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School Structure Paper

For question 1, the name of my school is St. Catherine’s School. It is a K-12 private school and all girls until high school, then it is combined with St. Christopher’s, our brother school. It is located in the west end part of Richmond, VA. It is a suburban school because it is surrounded by many neighborhoods and is in a metropolitan area. St. Catherine’s is a more centralized school because it is controlled by only a few high-power roles not many. There is a head of the school and the board members. There is also a head for the lower, middle, and high school. Those are the people that hold most control at St. Catherine’s, but the head of the school has the most power because she has the say on everything. The board members have a good amount of say on certain topics, but the head of the school calls the shots, like deciding if we cancel school for a snow day or not. I think that St. Catherine’s is less diffuse compared to other schools who are decentralized. It is more altogether rather than spread out. Since many other public schools in the area are super spread out with many different head positions instead of just one, that makes St. Catherine’s less diffuse. Question 2, the model of the school calendar that St. Catherine’s uses is traditional. We have a three-month summer vacation, and 2 periods where at the end of each semester we have exams. Yes, I think this model is very consistent. It seems to have worked for St. Catherine’s and for everyone attending’s convenience. It is very organized and makes sure that everyone is getting a break at some point. Comparing this model to a more modern model that many public schools use; I think that traditional is better. Traditional teachers their students more about the importance of customs and traditions within the school. The teacher’s main priority and responsibility is teaching within a traditional model. For question 3, St. Catherine’s uses the A/B block schedule. This schedule worked very well when I was there, and for people still attending they seem to still enjoy it. With this type of schedule, the teachers are getting their material across without having the students confused and behind, like many would be with a 45-minute period. The A/B schedule works for some people, and for others it doesn’t. Research says that many students cannot pay attention for a whole block period, but at St. Catherine’s there are breaks given halfway through which is a benefit to all. Comparing the A/B schedule to the 7/8 period schedule that many other schools do, I believe the A/B schedule is the most efficient for teacher’s being able to get their lessons and what they want to teach across to the students. For question 5, when it comes to the bureaucracy within schools, St. Catherine’s had many one person with all the authority and power and is the head of the school. There were many different authority figures, like the teachers and the dean, but the head of school is the person who is the clear decision maker and gives the explicit rules. For question 6, discipline at St. Catherine’s School is strict. There was no tolerance for many things. The dress code was very strict and if someone broke the code, they would be sent to the dean to change. At St. Catherine’s students were not allowed to wear leggings or any type of sweats or athletic clothes. We could not wear ripped jeans or spaghetti straps. Our dresses and skirts had to be a certain length and many people had to change because of this. At St. Catherine’s the honor code was a very important and harsh policy incorporated into our lives. Another big policy was that all students were expected to play at least one sport during the fall, winter, or spring. If a student did not do that, they could substitute an art in like a dance class, or they would have to take PE. The discipline was a big factor, but I think that it built me into a strong individual and that is the goal attending St. Catherine’s School. Lastly, safety is very important at St. Catherine’s. There are security officers patrolling around St. Catherine’s constantly ensuring safety and making sure every student and faculty felt safe on campus.

Citations

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