

Framework for Feb. 15, 2019 Equity PD Day

Rationale:

Based on the Bishops of Ontario's Pastoral Letter *Renewing the Promise*, schools will plan their own site-based PD Day. This will follow the strategy used for Faith Day: a menu of possible suggestions and resources provided for the schools to self-select their own strategies and plan for the day. Schools may team up with each other to develop a day (e.g. FOS etc.)

Title:

An Inquiry into Renewing the Promise:

Reflection, Discernment and Passionate Commitment on the Journey to Deepening Equity and Inclusion in Catholic Education as a True Encounter with Jesus

Learning Goals:

We are learning to deepen our critical consciousness regarding Equity and Inclusion in order to apply it to our professional practice at the Halton Catholic District School Board.

Opening Prayer/ Honoring the Land:

Prayer Service to be provided for all sites to use based on the Road to Emmaus and our understanding that the path to Equity and Inclusion is a journey.

Introduction:

Schools to be provided with a video introduction of:

- a) Pat Daly speaking on Equity and Inclusion at HCDSB.
- b) Sita Jayaraman introducing herself and her role, and speaking to Equity in broader terms.
- c) A brief overview of the purpose of the day, rationale, learning goal, inquiry question, topic (emphasis on developing critical consciousness/equity literacy in order

constantly consider equity perspectives as a way to promote student well-being and achievement).

d) Link of equity and inclusion literacy to *Renewing the Promise*

Suggestions for Format:

MINDS ON:

Option 1: Schools who have not had an opportunity to review *Renewing the Promise* should choose to unpack the relevant parts of the document. Suggested implementation:

1. a) Use the Booklet provided to break the staff into five exploratory groups. Provide the task sheets for each group. Each small group is to follow the instructions on their task sheet for reading and discussion. Have each small group share a summary of their reading and discussion with the large group.

OR

- b) Choose a strategy from the *Renewing the Promise Discussion Guide* to unpack the document.
2. Refer the large group to pp.86-89 in the *Renewing the Promise Discussion Guide* and discuss based on school's focus for the day.

Option 2: Schools who are familiar with *Renewing the Promise* may wish to explore *Ontario's Equity Action Plan, 2017*, pp. 13- 16, 22-25 and link the guidelines in this document to the table in the *Renewing the Promise Discussion Guide* pp. 86-89.

Option 3: Schools revisit SIPSA and/or look at Equity Action plan goals. Link SIPSA/Equity Plan to the table in the *Renewing the Promise Discussion Guide* pp. 86-89. Discuss: successes, needs for improvement, school concerns, student population etc. Questions to consider:

- 1) Are our goals specific?
- 2) Are they evidenced-based?
- 3) How do we know we are making a difference?
- 4) What are we doing well?
- 5) Do we have other areas that we need to address?
- 6) Do we have blind spots? Are there areas of concern that we know little about?

Option 4: Schools design their own Minds On linking Equity to *Renewing the Promise*.

ACTION:

Schools choose one of following sections in *Renewing the Promise* to address. Each section comes with a main Inquiry Question and smaller Topic Questions which help unpack the larger theme.

Section One:

A Community That Accompanies (pages 6 – 7)

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus helps his disciples to understand the faith and teaches us that the art of accompaniment is about taking the time to walk alongside one another to listen, and in so doing, to transform. Each person in a Catholic school practices accompaniment by helping students realize their own unique story is given greater meaning and purpose in knowing and living the story we share in Christ.

Inquiry Question:

How do we accompany students and staff on their life journey so that:

1) They feel included and their voices are heard in within our Catholic classroom and Catholic school practices?

and/or

2) We include and accompany as part of our Church understanding of who we are, what we believe and what our mandate is as Catholic educators?

Examples of possible Topic Questions to unpack the inquiry:

- 1) How do I include the voices of my non-Catholic school students in our Catholic practices?
- 2) What deep understanding do I need to accompany our LGBTQ students and families in their journeys within a Catholic context?
- 3) How do I look deeper into our population and practices to see the voices that may be currently hidden from my view (e.g. hidden poverty, small numbers of racialized students, Indigenous students who have not self-identified etc.)?
- 4) School may develop their own inquiry question.

Section Two:

A Community That Builds Relationships (pages 8 – 9)

Catholic schools are places where efforts are made to strengthen those who have lost their faith by inviting students and their families into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. The experience of community in the schools can gently fan the embers until they burst into flames. People often feel a special presence when they enter a Catholic school and this comes from Christ who is proclaimed through word and example and is evidenced by the way people care for one another. Catholic schools witness to Christ and by doing so help to reveal Him to others.

Catholic schools nurture a sense of respect, cooperation and the development of trust that helps to encourage effective working relationships.

Inquiry Question:

What relationships might benefit from deeper nourishment in our schools through an equity and inclusion perspective?

Examples of possible Topic Questions to unpack the inquiry:

- 1) Do our school practices encourage relationships with all of our parent community (e.g. are there particular parent communities that seem to be disengaged from the school? Can we explore why this disengagement might happen?)?

- 2) Do I see evidence of students having difficulty developing relationships (with peers or staff)? How might I explore how to help from an equity and inclusion perspective?
- 3) Do we find that many of the students sent to the office are from marginalized groups? Can we explore the reasons why and seek remedies?
- 4) School may develop their own inquiry question.

Section Three:

A Community That Encourages Engagement and Instils Hope pages 10 – 11)

The more students see and understand themselves as the beloved children of God, the more they will want to love God with all their heart, mind and soul and we know that the more we love God, the more we love our neighbour and the more we engage in community. Catholic schools help to promote engagement with the local and global community through acts of charity and by witnessing to social justice and care for the environment. Schools are places where staff and students are encouraged to enter into scripture, doctrine and worship and actively express their faith through acts of love towards their neighbours. The more schools foster and nurture Catholic identity, the more we promote that identity in service and witness to the world. Our faith calls us to engage with the world, have hope and inspire it in others.

Inquiry Question:

What works of service and education might we engage in which will increase hope in members of community from an equity and inclusion perspective?

Examples of possible Topic Questions to unpack the inquiry:

- 1) Do we understand what dignity means from the Catholic perspective and what rights and responsibilities we have related to human dignity?
- 2) Do our school practices consider the dignity of all members of our school community (e.g. Do we actively select activities that do not place hardships on those who struggle financially (staff or students)?
- 3) Do we deeply understand what culturally relevant and responsive

pedagogy is?

- 4) What strategies might we implement in our classrooms to better reflect culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy?
- 5) Are there social issues in our community that we could do address in our classrooms and schools (i.e. acts of service and education that need to be implemented)?
- 6) School may develop their own inquiry question.

Section Four:

A Community That Forms Joyful Disciples (page 13)

Catholic schools always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the gospel and are a most valuable resource for the evangelization of culture. As hearts and minds are opened to the transforming love of God, Catholic schools help to form joyful disciples, demonstrating the joy of believing and witnessing the good news to the communities that they serve.

Inquiry Question:

How do we draw each member of our community into joyful celebration of who they are as a child of God?

Examples of possible Topic Questions to unpack the inquiry:

- 1) How do we move away from a deficit model in our equity and inclusion perspectives to one which celebrates resilience, strength and overcoming?
- 2) What myths and stereotypes might we inadvertently hold that block joy and blind us to the joyful gifts of others?
- 3) Why does viewing people from a one attribute perspective block joy?
- 4) School may develop their own inquiry question.

Consolidation: Renewing the Promise

True encounter with Jesus can and does take place each day in schools. Together we renew that promise by continuing to strengthen our schools as inclusive communities that exemplify the good news in word and deed.

Schools can:

- 1) Debrief answers to the Inquiry Question based on day's learning.
- 2) Revisit SIPSAs and/or Equity Action Plan to refine goals based on learning. Schools who did not develop their own Equity Action Plan last year must develop one this year and submit it to Sita Jayaraman, HCDSB Senior Manager, Human Rights and Equity, in order to inform the development of the Board-wide Equity Plan.
- 3) Spend time developing practical applications of learning.
- 4) School choice.

Follow Up:

- 1) School Staff to complete PD Day Survey from Research and Development Department.
- 2) School Administrators to complete Questionnaire from Research and Development Department
- 3) School who created or revised Equity Action Plans to submit them to Sita Jayaraman, HCDSB Senior Manager, Human Rights and Equity.