

IHM BEST PRACTICES



Welcome to the 2018-2019 School Year! As we gear up for another school year, so many thoughts and plans swirl about in our minds. We know the old adage, “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” So where does one start?

1. Place the school year in God’s hands. After all, it is His work that we’re about. With the mindset of “All for His greater honor and glory,” we can’t go wrong.
2. Who are the students in my school or classroom? How can I best serve them? Reviewing permanent record cards and standardized testing results, speaking with the child’s previous teacher, and reviewing grades from the preceding year will assist educators in meeting the needs of each of their students.
3. Study the curriculum and the diocesan guidelines. Set out the calendar for the year and map out priority topics for each subject to be covered on a monthly basis. This template will be adjusted as the year unfolds.
4. Before the start of the school year, depending upon your position, administrator or teacher, write a personal welcome note to each of your colleagues or students. If you are a principal, let your colleagues know how much you appreciate all they are and do for the benefit of God’s children. Teachers definitely make a positive difference in the lives of children and their families. It is this vocation that touches all generations: grandparents, parents, and children. What a gift teachers are to the future of our world and to the Church! Teachers are the Church’s treasure and they in turn make their students experience the treasure they are through their positive influence.
5. Teachers are encouraged to write to their students before school starts and inform them of how much they are looking forward to meeting them and how they are anticipating a great year of learning together. Perhaps teachers can also share some of their dreams for the year and tell each student how they are interested in knowing what their hopes and dreams are for the upcoming year. In this introductory note, teachers may also want to acknowledge to parents how grateful they are for entrusting their precious child to their care. Assure parents that you are excited to be partnering with them for the benefit of their child. Reaching out in this manner will certainly go a long way in creating a positive and cohesive working relationship throughout the school year and beyond.

6. Sharing dreams with colleagues is life-giving and builds an excitement for the school year. Acknowledging one another’s dreams and finding ways to make dreams come true for colleagues, students, and parents is exhilarating and helps to create a wonderful and vibrant faith community. We can be *Dream Managers* for one another by helping the one dreaming to establish goals for making a particular dream become a reality. With students, for example, if they have a goal to earn honors for the first quarter, sit down with them and, cognizant of their academic aptitude, assist them in establishing specific steps for accomplishing their goal of achieving honors. For instance, you would guide and discuss with each student, that in his/her particular case, he may have to study at least three days in advance before a test to earn a high grade; for another student, one or two days may be sufficient. Studying students’ personal files will help in this determination. In establishing benchmarks for achieving goals, progress can be measured and dreams can then be actualized. What a sense of accomplishment the child and teacher will experience. And when one dream is achieved, then the next seems within reach, and the next, and the next resulting in a boost in the child’s self-confidence and self-esteem. This type of exercise will certainly build a

A dream written down with a DATE becomes a goal.
A goal broken down into STEPS becomes a plan.
A plan backed by ACTION makes your dreams come true.
Greg S. Reid

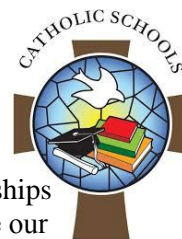
“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”
Eleanor Roosevelt

congenial relationship between teacher and students. Parents would appreciate teachers’ investing time to listen to children’s dreams and then assisting them in accomplishing established goals.

As Matthew Kelly states in his book, *The Dream Manager* (2007), a quick read and a very inspirational book, “Dreams are at the core of every person. It is there that our passion for life is ignited. Dreams are invisible, but powerful.” Let us therefore dream on and make 2018-2019 an unforgettable school year full of making

dreams come true for ourselves, colleagues, and the school community!

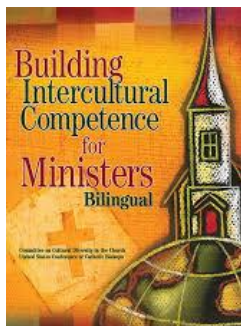
“Let the children to come to me.”



Classrooms today demonstrate an array of cultures. It is essential that educators encounter each of their students and their families with profound respect and dignity, appreciating the gifts and opportunities various cultures offer to the school community. At the recent Latino Enrollment Institute (LEI) of 2018 hosted by the University of Notre Dame, Father Joe Corporo, C.S.C., Director of University-School Partnerships in the Alliance for Catholic Education, posed the question, “If Catholic means ‘universal,’ how universal are our Catholic schools? If not, why not?” The University of Notre Dame conducted a study in 2009 entitled *To Nurture the Soul of a Nation* for the purpose of increasing the opportunity for Latinos to attend Catholic Schools. The study surveyed Latino families and discovered that the major reason why Latino parents do not send their children to Catholic schools is due to tuition being cost prohibitive. As we know, this is the case for many parents who would choose Catholic education for their children, but just cannot afford it. One of the presentation slides at the LEI displayed Jesus with the little children and stated, “Let the children come to me (Mt 19:14). He DID NOT say, ‘Let the little children who can afford tuition come to me.’” Father Joe emphasized that some parents may have an issue with some attending the school at a lower rate. This is the time when education to parents is needed. The LEI offered some suggestions for making Catholic schools a viable option for families.

1. **Airplane Tuition Model** – Airlines want the seats filled; otherwise, it is lost revenue. Likewise, if Catholic schools offer parents a Catholic education at a reduced rate, more seats would be filled. It is money the school wouldn’t have if the seats were left empty. A school that is at capacity portrays a thriving school to the public.
2. **Just-Share Tuition Model** – The school, in consultation with the parish finance council, would set an agreeable rate of tuition according to the parish demographics. The council would provide to parents information regarding the actual cost required to educate a student. The finance council would then establish the rate of tuition, for example, 5% of the family income, with an established cap for those who can afford the full tuition rate. Example: Family income: \$80,000 ---- Tuition: \$4000. This is 5% of their income. Family income: \$50,000 ---- 5% = \$2500.

Families would be required to submit their 1040 as this would determine their need for financial aid. Tuition would be negotiated on a yearly basis.



“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” -- Matthew 28:19-20. There is much to learn from one another, as we are all God’s children. The Latino Enrollment Institute pointed out that parishes and schools must not approach cultural differences as a deficit, but rather as a means of enriching and vitalizing parishes and schools. In the *Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers* program manual by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the bishops explain that “*The Church is a communion modeled on the love among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It seeks to mirror that communion of Divine persons in the way it welcomes and gathers in all peoples – ‘every tribe and tongue, people and nation’ (Rev 5:9).*” This excellent resource provides those in parish and education ministries with five modules and establishes goals, outcomes, explanations, resources, and ideas for group

activities for the purpose of developing knowledge of cultural diversity and insights on how to communicate with cultural sensitivity.

In the manual, *Seeking an Understanding of Culture and How It Works* explains the differences between an *Individualist Culture* as found in Western societies (approximately one-third of the world’s cultures) and *Collectivist Culture* evident in East and South Asian, Latin American, and African societies. Acknowledging these differences will aid when conducting school meetings. For example, in the *Individualist Culture* the agenda for a meeting is established, the meeting begins on time, deviation from the points on the agenda are frowned upon, and if the meeting ends earlier than the set time; all the better! Whereas, in the *Collectivist Culture*, a meeting will not begin until everyone has had the opportunity to greet and chat about their families with those present at the meeting. There is an agenda, but attending to the needs of the community is more important than accomplishing tasks on the agenda. Attendees at the Institute were reminded repeatedly that food must be present at every gathering.

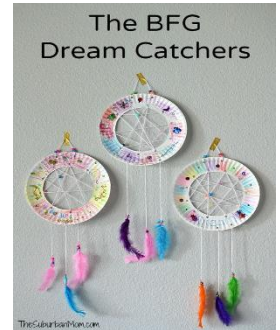
A possible application may include instituting a potluck dinner before Home and School Meetings. This approach would provide the opportunity for those present to acquaint themselves and be nourished physically and socially. Subsequently, points on the agenda would be discussed. These types of occasions may foster the respectful and authentic encounters Pope Francis promotes. Communication, real presence, respect, and a welcoming atmosphere will create a Catholic (universal) foundation for the parish and school community!

In his 2008 address to U.S. Catholic educators, Pope Benedict XVI implored his audience: “*Do not abandon the school apostolate; indeed, renew your commitment to schools, especially those in poorer areas.... No child should be denied his or her right to an education in faith, which in turn nurtures the soul of a nation.*” What a profound mission to which Jesus has called each one of us! May Our Lady of Guadalupe intercede for all involved in Catholic education!

To Nurture the Soul of a Nation file:///F:/nd_ltf_report_final_english_12.2.pdf

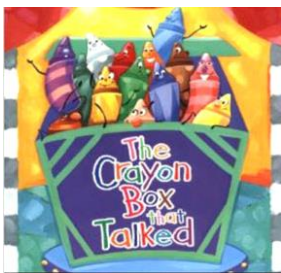
Dream Activities

1. Brainstorm a list of dreams in your very own dream book. Whatever comes to your mind, jot it down; the sky is the limit.
2. Choose your top ten dreams and decide what can be accomplished in a year's time.
3. Now from those ten, select three of the dreams and create a plan of action that is measurable and can be planned out in time segments.
4. Share these dreams with someone to whom you are very close and ask him/her to check in with you periodically to see how close you are to fulfilling at least two of your dreams. It would also be nice to have that person share his/her dreams with you; it is a great relationship builder.
5. Conduct an individual monthly or bimonthly assessment to check progress. You may want to discuss your progress with a loved one.
6. Construct dream catchers with your students. See <https://www.thesuburbanmom.com/2016/07/14/bfg-paper-plate-dream-catchers-craft/>



Celebrating Diversity

1. Create a map of the world, either for your school or classroom, and then label with the child's name the country of their origin. Have the class learn about the various characteristics of each country.
2. Celebrate an International Day and evening in which students may dress in their native dress, provide samples of their native foods, and introduce classmates to games, dances, and activities of their country of origin. Duplicate the event in the evening to accommodate working parents.
3. Include liturgical music from a variety of cultures at school Masses throughout the school year.
4. Pray the Living Rosary by displaying an image of the Blessed Mother at each decade from the countries of your students' origin, such as, Our Lady of Guadalupe/Americas, Our Lady of Lavang, Our Lady of Fatima, etc.
5. Read *The Crayon Box that Talked* by Tim Webb on Vimeo to impress upon students the unique gifts that each of us has to offer the other. Refer to: <https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/multic/a-box-of-crayons/>
6. Be sure to include in your school and classrooms images and pictures of saints and important figureheads representative of your school population.
7. Display pictures of students' representative of the different cultures in your school. If you have a display screen, create a slideshow of the students in action.
8. Foster a welcoming and inviting atmosphere throughout the school by displaying images and welcome signs in the languages spoken by the school community. Positive, accepting, and respectful relationships are of paramount importance.
9. Create a welcoming space for parents to gather. Provide informational pamphlets available in English and Spanish. Include near this area a bulletin board showcasing students' work. Be sure this is not the same area where students must wait to see the principal.
10. Be present in the community, at sporting events, at various parish Masses. Become students of your students' culture. Establish a cultural committee.



God's special blessings to you and your students throughout the 2018-2019 school year!!!