

# GRACE 2021-22

## A VIRTUAL GRACE EXPERIENCE FOR THIS SCHOOL YEAR

In trying to accommodate for the ever-changing landscape of this teacher leader program, we went completely virtual (again) this school year. We have tackled important topics such as teacher leadership, peer evaluation procedures, and PLC structures. In the winter, your Regional Teacher Leaders compiled feedback and data from region program participants and created a new focus for the second part of the year: subcommittee work.

The GRACE working committees were formed so we could divide and conquer some of our most pressing issues in our schools. Read ahead for updates about what each committee is focusing on - what they've completed thus far and what's next.

### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:

- PD and Curriculum Day
- Upcoming Events
- Celebrations
- Prayers for Peace
- BIPOC booklist
- Teaching Ukraine



### *Curriculum Committee*

The Curriculum Committee is working on editing the document outlining how many minutes should be spent on each subject. They also discussed best practices for homework in each grade level and will continue working on curriculum adoption timelines and schedule templates for schools.

# MORE COMMITTEE WORK

---

## *Accreditation Protocol*

introduction for schools going through accreditation 2022-2023, 2023-2024 or just interested in the process.

Objective: to familiarize teachers and leaders with the new Standards of Excellence protocol and introduce them to the NSBECS framework.

All schools in our Archdiocese who are currently utilizing the WCEA as their accrediting body will be moving to the new Standards of Excellence protocol for accreditation.



## *MS-HS Transition Team*

MS-HS Transition Team - suggestions for how to best prepare 8th graders for 9th grade

Objective: to give guidance to Middle Schools on how to best prepare 8th graders for the transition into HS. Also, to give support to HS Freshmen teachers in what MS teachers are seeing in their classrooms.

Currently, Becca Shope and Ryan White are leading a STEM discussion in this spirit - 8th-9th transition between science classes. Find out more on how to join this virtual discussion monthly on [mycatholicsschool.org](http://mycatholicsschool.org)

## *Educator Mental Health Team*

This subcommittee is looking to create resources for support in educator mental health.

Objective: to create resources, points of contact, mentorship, and support from other educators in Catholic Schools.

## *Data and MAP Testing*

This team discusses how to provide consistent usage of MAP and other assessment data to improve the learning of students. These educators will create a resource for schools to use in PLCs and support one another in assessment purpose and creation.



## *NSBEC Teacher Evaluation Pilot Protocol*

There is a subgroup of educators in the WCEA looking to create a new teacher evaluation system - including a formal evaluation protocol. The objective of this team is to provide feedback and ideas for how to make it effective for our current teachers.

## *New Teacher Orientation*

All of our schools have different expectations and systems when it comes to new teacher orientations and induction programs. What can we do as a system to support all schools in their new teacher programming, starting with the New Teacher Orientation days?



# PD AND CURRICULUM DAY

**1,000 STRONG**

Close to 1,000 Archdiocesan teachers, administrators and Catholic educators registered for our Professional Development and Curriculum Day 2022. It was a resounding success! But PD can only be as successful as the lessons we learn and how they are implemented immediately in our schools. To that end, GRACE teacher leaders were able to combine their learned knowledge into one comprehensive presentation that succinctly summarized learnings from the sessions they attended.

All Catholic school educators can find information on the day, resources from the presentations and some recordings from the sessions on [mycatholicschool.org](https://mycatholicschool.org)

Watch for PD&C Day 2023 on 2/10/23!



**For more specific takeaways and insights into the sessions you were unable to attend, use the QR code to take you to the PowerPoint for learning you can use and share with your colleagues.**



## UPCOMING GRACE MEETINGS:

- MARCH 15: 3:30-4:30PM - REGIONAL/ REMEMBER TO BRING A FRIEND!
- APRIL 26: 3:30-5:30PM
- MAY 17: 3:30-5:30PM
- JUNE - TBD
- GRACE KICK OFF MEETINGS FOR 2022-23 ARE SCHEDULED FOR 8/17/22 AND 8/18/22

## A CHALLENGE I NEED HELP. A LOT OF HELP.

Currently, our PD&C Day is called "Professional Development and Curriculum Day" - the worst title ever. It came from my head in a panic when we had to finalize calendars. Help me change it, friends!

Send me your ideas! All submissions will be entered into a drawing for GRACE swag; the winner will get a trip to Hawaii! (Just kidding.)

Send me your ideas:  
[justyna.king@seattlearch.org](mailto:justyna.king@seattlearch.org)

## ACCREDITATION VISITS

Congratulations to all of the schools who finished their accreditation process this year and thank you to all who served on visiting teams.

We highly recommend GRACE leaders serving on a visiting team. We know it's hard work and difficult to find subs and to be away from your students. AND, we also believe that it's wonderful professional development.

Sign up here: 2022-2023 Accreditation Team Member Registration  
- My Catholic School

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: <http://mycatholicsschool.org>



## Research Says...

# Humor in the Classroom Increases Learning

Interest Piece by Courtney C.

I'm not sure about all of you, but I've found myself rather humorless on more than a few days over the past year. And it's a shame not only for me personally, but, as I'm sure you all know from experience, humor makes teaching and learning not only more fun, but more effective. And research backs this up.

According to the March 2014 *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, there is evidence that, "appropriate use of humor can enhance retention, increase learning, improve problem solving, relieve stress, reduce test anxiety, and increase perceptions of faculty credibility. It also enhances students' attitudes toward the faculty member and can make the faculty member more likeable."

And there is science to back this up. According to the author of *Using Humor to Maximize Learning* (Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2007), Mary Kay Morrison, "We're finding humor actually lights up more of the brain than many other functions in a classroom. In other words, if you're listening just auditorily in a classroom, one small part of the brain lights up, but humor maximizes learning and strengthens memories."

In a fascinating study on instructional use of humor by R.L. Garner, humor was particularly effective for student retention of knowledge during asynchronous learning (may we never again...)

So, when that middle schooler says something they maybe shouldn't have, just know it's all part of the learning process!

## Make 'em Laugh

Suggestions from Rick Wormeli

Stop mid-sentence in your explanation of something and declare in a newscaster's voice.

Teach while holding an umbrella over your head, as if it were raining only on you. Don't say anything about it.

If you have the same set of rituals and lesson sequence every day, do the rituals and sequence backwards.

At the end of questions on content, throw in a question about something completely unrelated, but interesting to answer.

Start dancing in a recognizable dance move to a tune only you can hear in your head. Secretly recruit a student to join you after 30 seconds. Watch the class join in!

# UKRAINE

## Prayers for Peace

God of Mercy,  
We pray for Ukraine.

For all of humanity distorted by war.  
For all the lives lost, homes seized and  
peace broken.

May the Spirit of comfort and  
compassion envelop all who dwell in  
fear.

May the Spirit of wisdom and humility  
enliven our global leaders.

May we affirm the dignity and rights of  
all.

May we seek peace.

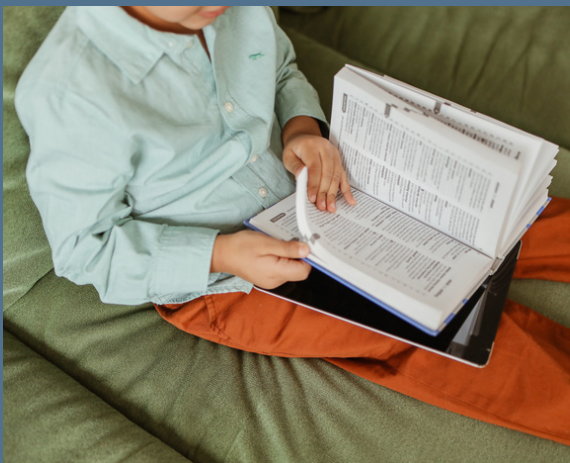
Amen.

- SALVEtoday

### HOW TO SPEAK TO STUDENTS ABOUT UKRAINE

Adapted from Sarah Schwartz  
& Kevin Bushweller  
in *Education Week*

- **Consider the developmental level:** take your cue from the kids - how much do they want to know?
- **Encourage their agency:** it is much easier to deal with difficult topics when we don't feel helpless.
- **Explain why it's important:** understanding what's happening in other parts of the world is essential to be a global citizen and thinker (and it's an essential to Catholic Social Teaching)
- **Ask objective, nuanced questions:** with HS students help them do the thinking by posing complex questions and give them time to do the research to answer these questions.
- **Share stories about what regular people are experiencing:** history is often told through the lens of what kings and presidents were doing, but the events of history are shaped by every day citizens.



As the invasion of Ukraine fills our newsfeeds and TV channels, we keep both Ukrainians and the Russian people in our prayers. Civilians, young soldiers, those risking their lives protesting, the Polish people who are welcoming refugees and those who are going to join in the service of others. We also pray for countries who are suffering greatly from war but garner far less media attention - Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Syria.



Use this QR code to check out reading lists of books written by BIPOC authors and/or featuring BIPOC main characters for the children, teens, and adults in your life.



## Celebrating the Good in Catholic Schools - Seattle Archdiocese

**10 of our 13 newest principals graduated from the GRACE program**

**We have have 14 schools who have completed, or are currently completing their WCEA accreditation this school year - congratulations to all leadership teams for their amazing work on these efforts!**

**GRACE High School leaders are 10 strong in our initial year of secondary GRACE support; we hope to get participation from ALL high schools in 2022!**

## Finally, a message for my GRACE friends

Did you notice that this newsletter looks a little different than those of the past? (Didn't know we had a newsletter of the past? Check 'em out on [mycatholicsschool.org](http://mycatholicsschool.org) - they exist!) It's because I learned about CANVA through our PD&C Day partner, O'Dea's IST conference presenters. Also, it is because someone far more creative than I forced me to try something new.

Trying something new is scary and a hassle. Why change when something is working just fine? Although it can be daunting and time consuming,

it turns out, learning new things opens up new worlds. Or in this case, very colorful newsletters. So in that spirit, I invite you to continue challenging yourself to try something new for the rest of this school year - whether it's slowing down on content delivery (blasphemy!) or maybe joining in on one of our subcommittees you have no background in, jump in feet-first.

As you are planning for 2022-23, consider your role in GRACE and how you can use it in your school setting. Feel free to drop me a note if you need anything; parlay your learning into changing something around you. I pray for your continual rest, and realizing that you are amazing.

*Thank  
you!*

**For all of your work**

