

# Annual Report 2023



## Agents of Change





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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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In 2005, Dominican and Canadian educators met for the first time as participants in teacher training workshops. The Canadians were the trainers, and the Dominicans were the enthusiastic learners whose determination to bring renewal to their schools was expressed in a powerful phrase: "We will be Agents of Change".

In 2008 the first Dominican mentor team was formed, and mentors have been true to their vow. Today, three teams at four sites throughout the country have assumed the role that in early days was held by Canadians. Dominican trainers lead the workshops, and their members hold positions of leadership in their schools and school districts. A visit to their schools and classrooms shows clear evidence of Agents of Change at work.

From the outset, the Dominican mentors challenged TMA to provide what they needed, not just what we wanted to offer. They knew their own strengths: a good curriculum, demonstrated commitment, passion for their work and a desire to learn how to be the best they could be. Good quality training is what was needed, delivered in a way that was culturally sensitive and relevant. In the next chapter of Teacher Mentors Abroad, the Dominican mentor teams will deliver effective training thus acting as catalysts for program expansion. They will thus honour their mandate for change.

Our Program Committee has responded admirably to the challenges of their committee's role. They have brought to the mentor teams the lessons of their teaching experience, the resources they have found to promote growth and, most of all, a desire to support the development of their Dominican colleagues.

The new chapter for TMA also includes new partners that broaden our presence in the Dominican Republic. TMA has signed an Alliance Agreement with the Instituto Superior de Estudios Educativo Pedro Poveda (ISESP) and the Centro Cultural Poveda, two Dominican organizations with a mandate for teacher training and education research. We will now undertake developing specific activity agreements that deliver programs and educational exchanges with our mentor teams. TMA has recently added Board members based in the Dominican Republic. They will serve us well in promoting dialogue with these organizations.

The Program Committee has been the greatest contributor in bringing this growth to fruition. The Board of Directors and Communications Committee added their expertise and support to achieve these goals.

TMA is comprised of genuinely collaborative and committed individuals. Our special thanks and heartfelt gratitude to Doug Wilson, who retires from the Board after years of trusted and invaluable service. To our team members, volunteers, staff, and donors, 'mil gracias', a thousand thank you's. None of this would have been possible without you!



Nancy Threan Loraine  
President



## REFLECTIONS

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### **Shining Stars** Dominga Ortiz Mota & Santa Desir Aquino

TMA was honoured and privileged to have worked recently with these two passionate educators from Consuelo who continuously strive for quality education in the Dominican Republic. It was evident from the moment they participated in our workshops last year that they were devoted educators who aimed at improving student achievement. Dominga and Santa have a strong understanding that implementing effective instructional strategies positively impacts students' results. The workshop that Dominga and Santa prepared and shared with their Dominican colleagues focused on active-learning strategies for teaching mathematics. They demonstrated an extensive knowledge of the curriculum and how to engage children in math in a meaningful way. Every Dominican educator who attended their interactive workshop raved about how much they learned and that they could see themselves using those strategies in their own classrooms. The participants in TMA's workshops are beginning to see just how cooperative learning and engaging practices can be used in any class and with any age.

Dominga and Santa's enthusiasm for teaching and learning is infectious. It is clear why ALL students desire to be in their classes! These are the reasons why these two educators have been the shining stars of Consuelo 2023!



“Last year I was at TMA's workshops as a participant and this year I am here as a mentor. This year the experience is totally different. It's better! It's the best! On this occasion. I have learned how to be a good mentor and how to be a good leader for my students, for the new teachers and for all the teachers here in Consuelo. Our teachers could use a change in the way they teach to help make their students feel like they are home, like they are comfortable and like they are happy.

With all of the strategies TMA has taught us and given us, we can share them too. So, it's like a continuous flow because I give to TMA, TMA gives to me, and we all give to the students. The learning goes round and round.

I feel so happy. Even though it has been a long journey, I am so satisfied and I am so thankful. Thank you very much TMA for coming here and bringing all these beautiful and amazing experiences to the Dominican Republic, especially to Consuelo, my hometown.”

**Greicy Noyola Ramirez**  
*Consuelo Mentor*



## REFLECTIONS



The Peace Learning Circles course experience was phenomenal and incredible!

At the beginning I was a little intimidated because I was the only Dominican. However,

what I learned was very helpful in organizing the entry of new students at the beginning of the school year. What I learned made a difference in my teaching 'del cielo a la tierra' (from heaven to earth).

The strategies readily connected with students and among each other. I saw other options for managing groups and character interaction. In the end, strategies arose from the students themselves making them more autonomous and leaving me free to serve as a guide."

**Andres Ovalles**  
*Zona Cibao Mentor*

My experience with the TMA workshops this year has been very favorable because one of my suggestions was taken into account, which is the approach to reading and writing with the students. Each of the strategies that were presented throughout the two days of workshops was beneficial and I can easily implement them in the classroom with the teachers and also with the students. I can use the strategies to give the workshop to the teachers but also the teachers can reproduce those strategies in their own classrooms.

**Egli Florián**  
*Santo Domingo  
Mentor*



Working as a Canadian mentor with TMA was an incredibly fulfilling experience. I loved the opportunity to guide and support teachers in Santiago and La Vega on their journey to make a positive impact on education in the Dominican Republic. As a mentor, it was fantastic to see firsthand the transformation that can occur when passion, dedication, and knowledge come together. It was heartwarming to observe the Dominican mentors we collaborated with not only embrace co-planning but also confidently lead workshops on their own. What made my TMA experience even more wonderful was the tight-knit community that was quickly established with the mentors. We worked collaboratively, sharing insights and experiences to enhance our collective impact on education in the Dominican Republic. This sense of unity and shared purpose made my time with TMA even more rewarding.

**Heather Feenstra**  
*Canadian Mentor*



## REFLECTIONS

“As a TMA mentor, I have had an amazing experience since I have been able to expand and share my knowledge to those teachers who need it. I have had the ability to provide them with the necessary strategies to use with their students. In turn, those students can acquire meaningful learning.”

**Dominga Ortiz Mota**  
*Consuelo Mentor*



“As a TMA mentor, I feel pretty lucky. With great joy, TMA truly discovered more of the potential in myself than I knew I had. It has been heartwarming to see my peers accept my experiences and

practices as a mentor. It has been truly a wonderful experience. I would like to invite more colleagues to participate in this great journey. Thank you so much.”

**Santa Desir Aquino**  
*Consuelo Mentor*

I have been fortunate throughout my working life to be mentored and to mentor great people that have enriched my personal and work life. Mentorship motivated me to learn about TMA. Participating in the two-way relationship of mentorship with people from a different country has been a goal of mine since I was in school to become a teacher and the passion for teaching that I found at the Teachers Mentors Abroad AGM last year let me know I had found the right place to be.

Going to the DR was all I could have hoped for, and more. When I think about my time there I am filled with gratitude. Gratitude for the team leaders, for the Canadian and Dominican teachers and for the inclusive environment that was created. Gratitude for the staff at the centre where we stayed who fed us so well. Gratitude for TMA for including me in the experience and allowing me to share my knowledge, but also allowing me to grow as a person and teacher.

I was, and am, inspired by all the teachers I worked with. The teachers I spent time with were good teachers whose main purpose was to become better teachers for their students. Good teachers are good teachers, no matter where they live and work.

**Michelle Spencer**  
*Canadian Mentor*



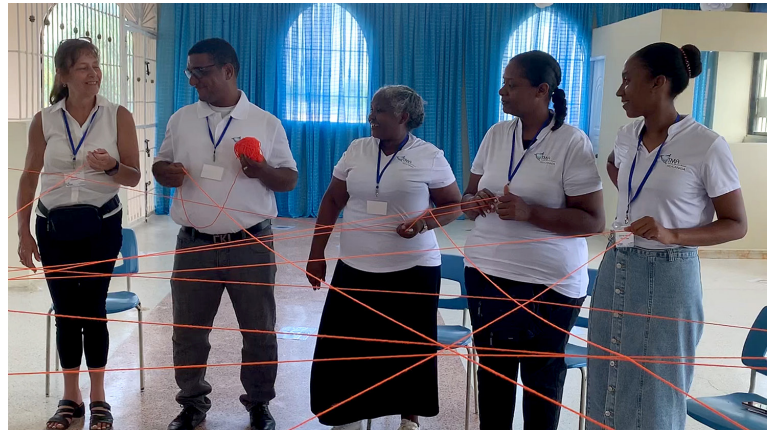


# 2023 WORKSHOPS

## Estrategias de lectura

Antes de la lectura...	Durante la lectura...	Después de lectura...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activar conocimientos previos.</li> <li>• Examinar la estructura del texto.</li> <li>• Establecer un propósito para la lectura.</li> <li>• Predecir el contenido del texto.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visualizar.</li> <li>• Resumir.</li> <li>• Confirmar o rechazar predicciones.</li> <li>• Identificar o aclarar ideas clave.</li> <li>• Ajustar de la velocidad de lectura.</li> <li>• Revisar o aclarar cualquier duda sobre el vocabulario o palabras utilizadas de la lectura.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parafrasear información importante.</li> <li>• Identificar la idea principal y los detalles.</li> <li>• Hacer conexiones.</li> <li>• Hacer inferencias.</li> <li>• Sacar conclusiones.</li> <li>• Analizar Información del texto.</li> </ul>

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### TMA MISSION

Grounded in the fundamental belief that quality education stems from effective instruction, Teacher Mentors Abroad (TMA) is devoted to the work of building teachers' capacity in under-resourced environments throughout the world.

### TMA VISION

TMA shall foster professional learning partnerships consisting of a vibrant corps of Canadian educators coupled with identified teachers in project sites. Emerging from each partnership will be improved instructional practices as well as local leadership capable of sustaining a dynamic professional learning community dedicated to ongoing instructional improvement.

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