

Report to the DDG  
Oficina Diocesana, Santo Domingo  
February 11, 2019

Once again, let me point out that I prepare a lengthy report after every DR visit for TEC/815 and Obispo Moises; copies can be made available. Thanks to Julius, I continue my blog ([mcgowandr.wordpress.com](http://mcgowandr.wordpress.com)) so you can follow my activities in detail.

Since our October meeting I visited the RD in December for 2-weeks; during that time, the education mission team offered a different type workshop at the Campamento.

1. A 2-day retreat for school leaders (rectors, principals and administrators). We focused on topics that leaders need to create a successful school: finance, professional development, motivation, community relations, language instruction. Groundbreaking effort.

2. Beyond the retreat, I worked on longer-term planning with my Dominican counterparts, Melvina Dinsey and Miguelina Corporan. Another new type of presentation will happen in May, involving intensive interactions with teachers in 4 newly identified pilot schools; presenters working one-on-one in classrooms.

3. Intention is for pilot schools to serve as demonstration schools; excellent teachers teaching improving teachers; features my intention to involve more Dominican educators in our efforts. Toward that end, we

added Lda Michelle Guzman, MINERD, as a presenter and translator with our retreat team.

As I mentioned earlier in our meeting, I continue to be indebted to Obispo Moises for his knowledgeable and support for my work. Education is a major emphasis for his episcopate; it's beginning to show.

I have helped to launch several initiatives in Episcopal education in the RD. What I am most excited to report today are the emerging initiatives developed by La Junta de Educacion which I serve as a consultant.

1. A careful, long-term planning process that examines issues facing the colegios and develops responses to them. Initiative for change lies with these planners.

2. A more activist Junta de Educacion, expanded in size and empowered to ensure that our schools are meeting (or at least addressing) new national standards for planning, curriculum, physical plant and instruction. School visits made regularly; the reviewers have a check sheet.

3. MINERD/Diocesan partnership. As we heard this morning, this remains a promising effort to ensure a quality private education with financial assistance from the government. Five additional sites are attempting such partnerships; roughly a dozen other colegios are beginning the exploration process

4. A "department of Diocesan education" at the diocesan level. Miguelina Corporan, a dynamic educator, will facilitate existing activities, organize record-keeping

mandated by the government, support professional development and curricular/strategic planning. And, yes, she will have an office.

5. Activities launched by the Junta de Educacion. I highlighted several activities in my last report; they continue in areas such as workshops in the uses of social media to promote school-community relations.

6. Collaboration with important stakeholder groups. Our private schools inevitably have a public aspect in terms of the standards that every school must meet. Miguelina and Melvina have extensive “connections” with MINERD and have positive relationships with that agency.

7. Emergence of a diocesan educational *system*. Goes beyond establishing an education office. A visibility for our schools; a coherence in our policies; new lines of governance.

8. Education for values/civic involvement/spirituality. The Bishop and every educational leader in the Diocese insist that education must have a spiritual dimension. My role as a presenter involves sessions in Civic education; a recent workshop series featured Diocesan theme: “Una Iglesia Movida por El Espiritu”.

9. Record-keeping at the local and Diocesan levels. Some of this in response to MINERD mandates; much of it based on the desire for widespread school improvement. We have 26 operating schools with 6,355 students enrolled. We have student performance data. We have a uniform electronic data collection/sharing system as the Bishop reported this morning.

I anticipate initiatives as part of my work in the next year:

1. Director, Colegio Kids foundation. Ellen Snow and I have taken over this organization upon the retirement of Jack Keester. Transition this year. Still, we raised funds for 42 scholarships, all provided at Colegio San Esteban. Revamping donor lists; revising materials; renewing the web page. Ellen and my objective: Expand Colegio Kids beyond giving scholarships at one school toward more general support for school improvement efforts.

2. Expansion of Workshop Team. We continue to add Dominican members as topics emerge. Focus this year on exemplary teachers and administrators in our schools.

3. Creation of an Education-oriented web page. Would be part of the Diocesan page. Promising strategies, lesson ideas. Ultimately, exemplary teachers who can offer advice and respond to situations.

4. Fundraising. Continuing to seek independent sources of support for professional development activities. Also to launch an initiative to add a technology dimension in colegios across the Diocese. Also, some serious attention to generating a fund/foundation/endowment for augmenting teacher salaries across the Episcopal schools.

5. Scholarship fund drives. We all understand importance of student scholarships to boost enrollments. Something that is a priority of the DDG. I worked with Julius/Julia to revamp the DDG website and revise the scholarship brochure; now need to use these communication devices to increase scholarship funding

system-wide. Identification of Karen Carroll as coordinator for fund-raising is hugely important.

6. Facilities Improvement. Schools have been built with DDG support. That happened a while ago. Time for identifying schools with building needs, prepping punch lists, and completing those listed projects. DDG should be in the school improvement business fixing buildings, maybe even more than building new ones.

Clearly, we are moving forward. Remember my insistence in past meetings that the government's increased educational presence hasn't created a crisis for our schools but has challenged us to reform and improve. We've accepted this challenge.

My work could never happen without the support of Obispo Moises and the exceptional Dominican educators with whom I work. Bendiciones y gracias.

