

# Office for Catholic Schools: High School Newsletter

February 2022  
Issue #5

Happenings around our Archdiocese and Catholic High Schools

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Resources for your high school to support BHM in February and where to find them

### **What is Best for High School Students: Start Times and Learning**

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### **GRACE program for High School Leaders and other PD opportunities**

How to support your K-8 Catholic schools while taking on a collaborative spirit - announcements on upcoming PLC opportunities for all HS Teachers!

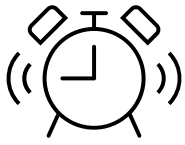


### High School Teachers!

There are many reasons to celebrate Black History Month and we have many resources that not only honor the beauty and culture of many Black Americans, but also, acknowledge the work that still must be done to dismantle systemic racism in our communities, our schools, and our Catholic Church. One of the most impactful resources that your school staff could reference for both cultural competency and also Catholic identity, is the Open Wide Our Hearts retreat protocol. This series of lessons and reflections, published by the USCCB uses a surprisingly diverse series of references throughout the documents. I would strongly recommend that should your school need support for work on racial equity and the Catholic church, your first stop should be to explore Open Wide Our Hearts, and then to really inventory what your school's goals are and what is happening in your school to ensure that your goals are being met. If you need help with this kind of work, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office – we do not have all the answers, but we do have the will, desire and heart to make a difference in our schools, and we will do what it takes to support your schools!

For February, it is important to acknowledge Black History Month, but it is important that black history is not contained to only one month (the shortest month of the year, nonetheless) but rather, celebrated and acknowledged throughout the entire school year. If you are interested in developing your cultural competency lens as an educator, to learn about resources available or just to meet others who are doing the work as well, join us for our Equity subcommittee meetings, via ZOOM, every last Friday morning of each month. All are welcome!

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## It's Time to Wake Up!

Did you know that research shows high school students (young adolescents) do their best thinking after 10:30am? According to scholar Teny Shapiro, "researchers discovered that adolescents experience major changes in their circadian rhythm, with an approximately three-hour shift toward later bed and wake-up times, making 7:30am for an adolescent equivalent to 4:30am for an adult."

And yet, our high school academic start times remain earlier than ever. Most of this is due to logistics with busing, sports, activities, etc.

Given that we know what we cannot change – what are some ideas of what can be changed to truly support our adolescent learners?

If you have some ideas or would like to chat about this topic, reach out to me and let's get talking!



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## Changing Start Times and Schedules – a Lofty Experiment or Crazy Endeavor?

Sir Winston Churchill is credited with saying “never let a good crisis go to waste” at the wrap up of WWII, and although we are not in wartime (debatable) right now, we certainly are in crisis. This pandemic, at times seemingly never-ending, has exposed a lot of opportunities in our schools for revamping a system that does not work for many families. Whether it is an antiquated system that follows an agrarian calendar or subjecting our academic programs to the logistical fallacies of operational realities (bussing and sports, specifically) if there’s anything that this pandemic has provided is the opportunity to re-think how we school. Let’s tap into our inner-Winston Churchills and determine that we will not, cannot simply go back to status quo – clearly it is not working for all kids and families.

So what should our high schools do?

### Think Big & Get Support

The average start time for Seattle area public high schools is 7:45am. That is average, friends. In our Archdiocese, we have high schools that begin as early as 7:45 and even a handful that offer zero period classes which start before that, when the skies are still dark and the owls are howling (do owls howl??) Research shows (see blurb on the left) that adolescent brains aren’t fully functioning until at least a few hours after that time, so what are we doing expecting them to engage in academic programming that early?

One school is considering restructuring their academic programming so that they provide more hands-on and physical opportunities in the early mornings and less of the traditional core subjects. One school is looking at scheduling electives and extracurricular opportunities in the early morning times and switching the core subjects to be offered only between the hours of 10-2pm. They realize that this could be a logistical nightmare for ensuring prep periods and needs of teachers are being met, so they are including teachers and department chairs in the planning of the schedule for 2022-23.

### Do Your Research

Change is hard for everyone involved; determine the research behind the why. Beyond scholarly articles or peer reviewed studies, how do big changes affect your specific school and community? Ensure that you have answers to the big questions by keeping the process of potential change as transparent as possible. Include all stakeholders and provide opportunities for feedback and participation.

### Pilot

Before jumping into a new system full-boar, determine a timeline and realistic program to pilot the idea. This can be a one-month, one-year, or multiyear process. Piloting allows schools to try new initiatives without fully committing to change and to learn from the needs of the new change that may not have been thought through. Plus, it allows for time to get use to the change should it affect multiple areas of school organization and/or governance.

In the end, we all know that change is hard, but status quo can be harder. Take the lessons learned from this pandemic and make changes to support students effectively, beyond the gradebook! Let me know if your school is doing something outside of the box and intentionally different for the sake of students.

## **February is Black History Month**

Throughout February we are called to celebrate the advancements and contributions of the black community to America. It is important that all Catholic schools recognize the advancements made by African Americans in our society, and imperative that we credit our black communities with some important work that is done in our Catholic church. It may at times seem daunting to get a wide range of voices when looking to implement Catholic lens in our lesson plans, and to that end, there is a side bar with some resources for teachers to consider.

If you have an interest in racial justice, please join Fr. Dan Horan, author of "A White Catholic's Guide to Racism and Privilege" in a workshop on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. See details below.

# Racial Justice with Fr. Dan Horan, OFM

**Saturday, February 12, 2022  
9:00 am – 1:00 pm PST**

Attend via Zoom  
Register by February 10



In this workshop Fr. Dan, author of *A White Catholic's Guide to Racism and Privilege*, invites us to actively address racism and become collaborators with our Black sisters and brothers as we work for racial justice in our society and Church.

Grounded in the Gospel, the wisdom of Catholic tradition and Catholic Social Teaching, he offers practical ways to educate ourselves and advocate for racial justice.



**Registration:** [www.ipjc.org/racial-justice](http://www.ipjc.org/racial-justice)  
No registration fee required. Donations are welcome.  
Questions? Email [ipjc@ipjc.org](mailto:ipjc@ipjc.org) or call 206-223-1138

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## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH CATHOLIC RESOURCES**

Could Black Catholic Saints be the US Church's Hidden Key for Peace in Society?  
NCR Article:

[Could Black Catholic Saints Be the US Church's Hidden Key for Peace in Society? | National Catholic Register \(ncregister.com\)](https://www.ncregister.com/Article/Black-Catholic-Saints-be-the-US-Church-s-Hidden-Key-for-Peace-in-Society-123456789)

The Catholic University of America's Black History Month resource page:

[Black History Month Resources | CUA \(catholic.edu\)](https://www.catholic.edu/black-history-month-resources/)

Six Saints for Black History Month:

[6 Saints for Black History Month \(aleteia.org\)](https://www.aleteia.org/6-saints-for-black-history-month/)

The Seattle Archdiocese Faith Formation Online Resources – both for Equity work and for BHM

[Racism - ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE FAITH FORMATION ONLINE RESOURCES \(weebly.com\)](https://www.weebly.com/racism-archdiocese-of-seattle-faith-formation-online-resources)

USCCB: Subcommittee on African American Affairs – comment on Black Lives Matter:

[Reflections on the Movement for Black Lives \(BLM\) | USCCB](https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/our-faith/faith-in-action/black-lives-matter/reflections-on-the-movement-for-black-lives-blm-usccb)



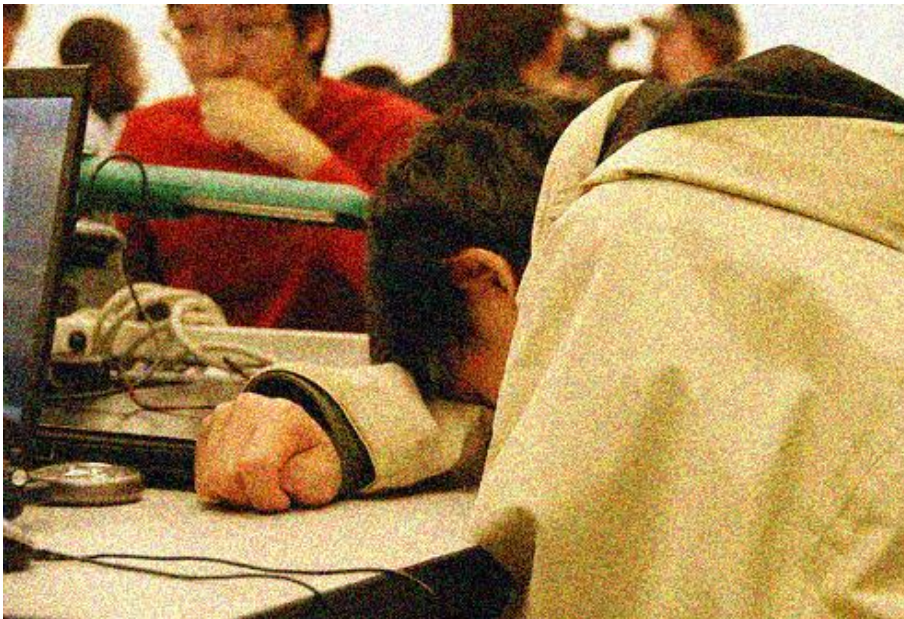
## Research and Points of Interest ...

### In Defense of Later Start Times for Adolescents ...

Research from IZA World of Labor researcher T.M. Shapiro – “Because adolescents have different internal clocks than younger children and adults, and later natural sleep and waking times, early secondary school start times are not conducive to learning. Empirical studies find sizable gains in test scores and grades from later start times for adolescents. **A one-hour delay has the same effect as being in a class with a third fewer students or with a teacher whose performance is one standard deviation higher.** Later start times are also shown to improve non-academic outcomes, such as mood and attendance, and reduce the frequency of automobile accidents. While changing start times is not costless, the benefits are likely to outweigh the costs.”

See the entire article here: [The educational effects of school start times \(iza.org\)](http://iza.org)

Given this reality, perhaps it is time to think outside the box for the sake of our Catholic school students. Is there any discussion at your school in particular about the potential to leverage this research with starting the academic program later in the workday?



### Archdiocese of Seattle Catholic HS Start Times\*:

Archbishop Murphy – 8am  
Bishop Blanchet – 8am  
Forest Ridge – 8:15am  
Eastside Catholic – 7:50am  
O'Dea High – 8:10 or 8:50  
Holy Names Academy – 8am  
Seton Catholic – 7:50am  
John Paul II HS – 8am  
Bellarmine Prep – 8:45am  
Seattle Prep – 7:45am  
Kennedy Catholic – 8:00am

(\*These do not take into account zero hour classes which are offered as early as 6:30am)

## **Serving on Accreditation Teams for 2022-2023**

We are always looking for volunteers on accreditation teams. If your principal agrees to release you for 3 days, you will earn 30 clock hours and reimbursed for travel/lodging costs. It is amazing Professional Development – email Justyna King if you are interested!!!

### **GRACE Teacher Leader Program 2022**

The GRACE Teacher Leader program has officially launched its pilot High School cohort this year and we are so proud to welcome eight of our eleven high schools to the team. We hope to get ALL high schools to participate for the 2022-23 school year, so if you are interested, please talk with your administrator about joining in on the (educational) fun! Here are some of the highlights:

- ❑ LEARN about Professional Learning Communities and how to effectively implement a PLC process in your school, how to lead staff meetings and support your school administrators in peer evaluation protocols
- ❑ LEAD the path for your fellow teachers in deciphering data, creating spaces for discussions around educational and instructional methodology and protocols for supporting courageous conversations.
- ❑ LEVERAGE your role in the GRACE program to implement new and exciting programs and protocols at your school for the benefit of students, staff, and your entire Catholic school community.

Our next virtual meeting is on **February 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm** – reach out to Kristin Kuzmanich (GRACE High School Regional Leader) and join us! You can email Kristin at [kuzmanichk@kennedyhs.org](mailto:kuzmanichk@kennedyhs.org) and let her know that you're interested in learning more.



**CALLING ALL 9<sup>th</sup> GRADE TEACHERS** – We are looking to coordinate a meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers with 9<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to discuss what to expect for the upcoming 2022-23 school year in terms of student preparedness and supports needed. If you are interested in a virtual meeting, please reach out to Justyna King at [justyna.king@seattlearch.org](mailto:justyna.king@seattlearch.org) and we can coordinate times to collaborate.

### **Middle School Science Collaboration and Support**

The goal of these workshops is to join together and converse about how we can best support our students as they transition from MS to HS. We will be working on curriculum alignment, best practices, technology use, and just have a chance to network with other middle school science teachers. There are four sessions from 3:30 - 4:30 pm on January 24<sup>th</sup>, February 28<sup>th</sup>, March 21<sup>st</sup>, and Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The sessions will be hosted by teachers from Holy Names and O'Dea. If you have any questions you can email Ryan White at [rwhite@odea.org](mailto:rwhite@odea.org) or Becca Shope [rshope@holynames-sea.org](mailto:rshope@holynames-sea.org).

### From Marshall Memo #920:

#### *The Keys to a Champion Classroom*

In an Education Week interview by Rick Hess, author/educator Doug Lemov talks about the just-published 3.0 edition of *Teach Like a Champion*.

- The number of schools that offer radically better classroom learning environments – orderly, productive, happy, challenging, scholarly – has increased significantly in a lot of communities [over the last decade]. That gives us more models to study and more evidence that exceptional classrooms are possible.
- The proliferation of technology, especially smartphones and social media...affects students both directly – by degrading their attentional skills, for example – and indirectly – by crowding books out of students' lives. • Low tech, high text. Phones away, books out. Attention is the driver of learning. You wire or rewire your brain through how you use it. The ability to sustain your focus, to key into the signal and ignore the noise is built by habit. Every time phones are out, you are practicing fracturing your or your students' attention, making half-attention the normal state. Read and read and read. In hard copy only. Write and write and write. Pencil to paper.
- To create the highest-quality learning environments for young people, teachers have to actively shape the learning environment and sometimes the social fabric of daily interaction. Yes, that requires teachers to ask students to do what may at first seem unnatural. But the benefits massively outweigh the costs.
- To love young people is to give them classrooms that build these habits [self-discipline, self-regulation, hard work, and patience]. You want to speak but you learn to listen first; you are tired some days but complete your tasks regardless. And in the end, those are the steppingstones of greatness. But in lieu of that, we've somehow accepted a Hollywood vision where success flicks on like a switch on a journey of self-discovery. I'm going to do everything I can to build schools that offer something better.
- Curriculum has been the most overlooked factor in the struggle for higher achievement. High-quality, knowledge-rich curriculum is key. It has to be carefully designed and include rich but adaptable daily lesson plans. And it has to understand what the cognitive science tells us: Facts and higher-order thinking are not opposites. You can only think deeply about that which you know a great deal about.

"What It Means to 'Teach Like a Champion' in 2022" by Rick Hess in Education Week, January 18, 2022

## Updates, Announcements and Prayer

### Professional Development and Curriculum Day 2022 – 2/11/22 (8:30-3:30pm)

virtual sessions, clock hours, and fabulous professional learning opportunities

Join us for PD on Equity, Catholic Spiritual Practices, Assessments K-12, and STEM related trainings. See more at [mycatholicschool.org](http://mycatholicschool.org) – **registration closes on February 4<sup>th</sup>!!!**

## IN CLOSING ...PRAYER

### The Still, Small Voice of Love

Many voices ask for our attention. There is a voice that says, "Prove that you are a good person." Another voice says, "You'd better be ashamed of yourself." There is also a voice that says, "Nobody really cares about you." and one that says, "Be sure to become successful, popular, and powerful." But underneath all these often very noisy voices is a still, small voice that says, "You are my Beloved, my favor rests on you." That's the voice we need to hear most of all. To hear that voice, however, requires special effort; it requires solitude, silence, and a strong determination to listen. That's what prayer is. It is listening to the voice that calls us "my Beloved."

- **Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith** by Henri Nouwen

Interested in **Educational Leadership Programs**? Deadlines for applying are in early 2022. Visit our leadership webpage, complete with links to our 8 Catholic university partners programs, listings of virtual open house sessions, and Fulcrum grant opportunity:  
<https://mycatholicschool.org/for-catholic-schools/professional-development/leadership-academy/>