



## President's Message

TMA is returning to in-person training and the response by Dominican and Canadian mentors has been enthusiastic and heart-warming.

This spring, on my first post-pandemic trip to the Dominican Republic, Dominican Board member José Lopez and I met with numerous mentors, schools, the Canadian Ambassador, education officials and collaborating organizations.

student learning requirements that will equip them for the future.

The opportunity to serve as leaders in implementing and sharing instructional strategies through the training received from TMA has been eagerly embraced.

TMA's past work in educational leadership development at a system level provided by Dr. Bev Freedman, Pedagogical Consultant and Board member, received accolades from Dominican colleagues. Several organizations requested continuation of this important work with Principals, Superintendents and Directors of Education.

In summary, this photo captures the sentiments that I repeatedly heard from various colleagues—TMA is a valued organization at all levels, both in the Dominican Republic and Canada, and educators are eagerly awaiting opportunities to continue their learning.

~ Nancy Threan Loraine



*Deyanira Aquino, co-leader of Santo Domingo mentor team, pointing to a mural that says- Al Retorno a la Alegria- 'Returning to Joy'*

Despite the repeated challenges identified by mentors, they remain hopeful and committed to serving as 'Agents of Change'. There were some common themes that we heard: teachers have been stretched both personally and professionally and they expressed some discouragement with the reality of their situation in schools and the potential direction that education is taking. While they are saturated with information, the lack of specificity in the details of implementation is concerning to them. Teachers have not been provided the opportunity to 'develop' the curriculum and be responsive in addressing



**"You (TMA) give life and colour" to the strategies that we share.**

*Leonisia Sosa, DR Mentor*

# Mentorship to Fellowship

we've stayed connected via Zoom throughout the pandemic and continued to explore ways to support our Dominican mentors and expand our work, there is absolutely nothing in this world that could have compared to the long awaited hugs that we shared today, the laughter as we reconnected, the tears of joy and the personal narratives about our kids, grandkids, partners and careers paths. We reminisced about past trips ~ plungers, seized Tribes books, close quarters, roosters, treacherous roads and so much more. This group of remarkable women, most of whom I have known for seven years, continue to inspire and push me to do better, to learn more about mentorship, to appreciate the importance of identity, to be not only a more informed educator, but to be a better global citizen. I truly believe that I am a better person when surrounded with their wisdom, their unconditional acceptance, and a shared vision of the impact that professional learning can have within society.

~ *Susan Bruyns*, TMA Mentor (and Principal, Sir Arthur Currie P.S., London, Ontario)



**Back row: Janet Giberson, Denise Taylor-Edwards, Sue Bruyns, Emily Edwards, and Cheryl Rayburn**

**Front row: Sandi Cole, Karen Percy, Wendy Chan, Catherine Duvall, and Beth Buchanan**

## 2022 TEAMS

**Santiago: Denise Taylor-Edwards, Sue Bruyns, Emily Edwards, and Cheryl Rayburn**

**Santo Domingo: Wendy Chan, Catherine Duvall, Beth Buchanan, and Janet Giberson**

# Supporting Teachers in Rural Dominican Republic

This summer our work is going to shift. As an organization we are going to return to the heart of our work which is collaborating directly with our Dominican mentors. Over the past few years (pre-Covid) our work was focused on providing a week-long conference, which grew to 300+ DR educators. Our group of DR mentors played a supportive role in the conferences, but we had yet to reach our ultimate goal of having them take the lead.

This summer, all of that changes! Mentors are focusing this summer's pilot project through their goal of reaching educators in underserved rural areas, which is an important step in achieving equitable outcomes for students.

We are taking a much smaller team and we will work with our DR mentors in both sites (Santiago and Santo Domingo) for three days. The focus will be primarily listening and learning about how they navigated Covid and where they feel the necessary work needs to be. Secondly, we will work together to

It has been three years since we have come together for a face-to-face planning meeting for our summer Teacher Mentors Abroad conference. Although

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support them as they develop a day-long conference for peers in an outreach location. The Santiago team will be traveling to La Vega. The Santo Domingo team will travel to Consuelo. The Whitby Sunrise Rotary Club is supporting that outreach.

We know that in order for there to be expansion and true implementation, it is our DR mentors who need to ultimately take the lead with their peers. We are hopeful that facilitating a conference in another district will assist them in gaining the confidence to take the lead within their own district.

~ *Susan Bruyns*, TMA Mentor (and Principal, Sir Arthur Currie P.S., London, Ontario)

**TEACHER  
MENTORS  
ABROAD**

Dedicated to improving the quality of education in under-resourced communities

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