

*Educational Governance and Policy Issues* afforded us the opportunity to explore the various facets surrounding educational governance through four main avenues. We examined governance and policy issues by examining case studies, mining websites, reading professional journals, and sharing group discussions in response to the presentations of Professor D’Ambrosio. What became clear early on was the complexity apparent in the tension between legal and educational issues. Some examples included, but are not limited to, unfunded mandates, roles and responsibilities of school board members, personnel issues, curriculum updates and assessing the performance of both the board and district. Our final project was an opportunity to examine a real life governance issue with a district of our choice. We chose to examine the governance issues surrounding the consolidation and closing of Catholic elementary schools within the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

Discussions included Diane Ravitch’s book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*. It was interesting that this book was also discussed in courses presented by Professor Hughes and Professor Smith, which illustrated the interdependence of the knowledge we learned in our entire course.

Our cohort was very diverse in respect to backgrounds, public vs. Catholic vs. charter schools, which resulted in fascinating discussions that covered a broad spectrum of governance issues. This was the last course in the first phase of our journey and it was apparent that the members of the cohort had grown from the knowledge that we acquired in each course leading up to and including this final course. As we look back on the discussions we had in our first course, we were happily surprised to see how much we had all grown and learned. It was also

clear that camaraderie had developed among our cohort. This camaraderie is a valuable asset that we will utilize as we prepare our dissertations and continue in our roles as educational leaders.