

WHY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SUCCEED

The following is an excerpt from Diane Ravitch's Commentary on *CH 2000: A First Look*, a publication of the National Catholic Educational Association.

"Catholic high schools have an unusually impressive track record. Studies of Catholic education usually point to certain key factors, including the schools' strong academic curriculum, their common expectations for all students, and their sense of community. The one element that is often left out, but that seems to be of equal, if not predominant significance, is the fact that these are faith-based schools and communities. Because they have a sense of religious mission, these schools are good places for children. The religious mission is not incidental; it creates the common expectations and the sense of community. Our society, rife as it is with danger for youngsters, has recently begun to reconsider the value of faith-based institutions. It may turn out that the secret of success of the Catholic school is inherent in its identity and cannot simply be exported to the public square."