden was on the family. They agreed that if homeschoolers want to participate, they can see what is available and come at the correct time.

Other Observations

The interviews led to other observations not included on the survey which focused on views of homeschooling. Several school leaders believed that, while they were content with their current situation, their school had the potential to grow in the area of homeschooling. If they had the resources and space, or if more people switched from public schools to homeschooling due to homeschool trends, political influence, or the public school system, they would be willing to look for ways to partner with homeschoolers. “I’m always up for helping fellow believers” (Cody, personal communication, March 29, 2022).

Another observation regarding homeschooling relates to financial views. Hannah believed that schools are driven by tuition, and the inclusion of homeschoolers could help provide more tuition. In Cody’s experience with homeschoolers who did not want to pay, he mentioned that homeschooling is not a benevolent ministry. Someone must pay. On the other hand, Emma believed that working with homeschoolers must be approached as a ministry, not a moneymaker. As a ministry, “you’re offering a Christian curriculum, a Christian worldview, a Christian system, environment. . . we strive to be a community that is for families” (Personal communication, March 11, 2022).

Regardless of the different views relating to the benefits and barriers of a Christian school and homeschool partnership, everyone who was interviewed had positive views of

homeschooling, whether they were from an inclusive or exclusive school. Emma stated that, “We would love more homeschooling families!” (Personal communication, March 10, 2022). While Cody’s school currently does not have room to include homeschoolers, he said that he is “not against homeschooling at all, and if we had the resources and somebody that would be committed to helping, I would be open to that” (Personal communication, March 29, 2022). Peter commented, “I do think the benefits [of having a relationship with homeschool families] outweigh the barriers in my heart of hearts” (Personal communication, February 24, 2022). Nelson, who has a diverse background in working at schools with a range of different relationships with homeschoolers, would love to partner with homeschool parents who have the same philosophy both theologically and educationally. While he believes not everyone should homeschool because they cannot all do it well, for those who can, he believes it can be another good form of Christian education. Nearly every interviewee agreed that a partnership between a Christian school and homeschool is mutually beneficial and valuable.

Implications and Recommendations

The many observations that can be made from this study led the researcher to wonder whether there a best practice regarding relationships that Christian schools have with homeschool families. As was mentioned by one of the interviewees, this is not an easy answer as many factors can affect a possible relationship including school size, location, resources, homeschool populations, and state policies. While the data does not prove that one relationship method is better than another, it does show that a higher number of schools are choosing to have some type of relationship with homeschoolers. It also shows that schools who choose to have relationships with homeschoolers find them mutually beneficial and have higher overall satisfaction level than those who do not.

While the researcher does not believe there is a clear best practice that can be identified from the study, many recommendations can be drawn from this study that can help schools decide what type of relationship would work best for their school and the homeschool families in their areas. Several of the recommendations come directly from the school leaders who were interviewed:

- When considering what a successful relationship with homeschool families can look like in a school, it is important to recognize that it will be different for each school depending on location, school size, state policies, and the local homeschool population.
- It would be beneficial to have someone dedicated to run the homeschool program and enough students to support the financial side of it.
- A homeschool policy would have to provide opportunity and access; it should be fair financially.
- Any type of program with homeschoolers would require the homeschoolers to be fully committed.
- Schools must be intentional about providing ways for the homeschool families to assimilate into the school community.
- Schools must be intentional about having policies in place for homeschool families just like they do for traditional students.

Emma said that this inclusive model is a service and a ministry and that is why they do it. Hannah encouraged others to understand that a partnership “is a win, win situation” (Personal communication, March 11, 2022). She encouraged a marriage of the homeschool community and the Christian school in whatever way makes sense in each community. Nelson provided advice for anyone considering a relationship with homeschool families:

My essential question in many of, or really all of my decisions as a school leader is, what's best for the kids? . . . And parents know their kids the best, so they should have that right, that power that's God-ordained . . . And if we can partner somehow with a homeschool family and provide a good experience but also help give them a good education, I'm for that. I'm not anti-homeschool. I would love to partner with homeschool parents who really have the same philosophy theologically and even educationally. We want what's best for our kids, and if we can find a way to, uh, kind of a marriage of that and work out the details, I'm all for that. (Personal communication, February 24, 2022)

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the current relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families. From the perspective of CSI school leaders who participated in surveys and interviews, nearly 60% of Christian schools have chosen to have some type of relationship with homeschool families. For many of these schools, the relationships are mutually beneficial as the benefits outweigh the barriers. Schools that have experienced full inclusion of homeschool families believe it is a best practice that is beneficial for everyone. For those schools that do not offer a fully or partially inclusive relationship, various factors are at play including school size, state rules, resources available, and not really having a need for it. For further study, the views of homeschool families or Christian school constituents could be explored to see if their experiences and views match those of the school leaders.

Limitations

One of the limitations for this study was that the researcher has served both as a classroom teacher and a homeschool mom, and her current role as a homeschool mom leads to potential bias. While the author sees the potential of partnerships between Christian schools and homeschools, it is worth noting that she was truly invested in understanding what relationships currently exist and which ones might be considered best practice. The researcher set aside her own ideas of what a relationship could like and instead embraced a listen-to-learn posture. The reporting of data gathered from the surveys and interviews was not altered. Methods such as open-ended questioning, coding, and charting were used to prevent bias. The researcher approached this study with an open mind to truly understand the benefits and barriers that existed among relationships between Christian schools and homeschool families.

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Appendix A

Online Survey

The following survey is being used to discover perceived relationship models that exist between Christian schools and homeschool families. The answers you provide to this survey will be kept confidential. Your name and that of your school will not be used in the survey results. Upon the completion of the research project, all data will be destroyed.

Thank you so much for taking time to fill out this survey which will help me complete my research project!

General Questions

What grades are included in your school system?

- a. K – 5
- b. 6 – 8
- c. K – 8
- d. 9 – 12
- e. K – 12

What is the population of your student body?

- a. 0 – 250
- b. 250 – 500
- c. 500 – 1,000
- d. More than 1,000

Where is your school located?

- a. Rural
- b. Urban
- c. Suburban

Relationship Models

For the sake of this survey, the following definitions of relationship models will be utilized:

Fully inclusive – Homeschool students are invited to be involved in all aspects of school including signing up for individual classes, taking part in sports and extracurriculars, and participating in school events such as retreats and field trips.

Partially inclusive – Homeschool students are invited to be involved in some aspects of school whether it is individual classes, sports and extracurriculars, or school events.

Exclusive – Classes, sports and extracurriculars, and school events are reserved for those who are enrolled as students at the school.

What type of relationship model does your school utilize with homeschool families?

- a. Inclusive
- b. Partially inclusive
- c. Exclusive

Please indicate what school activities homeschool students are invited to be a part of:

- a. After school clubs (lego club, chess club, etc.)
- b. Chapel
- c. Enrichment programs
- d. Extracurricular activities
- e. Fine arts (music/art/drama)
- f. Individual classes
- g. Remedial programs
- h. Service projects
- i. Sport teams
- j. None

Benefits

Each of the following statements posits a potential benefit of a Christian school having a relationship with homeschool families. Indicate your level of agreement to each statement with the following scale:

1 (strongly disagree), 2 (somewhat disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (somewhat agree), 5 (strongly agree)

The potential for mutually beneficial relationships can be realized by schools that adopt an inclusive stance towards homeschool families.

A benefit of this partnership for the school is that home educators who feel connected to the school will support the school more fully.

A benefit of this partnership for the school is the potential to reach students that it would not have had contact with otherwise.

A benefit of this partnership for the school is that observing what makes homeschooling successful could provide one avenue for Christian schools to deepen their practices as they seek to provide the best learning environment for their students.

A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to be part of large group educational activities.

A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to interact with other students.

A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the ability for parents to consult with teachers about curriculum.

A benefit to the homeschool parent is it allows their children to receive instruction in areas that the homeschool parent may not be competent to teach.

Barriers

Each of the following statements posits a potential barrier of a Christian school having a relationship with homeschool families. Indicate your level of agreement to each statement with the following scale:

1 (strongly disagree), 2 (somewhat disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (somewhat agree), 5 (strongly agree)

A barrier of this partnership for the school is trying to determine how much time students can spend in school and still be homeschoolers.

A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it could present for teachers.

A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it places on school schedules.

A barrier for the school is to positively assimilate the homeschool student into the ethos and culture of the classroom/school in ways that are beneficial to the homeschool student and the classroom/school.

A barrier in this partnership is that full-time school families may feel that their children's instructional or teacher time is being diverted to part-time students.

A barrier of this partnership for the homeschool families is critics who question whether homeschooled students have a place in the building.

Overall Satisfaction

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the current relationship model you have in place between your school and homeschool families?

1 (not at all satisfied), 2 (slightly satisfied), 3 (moderately satisfied), 4 (very satisfied), 5 (completely satisfied)

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Opening: Express thanks, review the purpose, emphasize anonymity, ask for permission to record, and let the interviewee know the data will be destroyed after research is complete.

You've described your relationship in the survey as What does that look like? What led you to this model?

In your survey results, I noticed you said one of the benefits for the school of having a relationship with homeschoolers was. . . Can you tell me more about that?

In your survey results, I noticed you said one of the barriers for the school of having a relationship with homeschoolers was. . . Can you tell me more about that?

Can you describe any other benefits/barriers that affect your relationship with homeschool families?

I noticed you indicated that your level of satisfaction with your current relationship with homeschool families is a Can you explain your answer? If it's high, what leads to this level of satisfaction? If it's low, what do you wish was different? Is there anything you would change about your relationship with homeschool families?

How would you describe a relationship model that you would consider a best practice?

Appendix C

Research-Based Benefits and Barriers

Benefits of Christian School/Homeschool Relationships

Survey Statements	Research Base
The potential for mutually beneficial relationships can be realized by schools that adopt an inclusive stance towards homeschool families.	Dahlquist, K. L., York-Barr, J., & Hendel, D. D. (2006). The choice to homeschool: Home educator perspectives and school district options. <i>Journal of School Leadership, 16</i> (4), 354-385. Van Galen, J. A. (1998). Ideology, curriculum, and pedagogy in home education. <i>Education and Urban Society, 21</i> (1), 52-68.
A benefit of this partnership for the school is that home educators who feel connected to the school will support the school more fully.	Terpstra, M. (1995). A home school/school district partnership. <i>Educational Leadership, 52</i> (1), 57-58.
A benefit of this partnership for the school is the potential to reach students that it would not have had contact with otherwise.	Eley, M. G. (2002). Making the homeschool connection. <i>Educational Leadership, 59</i> (7), 54-55.
A benefit of this partnership for the school is that observing what makes homeschooling successful could provide one avenue for Christian schools to deepen their practices as they seek to provide the best learning environment for their students.	Thomas, J. (2016). Learning from homeschooling routines. <i>Journal of Research on Christian Education, 25</i> (3), 233-250. Anthony, K. V., & Burroughs, S. (2012). Day to day operations of home school families: Selecting from a menu of educational choices to meet students' individual instructional needs. <i>International Education Studies, 5</i> (1), 3-17. Patterson, J. A., Gibson, I., Koenigs, A., Maurer, M., Ritterhouse, G., Stockton, C., & Taylor, M. J. (2007). Resisting bureaucracy: A case study of home schooling. <i>Journal of Thought, 42</i> (3-4), 71+.
A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to be part of large group educational activities.	Eley, M. G. (2002). Making the homeschool connection. <i>Educational Leadership, 59</i> (7), 54-55. Dahlquist, K. L., York-Barr, J., & Hendel, D. D. (2006). The choice to homeschool: Home educator perspectives and

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A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the opportunity for the students to interact with other students.	Eley, M. G. (2002). Making the homeschool connection. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 59(7), 54-55. Dahlquist, K. L., York-Barr, J., & Hendel, D. D. (2006). The choice to homeschool: Home educator perspectives and school district options. <i>Journal of School Leadership</i> , 16(4), 354-385.
A benefit of this partnership for the homeschool family is the ability for parents to consult with teachers about curriculum.	Eley, M. G. (2002). Making the homeschool connection. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 59(7), 54-55. Lines, P. M. (2000). When home schoolers go to school: A partnership between families and schools. <i>Peabody Journal of Education</i> , 75(1-2), 159-186.
A benefit to the homeschool parent is it allows their children to receive instruction in areas that the homeschool parent may not be competent to teach.	This is a perceived benefit as research about benefits in the partnership between Christian schools and homeschooling families is limited.

Barriers of Christian School/Homeschool Relationships

Survey Statements	Research Base
A barrier of this partnership for the school is trying to determine how much time students can spend in school and still be homeschoolers.	Terpstra, M. (1995). A home school/school district partnership. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 52(1), 57-58.
A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it could present for teachers.	Terpstra, M. (1995). A home school/school district partnership. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 52(1), 57-58.
A barrier of this partnership for the school is the burden it places on school schedules.	Terpstra, M. (1995). A home school/school district partnership. <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 52(1), 57-58.
A barrier for the school is to positively assimilate the homeschool student into the ethos and culture of the classroom/school in ways that are beneficial to the homeschool student and the classroom/school.	This is a perceived barrier as research about barriers in the partnership between Christian schools and homeschooling families is limited.
A barrier in this partnership is that full-time school families may feel that their children's instructional or teacher time is being diverted to part-time students.	This is a perceived barrier as research about barriers in the partnership between Christian schools and homeschooling families is limited.

<p>A barrier of this partnership for the homeschool families is critics who question whether homeschooled students have a place in the building.</p>	<p>Terpstra, M. (1995). A home school/school district partnership. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 52(1), 57-58.</p>
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