



# NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL ANTHONY CORDEIRO  
VICE PRINCIPALS JOANNE DESANTIS AND SHARI TYPER  
REVISED MAY 13, 2019

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL-BEING 2017–2021

In Ontario Catholic schools, students continue to grow in the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values articulated by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. The staff of Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School not only fosters in each student a deeper understanding of what it

means to be a human person, made in the image of God to live in relationship, but it also supports the ongoing development of each student who, upon graduation, is expected to be:

- *a discerning believer* formed in the Catholic Faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living;
- *an effective communicator* who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values;
- *a reflective, creative and holistic thinker* who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good;
- *a self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner* who develops and demonstrates their God-given potential;
- *a collaborative contributor* who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good;
- *a caring family member* who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community; and,
- *a responsible citizen* who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.

At Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, we believe:

- every student is made in the image and likeness of God and that his/her dignity and worth must be respected and valued;
- every student can learn and that, as Catholic educators, we are called to a vocation which values each student's successes, based on his/her level of understanding;
- every student is a unique gift from God and has his/her own way of learning. As Catholic educators, we must plan for this diversity and give students tasks that respect their abilities;
- our Catholic learning communities are places of conversation and support, where educators can reach out to others in the community for ideas and assistance in order to create a learning environment that best supports all students, including students with special education needs;
- all our students have a right to be educated in the manner that best suits them. We therefore understand the importance of universal design and differentiated instruction in order to ensure that our classrooms and other learning environments are as usable as possible to students, regardless of their age, ability, or situation;
- we are all life-long learners and that, as Catholic educators, we are called to continue to develop our pedagogy so that our instruction and professional judgment are supported by good research; and,
- as educators, we have the advantage of knowing the student and the ability to provide valuable feedback in order to support his/her programming and assessment.

## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING: NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL 2017-2021**

## **PROBLEM OF PRACTICE: Critical Thinking**

### **Evidence:**

#### **What evidence informs your Problem of Practice?**

Our data from a variety of sources indicates that students are not performing at the provincial standard (or above) on tasks that require critical thinking skills and resiliency.

- OSSLT Results (implicit reading and making connections)
- EQAO Grade 9 (multi-step problem solving open-response and multiple choice)
- Our Schools Survey
- Case Conferences between students and staff
- School strengths and needs assessment based on triangulation of data, Thinking/Application areas of the Achievement Chart
- School specific student questionnaire in addition to feedback from student focus groups
- Ontario Comprehension Assessment (inferencing and making connections)
- Grade 12 Exit Survey (my Blueprint)
- Trillium mark distribution and credit accumulation reports

### **Statement of Problem of Practice:**

Our data from a variety of sources indicates that students are not performing at the provincial standard (or above) on tasks that require critical thinking skills.

### **Students Urgent Learning Needs**

Our students are struggling with:

- implicit reading
- making connections
- multi-step problem-solving
- inferencing

all of which lead to **critical thinking** and having a perseverance process which will lead to resilience.

### **Teacher Urgent Learning Needs**

Do teachers have clarity and consistency around implicit reading, making connections, multi-step problem-solving, and inferencing in support of critical thinking?

What learning do the teachers require to address the students urgent learning needs?

How are teachers incorporating 21<sup>st</sup> century learning (i.e. collaboration, communication, creativity/innovation, critical thinking)

- what do they look like in each department?
- how are they taught in each department?
- how are they assessed in each department?

### **INQUIRY QUESTION:**

**How does the use of specific strategies related to:**

- implicit reading
- making connections

- multi-step problem-solving
- inferencing

**lead to critical thinking practices that impact student learning?**

**What specific strategies related to:**

- implicit reading
- making connections
- multi-step problem-solving
- inferencing

**allow for consistency in each department and makes thinking visible in each classroom?**

**Visible Thinking:**

**Can our students answer the following questions:**

- What are you learning? (learning goals)
- Why are you learning it? (making connections)
- How will you connect this to the world? Text? Self? (critical thinking)
- What do you do when you are stuck? (perseverance)
- How do I incorporate feedback to improve my learning? (success criteria)

### **SEF INDICATORS:**

**1.1** Assessment is connected to the curriculum, collaboratively developed by educators and used to inform next steps in learning and instruction.

**1.3** Students and educators build a common understanding of what students are learning by identifying, sharing, and clarifying the learning goals and success criteria.

**1.4** During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided based on students' actions and co-constructed success criteria.

**4.2** In recognition of each student's dignity, a clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school.

**4.3** Teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within both a Catholic world view and a global context.

**4.7** Timely and tiered interventions, supported by a team approach, respond to individual student learning needs and well-being to develop each student's God-given potential.

### **THEORIES OF ACTION:**

**ACHIEVING: Meeting the Needs of All Learners**

**Goals:**

- implicit reading (what diagnostics will be created at the beginning of each strand to practice/build capacity?)
- making connections (what charts/resources make thinking visible in the classroom?)
- multi-step problem-solving (what processes can students articulate?)
- inferencing (what strategies can students access and verbalize?)
- each department will outline their consistent practice with
  - implicit reading

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making connections</li> <li>• multi-step problem-solving</li> <li>• inferencing</li> </ul> <p>In support of the development of critical thinking and perseverance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each department is making visible thinking (students can verbalize and access resources like exemplars, anchor charts, etc/) around:</li> <li>- implicit reading</li> <li>- making connections</li> <li>- multi-step problem-solving</li> <li>- inferencing</li> </ul>	
<b>Theory of Action:</b>	<b>Monitoring:</b>
<p><b>If teachers use specific (evidence-based) strategies related to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implicit reading</li> <li>- making connections</li> <li>- multi-step problem-solving</li> <li>- inferencing</li> </ul> <p><b>then they will be able to identify and respond to urgent student learning needs.</b></p>	<p>Teachers will scaffold and explicitly teach the strategies to improve or narrow the achievement gaps around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implicit reading</li> <li>- making connections</li> <li>- multi-step problem-solving</li> <li>- inferencing</li> </ul>
<p>If teachers are clear and consistent in their practice around implicit reading, making connections, multi-step problem-solving, inferencing then students can make thinking visible when asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are you learning? (learning goals);</li> <li>- Why are your learning it? (making connections);</li> <li>- How will you connect this to the world? Text? Self? (critical thinking);</li> <li>- What do you when you are stuck? (perseverance);</li> <li>- How do I incorporate feedback to improve my learning? (success criteria)</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers will scaffold critical thinking strategies (implicit reading, making connections, multi-step problem-solving, inferencing) so students can initiate critical thinking tasks</p>
<p><b>BELIEVING: Celebrating our Catholic faith and aspiring to be models of Christ</b></p> <p>All students are to promote our Catholic Social Teachings by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implicit reading</li> <li>- making connections</li> <li>- multi-step problem-solving</li> <li>- inferencing</li> </ul> <p>in order to complete critical thinking tasks that build/strengthen their resiliency.</p>	
<b>Theory of Action:</b>	<b>Monitoring:</b>
<p>If our learners experience a Catholic learning environment that is rooted in faith, then students will be able to use implicit reading, making connections, multi-step problem-solving, inferencing in order to complete critical thinking tasks that build/strengthen their resiliency in the Catholic faith which honours their human dignity.</p>	<p><b>Student are able to answer the following questions and connect them to our Catholic Social Teachings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are you learning? (learning goals);</li> <li>- Why are your learning it? (making connections);</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How will you connect this to the world? Text? Self? (critical thinking);</li> <li>- What do you when you are stuck? (perseverance);</li> <li>- How do I incorporate feedback to improve my learning? (success criteria)</li> </ul> <p><b>which honours the human dignity of the learning process and helps to strengthen our Catholic community</b></p>
--	--

**BELONGING: Embracing Relationships and sustaining safe, welcoming schools**  
 All students are to promote our Catholic Social Teachings by:

- implicit reading,
- making connections
- multi-step problem-solving
- inferencing

in order to make visible thinking and faith formation a renewal of our Baptismal vocation and strengthen our sense of identity as a Catholic community.

<b>Theory of Action:</b>	<b>Monitoring:</b>
If students and staff work together to build a collaborative learning environment that uses implicit reading, making connections, multi-step problem-solving, inferencing then our students will continue to nurture and strengthen Catholic schools as communities that exemplify in word and in deed the Good News of Jesus Christ ( <i>Renewing the Promise</i> ) while narrowing the achievement gap.	Students and staff will report on a greater sense of belonging on the Our School survey and demonstrate greater participation in the life of the school that honours human dignity and faith formation. The Catholic ethos is experienced and celebrated in learning and in community.

<b>CHECK-INS:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Evidence Considered:</b>	<b>Progress to Date and Next Steps</b>
September 6, 2017	Staff meeting: review of the problem of practice	
October 11, 2017	Critical Thinking defined; connection to Bloom’s taxonomy; connected to Board Strategic Plan	Bloom’s higher order thinking chart to be ordered for classroom teachers
December 8, 2017	Instructional Rounds Team visit	
February 1, 2018	Reviewed at staff meeting the findings of the IR Team visit	5 Why protocol and Next Steps
March 20, 2018	IR School Team presented the Theory of Action to the staff	A review of the meta patterns that staff explored in small groups on February 1 <sup>st</sup> ; results will be shared with staff; as well, a look at the Theory(s) of Action that the IR Team developed along with the monitoring suggestions.
April 10, 2018	Assessment Piece and Bloom’s Taxonomy with specific connection to critical thinking in teacher assessments	Staff reviewed an assessment piece and then looked at the verbs used to assess students; compared the verbs to where the fit in terms of higher order thinking; staff are encouraged to attend a PD session offered by the itinerants on April 18 <sup>th</sup> in periods 1,2, and 4.

April 18, 2018	PD sessions on critical thinking in either current assessment piece or the development of a new one	FOS itinerants met with staff throughout the day to work on revising or writing assessment pieces that specifically addressed critical thinking tasks.
September 11, 2018	Literacy and Numeracy Team meeting	Early progress indicators
October 2, 2018	Academic Council	Key areas of focus: 1. Paying Attention to Proportional Reasoning, 2. Making connections to the ND problem of practice, 3. Transitioning from Remedial Math Strategies to Evidence Based strategies, 4. Monitoring tools and moderated marking.
October 4, 2018	SIP Team Meeting: review of current SIPSA and revision	Literacy/Numeracy/Spec Ed teams to meet to revise "achieving goals" prior to next meeting November 21, 2017.
October 3 & November 7, 2018	Academic Council Meeting – analysis of student data, discussion on how to improve data collection	DHs to bring discussion points back to Department Meetings.
November 6, 2018	Academic Council	Follow-up to previous academic council meeting focus items and an examination into Catholic Education and current trends.
November 14, 2018	Literacy Meetings – identification of target students using triangulation of data.	ENG 2P/3U Tutoring Initiative, building staff and student relationships with small-group instructions.
November 14, 2018	Teachers of Applied Learners CLC – discussion of Hattie's High Yield Instructional Strategies to meet the needs of target students	Teachers to implement one new strategy with their current classes and track achievement of marker students.
November 9, 2018	Review of SIPSA by admin and curriculum staff	Revisions sent to SIPSA team for consultation and feedback.
November 21, 2018	SIPSA Team meeting to discuss revisions and update one-page summary	Next meeting February 20, 2018.
November 24, 2018	Staff Meeting – to discuss revisions to SIPSA	
November 29, 2018	Literacy Committee	EQAO Pilot Project – long-writing task
December 5, 2018	Sharing and final review of the SIPSA for 2018-2019	Department Chairs to share with their respective department colleagues and return to the Academic Council table with descriptive feedback on February 6, 2019.
January 15, 2019	Period 1 Grade 10 teachers	Carried out the long-writing task (EQAO pilot)
February 7, 2019	EBS CLC	Hattie's Mindframes
February 13, 2019	EBS CLC	Chunking learning goals and success criteria
March 20, 2019	SIPSA Team meeting to discuss revisions and update one-page summary	A follow up to the November 21, 2018.
April 5, 2019	Admin Team	Ministry and Curriculum SIPSA in-service
April 10, 2019	EBS CLC	
April 12, 2019	PA Day	
May 13, 2019	Admin Team	Ministry and Curriculum SIPSA in-service
May 28, 2019	EBS Consolidation	

