



GRACE | Guiding Regionally–Advancing Catholic Education

GRACE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of the GRACE Project is ***to improve teaching and learning*** by empowering teacher leaders to:

- facilitate collaborative, data-informed *professional learning communities*, and
- *plan data-informed professional development* that is meaningful and meets the needs of adult learners.

GRACE PROJECT STRUCTURE

- 58 of 63 elementary schools participating
- Total of 109 teacher leaders
- 9 regional teacher leaders will lead the collaboration among teacher leaders and work more closely with the Office for Catholic Schools
- Ongoing online regional meetings
- One mid-year day-long meeting (January) and one 2-day institute (June Catholic Educators Forum)
- Two additional meetings for regional teacher leaders with OCS staff

GRACE CATHOLIC EDUCATORS FORUM OVERVIEW

The Catholic Educators Forum (CEF) took place on June 19th and 20th at Our Lady of Guadalupe School and was the official launch of the GRACE project. A total of 160 teachers and principals met for two days to learn about the development and implementation of professional learning communities and to plan a yearly calendar of professional learning community meetings to drive their work. Dr. Susan Abelein facilitated the professional development in collaboration with Kaitlyn O'Leary, assistant superintendent in the Office for Catholic Schools.

GRACE CATHOLIC EDUCATORS FORUM FEEDBACK SUMMARY

- 91% of participants indicated they understand the goals of the GRACE project after attending CEF.
- 95% of participants indicated they feel confident that they can collaborate with their colleagues to carry out the goals of the GRACE project at their schools.
- Most useful sessions were The 3 Roles of the PLC Leader, and Developing Annual PLC Calendars
- Net Promoter Score: 38 (14 Detractors, 52 Passives, 63 Promoters)

Additional, narrative commentary/feedback is included on the next page.

Comments: Best Features of the PD

- The ability to connect over the course of 2 days with specific teachers from other buildings was helpful in that it allowed for more time to develop that relationship to a point where I would feel comfortable reaching out to any of the teachers I met. This is different from the Teacher Excellence Day.
- It was twofold for me....I needed to learn about the concepts/terminology and it was presented in a great way. The second thing was that I needed time to process and plan and I appreciated that time was given for that.
- Applicable tools, discussion time with STL's, and self-assessments.
- Wonderful presenters, lots of helpful information without being overwhelming, enough of a variety of learning (jigsaw, breakout, etc)
- The communication from the Archdiocese was excellent.
- Having so much time for planning with our school team. (We kept running out though!)
- Time with the principal planning long-needed conversations about teaching and learning at our school.

Comments: This PD would have been better if . . .

- if...the paperwork was more organized...color coded or in a binder.
- Principals were required to attend. Unfortunately, ours did not come and there is so much that would have been helpful and more effective if he was here.
- I was more prepared for the two days and this falls under our school's understanding of it, not information passed on from the Archdiocese.
- At times this seemed overwhelming.
- There had been much less break-out time, and we could have heard from a few schools who have successful PLCs.
- It was a lot of talking and a lot of the same talking points. It could have been condensed on the first day so that we weren't sitting for so long, listening. Like our students, we can only listen for so long. More breakout sessions the second day made the day more enjoyable and felt more productive.
- It was held Thursday and Friday - give our brains just a couple days to rest after close of school to be better equipped to work efficiently
- It had been shorter. It could have been compressed into one day.

Additional Comments:

- I'm a teacher who will definitely step up for the needs of the school, but in this instance, with the amount of work that this project entails, there should be an expectation that teacher leaders will receive stipends. Secondly, schools participating should be compensated for substitute pay to cover days that teacher leaders are out of the building. Although some schools can afford these items in their budget, many cannot. Finally, this works seems valuable. I'd like to see Teacher Excellence Day and Regional Days being given back to schools to use for whatever work needs to be done at the school level toward their goals. There would still be a strong possibility regions would meet together if their goals aligned, but having full days to do P.L.C . work would be such a gift.
- Beautiful vision for leadership. Thank you for empowering our talented teachers throughout this Archdiocese!
- I wish it were mandatory for all schools