



# The Legacy of Lasallian Education

IN THE CATALYST SCHOOLS



*The education De La Salle envisioned would be characterized by a fraternal relationship between teacher and student. The teacher is totally immersed in the lives of their students: they share their interests, their worries, and their hopes. They are not so much a schoolmaster pounding truths into their heads as they are an older brother or sister who helps students to discern within themselves their deepest call, to come to a better understanding of what is real, to recognize their own abilities, and thereby to discover progressively their place in the world.*

- Adapted from the Declaration

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# Introduction

There is no greater relationship in a Catalyst School than that between a teacher and a student. It is filled with wonder, awe and enormous power. A reflective teacher, aware of and grounded in the sacred and privileged nature of that relationship, impacts the future beyond imagination.

Catalyst teachers are guided by a certain philosophy of education, of life really, that informs and describes this powerful and beautiful relationship. This guiding philosophy is the spirit that is to animate every facet of school life and drive the school culture. This particular approach toward young people is what we call the “Lasallian legacy” of education, and bringing this legacy to life in our classrooms and hallways is the founding purpose of the Catalyst Schools.

For this reason, it is critical that every member of the Catalyst team knows and understands the essence of this legacy, so we can be about our purpose of helping young people find meaning and purpose in their lives and building a world that is just and peaceful. This legacy is a rich collection of both wisdom and practical strategies informed by three centuries of experience. The purpose of this booklet is to capture the critical essence of this legacy, while also realizing it won't do justice to its breadth and depth. Acquiring this spirit, this mindset, and “heartset” requires interior reflection seasoned by time and experience.

It is all about relationship. In the end, the teacher is the decisive element in the classroom and in the lives of the young people entrusted to our care. One's hands should tremble just a bit before opening the doors to the classroom that holds the minds and hearts that are our future.

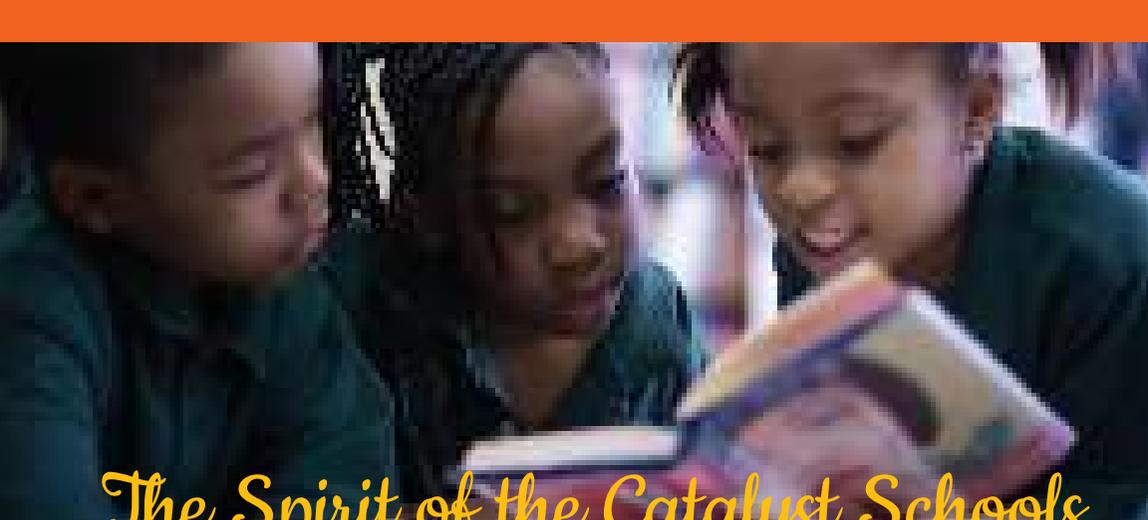


Gordon Hannon  
CEO, Catalyst Schools

*That which is of the utmost importance, and to which the greatest attention should be given in the Catalyst Schools is that all who compose it possess the spirit peculiar to it; that the leaders, faculty, staff, and students apply themselves to acquire it; for it is this spirit that should animate all their actions, be the motive of their whole conduct.*

*The spirit of the Catalyst Schools is first, a spirit of faith, which should animate those who compose it not to look upon anything but with the eyes of faith, not to do anything but for the highest purpose.*

– Adapted from the Rule of 1718,  
John Baptist De La Salle



# The Spirit of the Catalyst Schools

## Teaching Minds, Touching Hearts

The Catalyst Schools were born of a 335 year tradition of values-based education established in the 17th century by John Baptist De La Salle, who was an innovator and expert educator. He formed a community of teachers who ran the best and most demanding schools in France and eventually in 80 countries around the world. These values-based schools are renowned for their success, their culture of calm and respect, and for educating the whole child.

De La Salle was the eldest son born into a wealthy family in Rheims, France, in 1651. His family connections helped him to secure a prosperous position within the Church, and he could have lived out his life very comfortably as a powerful member of the clergy.

However, fate intervened through a meeting with a young teacher named Adrian Nyel. De La Salle agreed to assist Nyel in establishing a school for the children of the artisans and the poor in Rheims. Unlike De La Salle who was privately educated, most of the people of France were extremely poor and had no opportunity to educate their children. De La Salle and Nyel established a school that was free and open to all. This was a radical idea in 17th century France.

De La Salle took particular interest in training the teachers of the school who were often very poor and badly educated themselves. In a dramatic move, De La Salle abandoned his family's home and wealth and vowed

to live “together and by association” with the teachers. They would be brothers to one another and older brothers to the children entrusted to their care. De La Salle and the early brothers established the first schools throughout France while facing opposition from religious authorities as well as the teaching masters of the day. At his death in 1719, there were 100 brothers serving in schools throughout France.

Today, the Institute founded by De La Salle educates approximately one million students in 80 countries throughout the world. In 1990, the United Nations awarded the Institute the NOMA Literacy Prize for work in combating illiteracy throughout the world. In 2011, the Lasallian Regional Leadership team signed a statement supporting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This document calls upon political and religious leaders, as well as civil society organizations in this country, to move towards achieving real progress in the protection of children’s rights.



*There are Lasallian schools in 80 countries of the world.*

## Awakening Our Deepest Call

The Lasallian teacher exercises his or her vocation of teaching whenever he or she strives to awaken the young to an awareness that life is to be taken seriously, to a conviction of the greatness of human destiny; when he or she helps students to be able to experience, with intellectual rigor and a desire to seek the truth, the autonomy of personal thought; when he or she helps students use their liberty to overcome their ready-made prejudices and ideas, as well as to overcome social pressures and those that derive from the forces of disintegration within the human person; when he or she disposes students to use their freedom, their intelligence, and their training in the service of their fellow human beings, to open them to others, to teach them how to listen and try to understand other people, to trust and to love them; when he or she instills in the young a sense of justice, brotherhood, and fidelity.

To give evidence that it is truly a community, the Lasallian school will strive to foster the freedom of young people, encouraging them, little by little, to assume responsibility for their own education.

Education to freedom is made easier by a cordial relationship between teachers and their students, by the way discipline is handled, and by the very approach to teaching itself. Training in the exercise of freedom is inseparable from training in responsibility: students have to be given an active part in the very life of the school, including its discipline and its functions. Care must be taken that emulation does not turn into rivalry and selfish ambition.

To that end, the preferred manner of instruction will be through work in small groups, founded on trust, responsibility, and a spirit of collaboration. The school will be molded into a community only through a community of teachers rich in diversity and the unity of its members.

It is up to each teacher to do everything possible to realize his or her personal vocation. This requires frequent personal re-examination, opening oneself to ever new possibilities, and refusal to become complacent with the mastery of any particular skill. Such is the condition of an authentic educational and spiritual open-mindedness.



*The Lasallian school is characterized by a concern for each student, using the abundant resources of psychology and pedagogy so that each one will be known and treated according to his or her individuality as a human being. This concern will encompass the whole person: family background, personal talents, and special interests — a far cry from seeing the student as nothing more than someone who happens to be in school. By the same token, the teacher will make a conscious effort to discover and develop the special talents of his/her students, rather than concentrating on their short-comings and defects.*

*It happens frequently that young people have not the strength of body or mind to carry the burdens that often crush them.*

-De La Salle

## Principles of a Lasallian School

- 1 Profound reverence for each person as a unique person
- 2 Spirit of community
- 3 Treat each other the way we want to be treated
- 4 School of quality
- 5 Solidarity with the poor
- 6 Promotion of justice and peace
- 7 Inspired by the story of De La Salle



*It is urgent that every teacher make his or her own the decision of John Baptist de La Salle to go to the poor “with the heart of a poor person.” This cannot be separated from humility, from the love of one’s neighbor. It demands a genuine sharing in the life of the poor, an affective communion with the condition of the poor, going as far as the courageous personal and community practice of an effective poverty, a poverty that is consistent, however, with the practical necessities of professional life.*

- from the Declaration

# Virtues of a Good Teacher

## **GRAVITY**

seriousness, establish good order and classroom management

## **SILENCE**

speak when necessary, know what is important and what is not

## **PRUDENCE**

choose appropriate means to achieve a worthy goal

## **HUMILITY**

realize we have nothing that has not been given to us and we are called to share for the sake of others

## **WISDOM**

a deep understanding of what is worthy of our effort

## **PATIENCE**

peaceful possession of our very self – self-control – right perspective

## **RESERVE**

think, speak, and act with moderation, discretion, and modesty.

## **GENTLENESS**

goodness, tenderness, sensitivity – right relationship

## **ZEAL**

go the extra mile, do what is needed for the child's success

## **VIGILANCE**

diligence in all of our duties, being accountable for the stewardship that has been entrusted to us

## **REVERENCE**

examine and be comfortable with the deepest parts of our very self and our relationship with the rest of creation and our understanding of life itself

## **GENEROSITY**

sacrifice our personal interests to those of our neighbor and those in need. It comes from awareness that we are not the center of the universe.



# Philosophy of Discipline

## Underlying Philosophy of Discipline in a Lasallian School

The core belief at the Catalyst Schools is the “Golden Rule”: to treat other people the way you want to be treated. This is imperative for a true learning community to be formed and for children to learn what it means to live as productive citizens in the larger community.

At the Catalyst Schools, discipline is a tool used to reinforce rigorous and productive learning behaviors. Discipline must first of all be progressive and preventative and designed to allow and help children avoid those situations that could result in reprimand.

Parents are always the primary teachers of their children. In concert with this fundamental concept, we believe parents are also the primary disciplinarians of their children. School personnel assist the parent by addressing the needs of the whole child (academic, emotional, social, psychological, physical, and spiritual) and by establishing rigorous standards for achievement in all areas of the child’s life.

In the school, the classroom is where each child spends the greatest portion of the day. The relationship between the classroom teacher and the child is the context in which learning takes place. It is also the context in which discipline is exercised by the child, the teacher, and the instructional aide.

There is an expectation that all disciplinary action is taken first in the classroom by the teacher. All discipline is intended to be formative and not punitive. This is why the Catalyst Schools insist that teachers are proficient classroom managers as well as excellent instructional designers and passionate about helping scholars grow. Classroom routines and procedures must be transparent and consistently applied each and every day. Children thrive when routine and procedures support consistent and transparent school expectations. Good discipline in the classroom, rooted in a positive relationship between child and teacher, makes learning possible and gives the child opportunity for success.

*First-time teachers should enter the classroom with a deliberate and grave air, head held high and looking at all the students in a bold manner, as if they had thirty years of experience.*

-De La Salle

At the Catalyst Schools, a disciplined life begins as soon as the child enters the school building. He or she is greeted with a handshake and is expected to return the greeting. This affords the school staff an opportunity to intuit the mood and emotional context of the child immediately and to take preventative action on behalf of any child demonstrating the potential to stumble that day. Morning routines help each child launch into a positive learning environment and create a studious atmosphere that is conducive to focused learning.

All of this is very good but we know that children will be children. They will not always analyze the potential consequences of their behavior. They sometimes act impulsively. They cannot always understand their own emotional needs or how to manage their anxiety, frustration, anger, or fear. As a result, the Student Code of Conduct is designed to help parents and children understand those behaviors that are inappropriate and that will be addressed should they occur.

Consequences are intended to be aids to help the child avoid violation of the golden rule as expressed in the character traits that are essential to building the school community. They are also tools used by the school to preserve the community and to establish a culture of calm and respect where focused teaching and learning are the most important activities.

De La Salle said there should be specific conditions present for correction (discipline) to be an effective tool that promotes learning and the growth of the child into a productive adult with good character.



### **Conditions that must be present to be beneficial to the adult administering correction:**

**First, correction must be pure.** The adult administering the correction must have the correct motivation. Discipline cannot be rooted in anger, frustration, aversion, resentment, or a desire for revenge. If it is, it is about the satisfaction of the adult and not the good of the child. Purity means the motivation of the adult is clearly focused on the welfare of the child and the desire to help that child establish behaviors that will lead to success in school and in life.

**Second, correction must be charitable.** The pure motivation is appropriate love for the child. A teacher is like a doctor, not an enemy. Even though the doctor may inflict some pain, he or she is motivated by the desire to cure the malady being addressed, not the infliction of pain. Treatment is administered out of care. The teacher truly believes discipline is a gift because of the learning that will take place and how it will open the door to greater success and gratification for the child.

**Third, correction must be just.** All punishment presupposes a fault. Discipline should only be administered for a fault that is certain. A severe punishment should not be applied to a fault that is equally serious. Correction may sometimes err on the side of leniency, but it should never err on the side of severity. Otherwise we would violate not only justice but also good judgment and reason. It would mean we are being guided by prejudice or personal satisfaction rather than the good of the child.



*“To touch the hearts of your students is the greatest miracle you can perform.”*

*-De La Salle*

**Fourth, correction must be proper.** We must pay attention to the age, the character, the temperament and the dispositions of the child we are about to correct and also to those of his or her parents. In this way, we ensure that disciplinary action is proportionate to the fault, circumstances, and the end we have in view: the good health and development of the child.

**Fifth, correction must be moderate.** Discipline should never be too harsh or too quickly administered. If it is too severe, it might embitter the child, give rise to hatred, incite rebellion, or cause discouragement. If it is administered too quickly, it risks being neither just nor proper.

**Sixth, correction must be peaceable.** Discipline is administered without impatience, excitement, or a troubled spirit. The adult administering correction must be calm and at peace. There should be no shouting or anger present in the tone of the one who disciplines.

**Seventh, correction must be prudent.** Prudence demands we must ascertain the dispositions of both the child and ourselves. We would punish in vain a child whose emotional life is broken, who is filled with bitterness and anger. We must prepare a child in this condition to receive correction. It is possible the child needs counseling, time alone, a moment to reflect. Prudence requires us to determine whether a fault was committed out of malice or other human flaw inherent in our condition as persons. There should be a difference in the correction which must be appropriate to the reason the misbehavior occurred. Prudence also demands that we examine the manner of punishing — the time and circumstances. In other words, we must have some conviction about what will make the disciplinary action effective for the good of the child.

We should be careful about punishing children who are timid and usually docile and who admit their faults and demonstrate their positive motivation and desire to learn and grow.



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-De La Salle

## **Conditions that must be present to be beneficial to the child receiving correction:**

**First, it must be voluntary.** While this sounds impossible, it means the child should understand why the correction is being administered. Voluntary reception of correction implies we have reasoned with the child, explained the reason for the discipline, related it to the character traits we uphold and the golden rule that is essential to the culture of calm and respect. The child needs to know why his or her behavior violated the well-being of others and of self. This should be a moment in which teaching and learning occur. This does not mean the child will like the correction, but only that he or she will truly understand the adult's motivation and the reason for the discipline.

**Second, it must be respectful.** The student should understand the adult is required to correct him or her for faults that get in the way of learning and the welfare of the school community. When the adult corrects in a respectful manner, the child can return the respect more easily and more readily admit guilt.

**Third, it must be silent.** This means that when the child is shouting, complaining, loudly giving excuses, murmuring, or otherwise resisting, he or she is demonstrating that there is no readiness for correction. This inevitably gives rise to negative emotions in the adult. It creates a situation when all of the other positive conditions dissolve and the adult can become as negative as the child. When this happens, the child may need other intervention so that greater readiness to receive correction will develop and the child will be ready to demonstrate respect in the relationship with the teacher.

These conditions are a matter for reflection and are the guide for adults in their role as classroom managers and disciplinarians. These conditions should also guide the behavior of school leadership, administration, a Principal or any other adult who has responsibility for the welfare of children.

*A teacher's behavior becomes unbearable to students when punishments are too rigorous and the manner in which the teacher imposes upon the students is too heavy.*

-De La Salle

### **Examples of a teacher's conduct which becomes unbearable to those in the teacher's charge:**

**First**, the teacher's consequences are too rigorous and the burden which the teacher imposes upon the students is too heavy. This state of affairs is frequently due to lack of discretion and judgment on the part of the teacher. It often happens that students do not have enough strength of body or of mind to bear the burdens which many times overwhelm them.

**Second**, when the teacher enjoins, commands, or exacts something of the children with words too harsh and in a manner too domineering. Above all, the teacher's conduct is unbearable when it arises from unrestrained impatience or anger.

**Third**, when the teacher is too insistent in urging upon a child some performance of which the child is not disposed to do, and the teacher does not permit the child time to reflect.

**Fourth**, when the teacher exacts little things and big things alike with the same ardor. In other words, makes a mountain out of a mole hill.

**Fifth**, when the teacher immediately rejects the reasons and excuses of children and is not willing to listen to them at all.



**Sixth**, when the teacher is not mindful enough of his/her personal faults and does not know how to sympathize with the weaknesses of children and so exaggerates their faults too much. This is the situation when the teacher reprimands them or punishes them and acts as though dealing with an insensible instrument rather than with a creature capable of reason.

### **Examples of a teacher's weakness which leads to negligent and lax conduct by the students:**

**First**, care is taken by the teacher only about things that are important and which cause disorder, and when other less important matters are imperceptibly neglected.

**Second**, when not enough insistence is placed upon the performance and observance of the school practices and those things which constitute the duties of the children.

**Third**, when children are easily permitted to neglect what has been prescribed.

**Fourth**, when, in order to preserve the friendship of the children, a teacher shows too much affection and tenderness to them. This involves granting something special. This does not edify the others, and it causes disorder.



*Correction must have the proper motivation.*

*Discipline cannot be rooted in anger, frustration, aversion, resentment, or a desire for revenge. If it is, it is about the satisfaction of the adult and not the good of the child.*

*-De La Salle*

**Fifth**, when, on account of the teacher's natural timidity, the children are addressed or reprimanded so weakly or so coldly that they do not pay any attention or that the correction makes no impression upon them.

**Sixth and final**, a teacher easily forgets proper deportment, which consists principally in maintaining a gravity which encourages respect and restraint on the part of the children. This lack of deportment manifests itself either in speaking to the students too often and too familiarly or in doing some undignified act.

It is easy to recognize what constitutes too much harshness and too much gentleness by an examination of these examples. Both of these extremes must be avoided if one is to be neither too harsh nor too weak, if one is to be firm in attaining the purpose and gentle in the means of attaining it, and in all to show great charity accompanied by zeal. A teacher must be constant in persevering.

However, children must not be permitted to expect impunity or to do whatever they wish, and the like; gentleness is not proper in such cases. We must know that gentleness consists in never allowing any harshness or anything whatsoever that savors of anger or passion to appear in reprimands.

Instead, being gentle means showing the gravity of a father, a compassion full of tenderness, and a certain ease, which is, however, lively and effective. The teacher who rebukes or punishes must make it very clear that such punishment arises from necessity and that it is out of zeal for the common good that it is administered.



# Guiding Themes for a Just and Peaceful Society

## Life and Dignity of the Human Person

*Human life is sacred and the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. In our society, human life is under constant threat and the value of human life is threatened in a variety of ways. Every person is precious, people are more important than things, and the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.*

How do we treat the least among us? De La Salle asked for special attention to be given to those most in need. The least among us is given preference. The pupil who can't seem to "get it," the one who has behavioral or emotional issues that frustrate us, the child who comes to school dirty - these are the very ones De La Salle advises us to look beyond the rags to the person that lies behind the very things that we find repulsive.

The very first thing that happens when a child is enrolled in the school is a meeting with his or her family. It is the first step in getting to know who the person is. None of us exists outside of a social setting, and the child's family is the first context in which the personality, the perspective on life, the world view of the child begins to take shape. If we want to know the person within the "rags" we begin by developing a better understanding of his or her context. Each child, along with the parent or guardian, is asked about his or her goals. Diagnostic testing is used to know the starting point for the child's academic growth. Differentiating content means it is necessary to know the student first. The symbolic ritual of the morning greeting of each student by the adults in the community indicates the desire to be in a relationship that is inclusive, mutual, and welcoming. When the teacher does not know a child, information can be passed on but real education will not take place. Education only takes place in a relationship that is supportive, and in which the child develops a respect and love for the teacher.

## Call to Family, Community, and Participation

*The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society -- in economics and politics, in law and policy -- directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.*

In the school inspired by the Lasallian vision, everyone belongs, community is central, and strategies that fit the circumstances and situation of the particular school are devised and implemented in order to create and demonstrate the importance of belonging and that effectively communicate that the school is a community in which everyone has opportunity to participate.

This does not only happen in the classroom. Extra-curricular activities are purposefully designed to advance community. One example of this is Catalyst's approach to the young women in the middle grades. Groups are formed in which a trusted adult works with the young ladies regarding self-image, relationships with boys, and the cultural images of women (positive and negative) that they are trying to live into. Overnight retreat experiences provide opportunities for the young ladies to bond and actively participate.

Athletics are not the only kinds of teams at Catalyst. While sports are important, so are the arts. This is why more than 100 students have joined the Ravinia Circle Rockets orchestra. It is why there is invitation to participate in the writing and speaking of poetry. It is why student art decorates the halls near the art room. Attempts are made to engage students according to their natural talents and interests and to actively nurture their growth.

## Rights and Responsibilities

*Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities--to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.*

The Lasallian School is never a one way street with some people doing all the giving and others all the receiving. It is a place where mutual commitments are made explicit and are the norm. Teachers and administrators are competent, prepared, and skilled and students give their all through effort, hard work, genuine concern for their own success as well as that of their classmates. Everyone is treated with respect and genuine human relationships are encouraged and nourished. The school is a training ground for life beyond graduation.

## Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

*A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, the Lasallian tradition instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.*

This is why De La Salle became so deeply involved in the movement he founded. He was well aware of the failure of his own social structures to uphold the dignity of the most vulnerable. The class and economic structures were destructive of family life and the children were the most vulnerable. This reality is repeated in our own time. People need to work from morning to night with little energy left for what we would say are some of the important things in life, such as our significant relationships and activities that help us develop our human potential. Many work hard and long hours at minimum wage jobs without benefits. They are trapped in the cycle of poverty and have no apparent way out. And it is the children who continue to suffer as a result. When the choice in the winter for the working poor is between food and heat, there is something wrong with how we are caring for the least among us. Education in this context is definitely a work of justice. It is, for educators, a way to carve a path out of poverty and to create right relationship in our society.



## The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

*The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in building a just and peaceful world. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected--the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.*

In Lasallian Schools the work force is respected. Teaching is a difficult challenge under the best of circumstances and educators are on the go from early morning until late in the evening. Teachers must balance a multitude of relationships and responsibilities. Regular ways to demonstrate appreciation are used to give voice to that appreciation and to the respect we have for staff. Work-life balance is always a tension, especially for those who have primary relationships beyond the school - partners, families, good friends - all of whom need and deserve the educator's presence in their lives. Unnecessary burdens are not laid upon the shoulders of those who are the front line mission bearers, those most directly in relationship with children.

The school does its genuine best to provide the benefits and safety nets that support the entire team. If the school is a real community, if everyone's voice is given real hearing, if leadership is shared, if legitimate authority is participative, if there is a common sense of mission and vision, if the dignity and right of each person are respected, there is a

*Take even more care of the education of the young people entrusted to you than if they were the children of a king.*

-De La Salle

union of mind and heart because legitimate concerns are always heard and addressed. The school is a workplace that must serve people; this includes the educational team and never the other way around. Everyone is there for the same reason - the salvation of the young.

There need be no unresolvable conflict over rights and responsibilities when mission is always the primary focus and systems are put in place to make sure communication is open and invited, and respect is mutually given and received.

## Solidarity

*We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers and sisters keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace.*

De La Salle was challenged by his teachers, his brothers, to walk his talk. Basically this meant a deep sense of solidarity with the poor. He taught his teachers to trust in Providence. The teachers were well aware of his financial security. They rightly pointed out that these things were easy for him to say but they were the ones living what he taught and it seemed to them and that he was not. He had a significant cushion that would catch him should the enterprise fail.

*Have great respect for each person you are with.  
Never speak to anyone except with kindness.  
Inspire and lead others by encouraging them.*

*-De La Salle*

De La Salle knew in his heart that the sense of solidarity they were challenging him to embrace was necessary. So he distributed his wealth to the poor during a famine and retained only enough so that he would not be a burden upon the fledgling community. He joined the ranks of those who depended upon Providence and left the ranks of those who only preached about it. In our schools, we might ask ourselves what we know about those we serve. An awareness of their life challenges and the consequences of disenfranchisement and poverty imposed upon them give us great insight into the nature of the children entrusted to our care. Such knowledge teaches the teacher how to better reach them. It also calls us to align ourselves with those people who work tirelessly to change those very structures that have institutionalized the poverty we face each day in our children. Standing in solidarity with the poor means we understand the communities in which we serve. It is incredibly difficult to be one with people we do not know and when we allow a great distance to exist between us.

### **Care for Creation**

*We show respect by our stewardship of creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, to live in relationship with all of creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.*



If life is indeed a grand unity, then it makes sense to take our responsibility for all of life seriously. Science demonstrates that the stuff of the stars is the very stuff of which we are made. Life is an organic whole and humanity is not separate from the rest of the universe. We are part of it moving through space on one small globe, just like the other planets and stars. Caring for all of creation is caring for our very selves. When we abuse our resources, we set ourselves up for disaster. Human consciousness gives us the opportunity to reflect on what we see and experience. That pondering, wondering, the search for meaning, leads us to the awe, gratitude, and trust that are the foundation stones of faith and the basics of life's very mystery that lies at the heart of who we are.

Organizing our corporate life around these principles and teaching them is offering students a preparation for moral life in the world. These seven principles can become an axis around how graduates generate their own life's work, organize their own businesses, interact with those still living in poverty, establish government policy, or manage and supervise others. They should also learn their rights and be convinced of their own sense of dignity and worth. We offer them a coherent way of understanding themselves and their relationship to the rest of life through our teaching and our example.



# Loving Our Students

When De La Salle encouraged his teachers to love the children, he was encouraging these behaviors below. When children are educated and embrace these kinds of values, they grow in wholeness and become productive, contributing citizens who are committed to more than their own welfare. They know that they are participants in a society and that the welfare of all is their concern.

These values are central to what it means to be human and social. If they are not being promoted, we are cheating children and we are sacrificing the welfare of our society. In their place is found selfishness and greed, hate and conflict, anxiety and alienation.

## **Awe and wonder**

An ability to marvel at the complexity of the created world.

## **Common good**

Total human well being which takes into account the needs of the whole community. Individual rights must always be assessed in light of the Common Good.

## **Compassion**

Each individual should have a sensitivity to, and concern for, the well-being of other people.

## **Courage**

Choices, commitments and actions made in accord with what one believes to be true and right; a willingness to persevere in the face of suffering and opposition.

## **Dignity of each person**

Respect for life, and above all the dignity of the human person, is the ultimate guiding norm of any sound economic, industrial or scientific progress.



### **Family**

However it is expressed or understood, the family is cherished and fostered as the primary unit of belonging in society. It assumes personal values of identity, love, commitment and self-sacrifice for the sake of the family unit.

### **Global solidarity**

All creatures and all of creation are intrinsically valuable and linked.

### **Honesty**

Seeking truth and demonstrating sincerity in all actions and behaviors.

### **Hope**

A spirit of optimism and joy sustained by faith; an enduring and sustaining trust in providence.

### **Hospitality**

An attitude of openness, understanding and welcome to others.

### **Human rights**

All people have the universal human right to live with dignity and freedom from oppression.

### **Justice**

The right ordering of relationships and right exercise of power in a way that is life-giving for all people.

*Example makes a much greater impression than words; the young should be able to see in your wisdom how they should behave.*

-De La Salle

### **Love**

The gift of sincere care, concern, empathy and compassion extended to others; love is patient, kind, humble, forgiving and trusting.

### **Multicultural understanding**

Positive interaction with other cultures for mutual understanding and enrichment; an openness to, and dialogue, with those of different cultural backgrounds

### **Peace**

Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right order among humans and among nations; seeking peaceful, life-enhancing solutions to conflict; peace is more than simply the absence of war or conflict.

### **Reconciliation**

Reaching out in a spirit of dialogue, forgiveness and mutual respect; closely linked to love and justice.

### **Sacredness of life**

Seeing life as a gift to be respected.

### **Service**

Loving care for the needs of others.



### **Stewardship of creation**

Honoring the created universe by respecting and sharing resources, since we are all part of the community of creation. By our work we are co-creators in the continuing development of the earth

### **Self-respect**

- Proper esteem or regard for the dignity of one's character and person.
- Due respect for oneself, one's character, and one's conduct.

## Documents Referenced in This Booklet

**Rule of 1718:** this is one of the original versions of the Rule that John Baptist De La Salle gave to his early Brothers (teachers).

**Declaration:** this document was created in 1966 at the 39th General Chapter. The spirit of the Declaration is a spirit of renewal and..... a missionary spirit of dedication to the needs of youth and to the educational service of the poor; it also encourages teachers to live a spirit of community.

**Principles of a Lasallian School:** this piece was authored by Brother John Johnston, former worldwide Superior General of the Christian Brothers, from his “7 Principles of a Lasallian School.”

**Virtues of a Good Teacher:** In 1706, John Baptist de La Salle, listed twelve virtues of a good teacher in his writing, The Conduct of Schools. In 1785, Brother Agathon, the fifth superior general, reissued the list in a much longer letter titled The Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher.

**Underlying Philosophy of Discipline:** from the 17th & 18th Century writings of John Baptist De La Salle.

**Examples of a teacher’s conduct which becomes unbearable to those in the teacher’s charge:** from the 17th & 18th Century writings of John Baptist De La Salle.

**Loving Our Students:** Taken from Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching, United States Catholic Bishops’ Conference



Catalyst Schools holistically educate the young men and women entrusted to its care by a school community committed to teaching minds and touching hearts.

We envision a life of meaning and purpose for all people in a world that is just and peaceful.