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Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

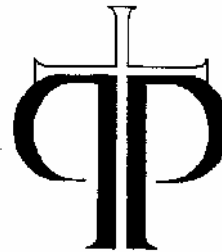


School Plan to Improve Student Achievement (S.P.I.S.A.) 2009-2010

Planning / Implementing / Monitoring (PIM) School Improvement

Philip Pocock Catholic Secondary School
4555 Tomken Road, Mississauga L4W 1J9

<http://www.dpcdsb.org/POCOK>



Let this be a School with Spirit

PHILIP POCOCK COMMUNITY PHILOSOPHY

*The pursuit of excellence in all things governs school life.
The investigation of human knowledge and the acquisition of skills
within a vibrant Christian climate inspire and provide focus.
The education process is both formative and summative.
It demands total participation in the exercise of the intellectual, physical, and
spiritual faculties found within each member of our community.
Each person develops a keener awareness of life in Christ and
an appreciation of the attendant responsibilities.*

Our School

Philip Pocock Catholic Secondary School is a secondary school of approximately 1375 students, of diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. The surrounding community consists of single family homes and multiple family apartment buildings, located in eastern Mississauga. Our student population over the past 4 years has seen a significant increase in English as a Second Students (ESL) and newcomers to Canada.

For almost 27 years, Philip Pocock has been a beacon for Catholic Education in the area. Catholic Education, rooted in Christ, is called to a unique way of seeing and interacting with our world. Through the examples of our master teacher, Christ, we take our calling to “reach out into the deep” and “be community” for others seriously. Our Catholic view of academics, spiritual and moral development, liturgical celebrations, prayer, discipline, and community, challenge us to use our learning for the benefit of others. We are called to be Christ for others.

At Philip Pocock our commitment to academic excellence is a shared responsibility. As a Staff and School Council, we work hard bringing together students, parents, teachers, pastoral team, trustees and other partners to form a Catholic community in the service of the spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional needs of students in our care.

Our students come to us with a variety of strengths and needs, with their Catholic *faith* as their common bond. Our prayer life, liturgical celebrations, the sacraments, and our *faith* and values system form the foundation of our school program. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs and aspirations of all our students. A wide range of subjects and learning experiences are offered to develop the skills, abilities and talents of individual students. Accordingly, appropriate assessment procedures are employed regularly to motivate and encourage student success. To ensure coherence and wholeness, subjects are taught within the context of *The Ontario Curriculum*, Gospel values and sound educational practices.

Our Commitment to Promoting Excellence in Catholic Education and Improving Student Achievement

The school system seeks to promote excellence in student achievement in all of our Catholic learning environments through the use of clearly stated expectations to inform discussions regarding the planning, review, evaluation and appraisal processes for school improvement. The expectations for improving student achievement in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board are centred in the principles and values that we hold for the construction and deconstruction of every teaching and learning situation.

Schools, Families of Schools, Program and Special Education departments will honour each of the expectations, listed below, in the context of their daily practices and individual and collective goal-setting activities.

Creating a Community and Culture of Learning: Professional Learning Communities and Learning Teams

The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of schools to function as professional learning communities. The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is committed to encouraging its schools to become professional learning communities. These communities are characterized by a culture where members of the education community continually seek, share learning and act upon what they learn. The goal of professional learning communities is to enhance the effectiveness of their members as professionals to the benefit of student achievement.

The key attributes of Professional Learning Communities are:

- Supportive and shared leadership;
- Collective creativity;
- Shared vision and value;
- Supportive conditions;
- Shared personal practice.

Research has shown that professionals learn best when they learn from one another, and learning communities provide an ideal vehicle to promote and sustain professional growth for student achievement and continuous improvement. An evolving model, learning teams in Dufferin-Peel consist of groups who meet on a regular basis to engage in focused inquiry, share ideas about teaching and learning, and develop common language and understandings, which lead to action.

The key elements of inquiry-driven Learning Teams in Dufferin-Peel are:

- Common focus/goal;
- Professional learning;
- Application/practice;
- Dialogue and sharing.

In collaboration with Family of Schools Superintendents and family capacity building teams, the Program Department continues to support the implementation of learning teams in all schools, to ensure system-wide coherency of the school improvement planning process. Schools working as professional learning communities examine their student achievement data to determine their effectiveness and the impact of their instructional strategies. They implement learning teams to ensure reflective and consistent practice, so that all school practitioners focus their efforts on supporting students.

Linking Staff Development to Student Learning and Achievement

Effective staff development focused on improving student learning is a key component of successful schools and districts. Research indicates that staff development programs must adhere to the following principles for instructional and school improvement and increased student achievement:

- Ongoing professional development is required to result in significant change in instructional practice.
- School change is the result of both individual and organizational development.
- The goal of professional development is to support the inquiry into and study of instructional practice.
- Teachers enhance their craft through training, practice, and feedback, as well as individual reflection and group inquiry into their practice.
- Professional development is essential to school improvement and increased student achievement.
- Effective professional development is school-focused and embedded in regular classroom practice.
- Successful staff development opportunities are grounded in theory, modeling, practice, and coaching.
- Successful schools promote a culture and community of learning for students, teachers, administrators and special services support staff.

EVIDENCE INFORMED INQUIRY – PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY – CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE

As a school, collectively, we have been invited to engage in the improvement model as outlined by Hill and Crevola (1979) and Fullan, Hill and Crevola (2006): Collect Student Evidence; Analyze Evidence in Relation to Research and Successful Practice; Establish SMART Goal; Identify Strategies; and Monitor and Assess. Through evidence-informed instructional leadership, we (administrators, teachers, and support staff) are “*each called by name*” to support learning for all. School improvement has implications for all aspects of school operation. How will school improvement efforts impact on the following areas?

Assessment Literacy

- Understand the difference and value of various forms of assessment (e.g., norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, standard-referenced)
- Ensure assessment tools inform an appropriate instructional response with the aim of improving student learning
- Ensure a variety of assessments are used to inform student achievement
- Utilize a variety of school wide diagnostic assessments to inform student progress (e.g. Early Warning Letters, Student Success Initiatives Credit Recovery Programs)

School/Classroom Organization

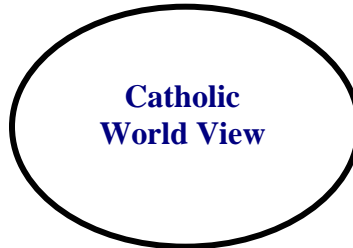
- Ensure all aspects of effective school organization are weaved into the fabric of our school: Catholicity, Safe Schools Initiatives, Diversity, Inclusion
- Ensure daily learning includes Literacy across the curriculum ensuring balanced literacy.
- Ensure daily extra help available to ensure students begin to embrace key components of mathematical literacy
- Minimize disruptions to daily classes

Classroom Teaching

- Implement targeting of high yield strategies
- Ensure implementation of IEP accommodations
- Ensure elements of balanced literacy classroom environment exist in all grades:
- Ensure implementation of high yield instructional strategies in Mathematical literacy are implemented

*Professional Goals
All Staff as Instructional Leaders*

- Pursue evidence-informed instructional leadership that targets elemental improvement across grade levels
- Support on going inquiry into supporting students at risk within an inclusive school setting, ensuring a spectrum of services



Contributions to the Family of Schools

- Involvement in FIT Committees
- Staff to contribute to family improvement initiatives
- Present, along with staff, at Superintendent Meetings, Early Release Days, Faith Development Days and After school workshops
- Staff involvement in Board and Family Initiatives

*Home/School Community
Partnerships/Catholicity*

- Partner closely with St. Patrick’s Parish
- Invite collaboration between all partners
- Offer curriculum evenings for Grade 8 parents to enable them to become active participants
- Embrace community partnerships i.e. The Learning Partnership, local parish
- Improve connections between school, home and Parish to improve parent involvement

Intervention and Assistance

- Align Resource Staff to students at Risk
- Utilize Assistive Technology in a manner that targets specific students
- Explore and implement more fully differentiated instruction
- Ensure that all staff are conversant with IEPs
- Encourage use of ARD and Resource room by reluctant students

Professional Learning Communities

- Continue department based learning teams with a focus on evidence-informed inquiry into improving student achievement and supporting students at risk
- Encourage staff involvement and engagement in family and board capacity teams and initiatives involving evidence-informed inquiry into student achievement and supporting students at risk
- Continue inquiry into effective use of diagnostic tools that inform appropriate instructional responses to student learning

Measures of Student Achievement and Success

All students in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board schools are provided with the same opportunities to learn, to grow and to achieve their potential. Assessment results ensure that schools, parents and other stakeholders in our communities have access to high-quality information needed to make informed judgments and effective educational decisions. Schools continuously collect assessment data on student learning to plan for student growth. Teachers assess knowledge, skills and strategies on an ongoing basis. Regular assessments, both classroom and large scale, allow teachers to determine the effectiveness of their instruction, assess student learning, and make informed decisions about how to organize and pace instruction.

Provincial Measures of Student Achievement

The Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test are conducted annually by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in every publicly funded Secondary school in Ontario. The assessments are based on *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12* and measure how well students know, understand and apply their skills and knowledge. The provincial assessments provide a ‘snapshot in time’ of how well students are learning what is expected of them in the curriculum, and identify ways to influence instruction and other practices to help students learn more effectively and efficiently. Students’ work is marked according to four levels of achievement, which are based on the curriculum expectations. Level 3 on the assessment scale represents the expected standard and identifies a high level of achievement of the provincial expectations. The results from the assessments are used by boards and schools to improve learning and teaching and not for ranking schools. *Ranking of schools provides misleading comparisons, which ignore the unique conditions that affect student achievement and prevents schools and the board from addressing the critical issue of improving learning for all students.*

School, Board and Provincial Achievement Results: 2008 - 2009

School results on the OSSLT and EQAO Grades 9 Mathematics assessment indicate that the intensive support initiative has produced a marked improvement in our students’ mathematical skills. Our results in the OSSLT and EQAO mathematics have exceeded the results from the previous year.

Percent of students, enrolled in the grade who scored at and above the provincial standard (Levels 3 & 4) in EQAO Math and the OSSLT:

	OSSLT (Grade 10) Successful, First-time Eligible	EQAO Math Academic) Levels 3,4	EQAO Math Applied Levels 3,4
School (2008-2009)	88 %	84 %	36 %
Board	88 %	76 %	35 %
Province	85 %	77 %	38 %

School Plan to Improve Student Achievement, 2009-2010

Response to School Assessment Information

The achievement at Level 3 or 4 at the academic level remained static from last year at 81%, above the board average and significantly above the Provincial level, At the Applied level there has been a dramatic improvement with 49% of our students achieving at Level 3 or 4. Preliminary examination of the results of the EQAO Math Assessment indicates a significant number of students achieved borderline level 2 (37% at the Applied Level and 14% at the Academic Level). The large improvement at the Applied level is attributed to a concerted effort and support, zeroing in on targeted instructional strategies. This strategy will be renewed this year to so that even more students can move to a solid level 3 and beyond. We are continuously reassessing existing programming and assessment strategies and reviewing students' results for the purposes of improving student performance. The data from this assessment will be shared with the entire staff and will be used as a basis for future discussion and planning. Achievement by our ELL students also shows a significant improvement to 58% at Level 3 or 4. A closer examination of the school's approach to reading and writing as it relates to ELL students and students with special needs will be an on-going focus this year.

Commitment to Improvement

Targets are a commitment to improvement and determine the highest level of student achievement. The following table lists the 2008-2009 school targets for the percentage of students who will reach levels 3 & 4 Mathematics assessments and who will be successful the first time in OSSLT.

	OSSLT (All Grade 10) Successful, First-time Eligible	EQAO Math Academic Levels 3,4	EQAO Math Applied Levels 3, 4
(2009-2010)	90 %	86 %	40 %

SCHOOL PLAN FOR IMPROVED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

We are reviewing the results of the Grade 9 EQAO assessment the OSSLT, in conjunction with school evidence, to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. The information gathered will be used to develop a plan that is aligned to the provincial curriculum and the Board's plan for improved student achievement. In the interim, a variety of remedial assistance programs and services will continue to be provided to all students who are not achieving grade level expectations.

Areas of focus for the school plan from September 2007 to June 2008 include: Catholicity, Creating a Safe, Caring, Inclusive and Healthy Community, OSSLT, 9-12 Mathematics. Improvements in Mathematics especially at the Applied level have been identified as a school priority.

Some of the initiatives we are focusing on this year to improve student achievement include:

Catholic Faith

- Continue to involve all academic departments in the implementation of our Pastoral Plan
- Focus on the implementation of Sacred Spaces throughout the school
- Focus on improving our Newcomer Ambassador Program to assist with the integration of newly arrive students
- Continue to celebrate our Faith in ways that are meaningful and formative for young people

Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities

- Focus staff attention on the growing population of IEP and ESL students, ensuring that all accommodations are understood and implemented
- Continue with Lunch Time detention program as an element in our Progressive Discipline program
- Continue to involve all stakeholder in a better understanding of Progressive Discipline
- Focus on credit accumulation at the grade 9 and 10 level through our Student Success Initiative
- Continue to focus on closing the gap in achievement levels between Academic and Applied streams
- Implement improved transition program with the introduction of the Link Crew model

OSSLT

Our evidence tells us.....

- Continue to focus on Literacy across the curriculum
- Expand Credit Recovery and Credit Rescue initiative through Student Success Program
- Continue to offer voluntary after-school OSSLT preparation courses.
- Continue to use "Don't Panic" on a school-wide as a preparation text for the entire Grade 10 population.

Grade 9 EQAO Mathematics and Mathematics at all grades

Our evidence tells us.....

- Begin to focus more resources on IEP and ESL student to improve achievement
- Continue the collaboration between classroom teachers, ARD, Guidance, parents and students to ensure that the student is enrolled in courses at the appropriate level or stream
- Continue to provide after and before school help through the math department
- Expand the breakfast program offered through our Alt Ed program to include more At-Risk and ESL students
- Continue to implement the Intensive support program for our Math teachers and Student, particularly at the Applied and College levels

Other Ongoing Initiatives

- Continue to work with the feeder school to improve our Transition Planning for students coming from Grade 8
- Implement Differentiated Instruction Professional Development to improve student achievement at all levels and grades.
- Continue to develop methods of communication with parents and the Parish to improve community involvement
- Maintain a balanced and sustainable budget to meet our targets in student achievement.