

Report to the DDG

St. Mark's Church, Tampa, FL

15 October 2018

I should note that a report of my activities presented after every visit to the DR is submitted through official channels (TEC/815, Obispo Moises). I also maintain a blog (with great support from Julius Arial; [mcgowandr.wordpress.com](http://mcgowandr.wordpress.com)) that allows you to follow my DR activities in detail. I will send these speaking notes to Julia so they can be posted online as part of the proceedings of this meeting.

Essentially, since our last meeting I've visited the RD twice for a 2- and 3-week work time; I continue to work with colleagues online through email. These activities produced:

1. A workshop series in early May. 4 days, 4 sites, 180 teacher-participants. Sites in every region around country. Evaluations by participants have been extremely positive; we have also collected data about what educators believe their needs are as we design future workshops.
2. I returned in August/September. Mostly for planning and school visitations. My blog details what happened during this visit.
3. Also during this visit, we engaged in planning for a leadership retreat in early December.

I very much want to reinforce aspects of the report by Obispo Moises. These elements were developed by La Junta de Educacion to which I am a consultant.

1. MINERD/Diocesan partnership. This remains a promising effort to achieve quality private education with assistance from the government (pay for staff, principal). The best example I have seen is Colegio Buen Pastor. A veteran administrator paid by the government has improved facilities, raised enrollments.
2. A "department of Diocesan education" at the diocesan level. An excellent person is in process of being named as education coordinator. This position will facilitate existing activities, organize record-keeping mandated by the government, support aspects of my work like professional development and curricular/strategic planning.
3. Activities launched by the Junta de Educacion. These are important for inspiring school leadership in their efforts to improve opportunities for children. This activities included an organizational workshop before start of school year to support school leaders, reinforcing their command of new MINERD directives and working with them on strategies for school leadership. The group sponsored a "Grand Opening" of the school year, held at Colegio San Jose, Andres/Boca Chica; this school represented every school across the Diocesan *system* (a word I could not have used only 2 years ago); Bishop

Quezada blessed the teaching/learning process and offered his hopes for the school year; homilies reflected his time as a teacher and long-standing support for Diocesan education.

4. Education for values/civic involvement/spirituality. Role of Melvina Dinsey and Miguelina Corporan — their insistence that education reflect the Dominican church's insistence that it is "Una Iglesia Movidada por El Espiritu".

5. Greatly improved record-keeping at the local and Diocesan levels. We can now report officially that we have 26 operating schools with 6,355 students enrolled. Can report results like the fact that Colegio San Andres led the city of Santo Domingo in achievement test scores for the past academic year.

I am anticipating these new initiatives as part of my work in the next year:

1. Retreat for School Leadership. Planned for December 5-6 at Campamento in Jarabacoa/Pedregal. It will involve overnight at the camp and precedes a general retreat the Bishop is holding for priests and their spouses. Sessions will focus on the sorts of "Canon to the Ordinary" tasks that running an effective, high quality school demands. It will feature a number of panel discussions with proven Dominican educators — something we've needed to do and are now doing.

2. Expansion of Workshop Team. We have already increased numbers and also specialties of team membership (e.g., added TESOL, school climate). At the retreat, we will be adding Dominican experts to our team, particularly in the areas of school finance and management.

3. Fundraising. Our team needs an independent source of support for professional development activities. Additionally, funding would be helpful to explore strategies for "technologizing" pilot schools across the Diocese. We will explore possible sources and submit letters of inquiry to these sources asap.

4. Colegio Kids. The organization's founder and long-time manager, Jack Keester, has stepped down for health reasons. I have assumed role of program director, with assistance from Ellen Snow.

5. Scholarship fund drives. Central to efforts to improve schools is boosting enrollments across all of our colegios. Central to increasing enrollment (which we have done, incidentally, to a significant degree) is a healthy scholarship program. There is a need to revamp and re-inspire the ways in which we raise scholarship funds. I am willing, with DDG approval, to begin drafting materials to help in that effort.

Clearly, we are moving forward on a number of fronts. My opportunities to work with the Junta de Educacion and solicit input from people engaged over time in missionary activities (e.g., David Morrow) allowed me to prepare a white paper suggesting directions for the future of the colegios episcopales; the Bishop has sought assistance from engineering/architectural/financial consultants to identify projects to pursue. Many of those proposed initiatives are happening. Based on my sense that the emergence of the PS in every community/neighborhood did not offer a crisis for our schools but a constructive

challenge that would force improvement reforms that were needed. That approach has seemed to have been taken.

My work would not be happening without the initial inspiration/motivation by Obispo Holguin and the continuing support of Obispo Moises. I work with a team of exceptional educators who make my work simple. I am blessed to have had this opportunity. Those of you who know my medical history understand how important it was for me to find a meaningful way to "give back" to others; thanks to my Dominican colleagues for making that happen. Bendiciones y gracias.