Travis Russell, S.J., is the president of Verbum Dei Jesuit High School in Los Angeles, where he previously served as a teacher and director of Adult Faith Formation and worked in Mission Advancement. Father Russell was also a senior policy advisor for the Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology in Washington D.C., and an associate pastor at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco. Additionally, he served as a pastoral associate and assistant country director stationed at the Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi for the Jesuit Refugee Service.

Father Russell joined the Jesuits in 2008. He grew up in Sutherlin, Oregon, where he learned from his working-class parents the value of hard work. Through a series of odd events, along with a few hardships, he found his faith, which ultimately led to his vocation to priesthood. This, combined with his adventurous, can-do spirit, has put Father Russell on a unique trajectory within the Jesuits, that is, going to the margins and serving and advocating for those most in need.

Father Russell believes that while talent is evenly distributed, opportunity is not. Since arriving at Verbum Dei Jesuit in 2022, he has set the bar high, insisting on excellence, hard work, and rigor. His goal is to make the school the best college and career preparatory institution in Los Angeles. "Our students have the same potential as any in the city," he says. "We aim for the best, without qualifiers like 'inner city' or 'underserved.' At Verbum Dei Jesuit, we're focused on transformational change, measured by growth."

Father Russell completed his undergraduate studies at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, majoring in Global Security and Intelligence Studies. He holds an MA in Philosophy from Loyola University Chicago, a MDiv from Boston College, and earned his MBA from Georgetown University. He serves as a Trustee for Loyola Marymount University.