

Exploring Ethical Professional Practice:
Environmental Consciousness & Eco Justice

Care

The Ethical Standard of Care

The ethical standard of Care includes compassion, acceptance, interest and insight for developing students' potential. Members express their commitment to students' well-being and learning through positive influence, professional judgment and empathy in practice.



Anishinaabe
Representation
of Care



Rotinonhsyón:ni
Representation
of Care

Perspective of an Educator

“As educators, I believe we positively influence our students by showing them our own empathy and care for the environment and others, in knowing we are all a part of God’s Creation. I believe that in giving students opportunities to explore the natural world around them, we will be helping them to realize their connectedness through experience and relationship.”

– Marianne Braca, OCT



Perspective of a First Nation Artist

“From planting the corn, to harvesting, preparing for storage or consumption, every step is important, and every contributor is vital.



These practices of acceptance, kindness and compassion are done with the best interest of our future generations in mind.”

– Elizabeth Doxtater, OCT, Six Nations

Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.” (LS, 11)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

When have I felt that awe and wonder, that deep sense of connection to Creation? How would I describe that experience?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

It may be easier to reject notions of mastery over Creation than to confront consumerism. How does the consumerism that surrounds me interfere with my connectedness?

Act

What am I called to

How can I facilitate times of quiet, ecological contemplation and prayer for my students out of doors?

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Professional Practice

The Standard of Practice Professional Practice

Members apply professional knowledge and experience to promote student learning. They use appropriate pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, resources and technology in planning for and responding to the needs of individual students and learning communities. Members refine their professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection.



Anishinaabe Representation of Professional Practice

Perspective of an Educator

“It is essential that we as educators of Kindergarten to Grade 12 and all subject areas challenge our practice to include opportunities for our students and ourselves to be immersed in the beauty of Creation that surrounds us in our local environments. This includes everything from our choice of learning materials, how and where we teach, and the opportunities we create for student inquiry and reflection.

In doing so we not only create rich opportunities for learning, but also for increased well-being, stronger internalized understanding of the interconnectedness of life, and most importantly to develop a true and deep relationship with God in ways that help to make the intangible nature of grace tangible.”

– Tara Cakebread, OCT



Perspective of a First Nation Elder

“The less resources we use today, the more we will have for tomorrow”

– Elder Garry Sault, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation



Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“The history of our friendship with God is always linked to particular places which take on an intensely personal meaning; we all remember places and revisiting those memories does us much good. Anyone who has grown up in the hills or used to sit by the spring to drink or played outdoors in the neighborhood square; going back to these places is a chance to recover something of their true selves.” (LS, 84)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

Think back to a time when you played outdoors in a neighbourhood square. What memories does it bring you?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

Pope Francis says our history of our friendship with God is linked to particular places. What in my classroom or my teaching practice can or does provide this sacred place?

Act

What am I called to

How can I model environmental stewardship in the pedagogical and assessment choices that I make and the resources that I use? Consider sustainable and natural materials, outdoor classrooms, digital options versus paper use, etc.

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Professional Knowledge

The Standard of Practice Professional Knowledge

Members strive to be current in their professional knowledge and recognize its relationship to practice. They understand and reflect on student development, learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum, ethics, educational research and related policies and legislation to inform professional judgment in practice.



Anishinaabe Representation of
Professional Knowledge

Perspective of an Educator

“There has to be a balance in knowing. There is a physical balance of things in nature but there is a spiritual element that also requires that we find balance. Ecological justice is about consciousness. So part of that is knowing what others are doing and really lifting that up and celebrating that.”



– Terry Dubroy, OCT

Perspective of an Anishinaabe Educator

“She (the teacher) understands that all things are connected, and like a spider, she is ready to weave all knowledge of professional practice to convey life’s teachings to her students.”

– Bruce Beardy, OCT

(Exploring the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession through Anishinaabe Art)

Perspective from *Laudato Si’*:

“Environmental education has broadened its goals. Whereas in the beginning it was mainly centred on scientific information, consciousness-raising and the prevention of environmental risks, it tends now to include a critique of the ‘myths’ of a modernity grounded in a utilitarian mindset (individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, the unregulated market). It seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God. Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the transcendent which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care.” (LS, 210)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

There are different ways of knowing. What are the ways I learn best about God’s Creation?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

How might I respectfully and meaningfully include Indigenous Elders and Indigenous knowledge to enhance my professional knowledge, especially as it relates to care of our common home?

Act

What am I called to

As I look to projects in my classroom or school where students are taking responsibility for the environment, how can I help them to understand their work as an act of solidarity with Creation?

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Ongoing Professional Learning

The Standard of Practice Ongoing Professional Learning

Members recognize that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration and knowledge.



Anishinaabe Representation
of Ongoing Professional Learning

Perspective of an Educator

“I grew up in the city, but I now live on a farm. I never thought a lot about where my food and water came from. Weather was more about what I should wear outside. Over the years, I have come to appreciate the distinctiveness of seasons. Every season bringing gift, work, challenge, beauty, but all of it distinct. I look back on my career and see different seasons, too. It’s still moving and changing and bringing new gifts. I just feel there’s so much more to learn and to learn to appreciate. I hope I never lose that.”



–Dr. Anne Jamieson, Executive Director,
Institute for Catholic Education

Perspective of an Anishinaabe Educator

“In the Anishinaabe culture, Raven is a trickster, a scavenger and is considered annoying at times. Raven has accepted his being as he is, and thus he knows honesty. He does not try to change. Raven has an important role, which is to guide the teacher.”

– Bruce Beardy, OCT
(Exploring the Standards of Practice for the
Teaching Profession through Anishinaabe Art)



Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth...”

“This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth; our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.” (LS, 1-2)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

What can I discover about myself, my students and our communities as I engage in environmental stewardship?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

How might we, as educators, believers, and lifelong learners, demonstrate collaboration, creativity and optimism while working towards solving environmental problems?

Act

What am I called to

Pope Francis says we have forgotten ourselves and can no longer hear our sister’s cry. What might be some shared learning opportunities that inform a school community’s action and demonstrate commitment to ecological justice and the care of our common home?

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Leadership in Learning Communities

The Standard of Practice Leadership in Learning Communities

Members promote and participate in the creation of collaborative, safe and supportive learning communities. They recognize their shared responsibilities and their leadership roles in order to facilitate student success. Members maintain and uphold the principles of the ethical standards in these learning communities.



Anishinaabe Representation of Leadership
in Learning Communities

Perspective of an Educator

“We need to facilitate a learning environment which appreciates and connects with a collection of educators. This ‘communion of teachers’ exists within the classroom, the school, nature and the greater community. We provide a living example of how an individual can mindfully situate themselves within an integral ecology. This journey is collective in that learning extends in all directions, between all elements and towards a common destination.”

– Peter Glaab, OCT



Perspective of an Anishinaabe Educator

“In the Anishinaabe culture, all forms of life are connected, animate or inanimate, and treated with great respect. In the world we live in, there are many types of animals, mammals and living organisms: some small, some large and some in between, all co-existing daily. In the Anishinaabe culture, we learn from and respect each and every life form as each one contributes to our environment and survival.

It is extremely important that we understand each other so that each life form can continue to exist on our planet.”

– Bruce Beardy, OCT

(Exploring the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession
through Anishinaabe Art)

Perspective of from *Laudato Si'*:

“We also need the personal qualities of self-control and willingness to learn from one another.”

“By learning to see and appreciate beauty, we learn to reject self-interested pragmatism. If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she

treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple. If we want to bring about deep change, we need to realize that certain mindsets really do influence our behaviour. Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature.” (LS, 214-215)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

How have I allowed the outdoors to educate myself and my students? When have I encouraged them to observe and reflect outdoors on changes in the wind, the sun, the seasons and themselves?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

How do I provide opportunities for students to share their observations and reflections with one another so that their emotional connection to the land can motivate actions to protect, preserve and participate?

Act

What am I called to

How do I ensure a rich learning community with many contributors? Perhaps invite an Indigenous Elder or knowledge keeper to share their understandings on relationship, kinship and reciprocity with nature.

Commitment to Students and Student Learning

The Standard of Practice Commitment to Students and Student Learning

Members are dedicated in their care and commitment to students. They treat students equitably and with respect and are sensitive to factors that influence individual student learning. Members facilitate the development of students as contributing citizens of Canadian society.



Anishinaabe Representation of Commitment
to Students and Student Learning

Perspective of an Educator

“All of life, all creatures on Earth, are gifts from God. Every student is a gift. As educators, we are committed to provide our students the opportunities that allow them to notice, develop an awareness of, inquire, learn from and appreciate all of God’s many gifts around us. Children are naturally in awe of the wonders of our world - a ladybug resting on a green leaf, the sun’s rays of light sneaking through the bare trees, a sunflower stretching towards the bright blue sky. How can we foster a love and passion for all of God’s natural gifts in our students?”



– Eileen Berwick, OCT

Perspective of a First Nations Elder

“The earth takes and accepts the tree. The tree makes a commitment with the earth to grow. Give thanks for the stick standing people: that they might grow, that they might be strong, and that our future generations will benefit from the oxygen they produce.”

– Elder Garry Sault, Mississaugas
of the Credit First Nation



Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures....Everything is interconnected.” (LS, 240)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

What do my students wonder? How can I know about their passions for the earth? Is it through a reflective journal, a daily wellness meeting, a regular check-in or conversation?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

How might facilitating experiential learning opportunities to connect with nature (e.g., growing their own food, taking care of a perennial garden) further support continued learner well-being, resilience and agency?

Act

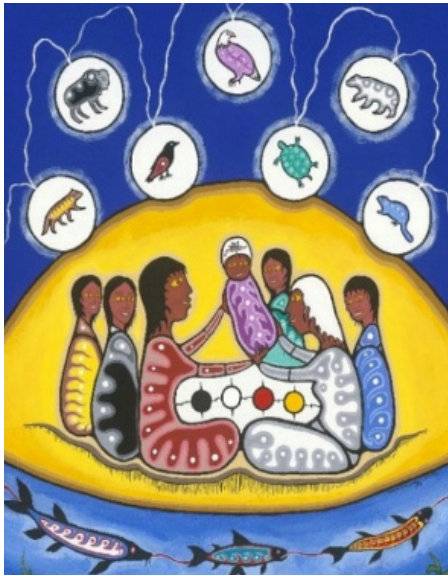
What am I called to

How might I come to know my students in a way that allows their desires for the future to guide the experiential learning opportunities? How can I support them in becoming leaders in caring for the earth?

Integrity

The Ethical Standard of Integrity

Honesty, reliability and moral action are embodied in the ethical standard of Integrity. Continual reflection assists members in exercising integrity in their professional commitments and responsibilities.



Anishinaabe
Representation
of Integrity



Rotinonhsyón:ni
Representation
of Integrity

Perspective of an Educator

“‘Live simply so that others may simply live’ (Mahatma Gandhi). To operate with environmental integrity, I try to model a simple lifestyle for my students. They see me bringing my reusable lunch containers and drinking from my favorite water bottle. I discuss with my students what it means to ‘live simply’. Together, we devise actions to take, as a class, in our efforts to decrease our own demands on the environment.”

– Heather Michel, OCT



Perspective of a First Nation Artist

“Cornhusk is important. It protects the integrity of each individual seed as it grows, and has every year for thousands of years.

That husk has an important, vital responsibility. Protecting the integrity of each seed on each cob, on every stalk, in each field, every season for too many seasons to count, continues to teach us about the importance of protecting the integrity of everyone and everything that is placed in our care.”



Three Sisters
Seneca Red Stalk

– Elizabeth Doxtater, OCT, Six Nations

Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” (LS, 49)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

Can I name an experience of moral outrage in the face of some devastation to the poor or to the environment or both? Does it leave me fired up to work for change or overwhelmed?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

Catholic Social Teaching gives us tools to work with and to bring about greater justice. How can I lift up these teachings for my students?

Act

What am I called to

Can I find ways to integrate the ecological and social concerns in concrete ways for my students? Perhaps, hold a “Hand-Me-Down Fashion Show” where students share their favourite clothing that they have had handed down to them.

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Trust

The Ethical Standard of Trust

The ethical standard of Trust embodies fairness, openness and honesty. Members' professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, guardians and the public are based on trust.



Anishinaabe
Representation
of Trust



Rotinonhsyón:ni
Representation
of Trust

Perspective of an Educator

“Every living being has their own unique role to play and a reliance on others to keep the natural world in balance. As educators, we need to model behaviour that cares for and learns from the natural environment. We need to help all learners to better understand our interconnectedness with the natural spaces that surround us. There are trust relationships everywhere in biodiversity.”

– Sarah Taylor, OCT



Perspective of an Anishinaabe Educator

“The animals are a part of the important ecosystem; each has a role within the cycle of life as do all other living things. Everything is connected for a reason.”

– Bruce Beardy, OCT

(Exploring the Ethical Standards for the
Teaching Profession through Anishinaabe
Art)



Perspective from Laudato Si’:

“As the Catechism teaches: “God wills the interdependence of creatures. The sun and the moon, the cedar and the little flower, the eagle and the sparrow: the spectacle of their countless diversities and inequalities tells us that no creature is self-sufficient. Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other.” (LS, 86)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

What grounds my trust in Creation?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

In what ways does teaching and learning about caring for the environment help to foster relationships of trust?

Act

What am I called to

How can I teach not only interdependence between creatures but also relationships of trust and service? Try making a “web of trust” around a single element of nature (e.g., water or a particular crop or animal). What are the trust relationships that exist among and between the elements that serve and are served by this part of Creation?

Respect

The Ethical Standard of Respect

Intrinsic to the Ethical Standard of Respect are trust and fair-mindedness. Members honour human dignity, emotional wellness and cognitive development. In their professional practice, they model respect for spiritual and cultural values, social justice, confidentiality, freedom, democracy and the environment.



Anishinaabe
Representation
of Respect



Rotinonhsyón:ni
Representation
of Respect



Ontario
College of
Teachers

Setting the
Standard for
Great Teaching



Institute for
Catholic Education

Perspective of an Educator

“Seen as an adjective, ‘respect’ conjures feelings of admiration. Seen as an action verb, ‘respect’ becomes something we do. We get to know our environment, we rekindle our relationship with the Earth and we make it part of our practice.”

– Mike Mooney, OCT



Perspective of an Anishinaabe Educator

“Respect is shown to the abundances of the land. The people take only what they need from the land and share with others if they have more than they can use.”

– Bruce Beardy, OCT

(Exploring the Ethical Standards
for the Teaching Profession
through Anishinaabe Art)



Perspective from *Laudato Si'*:

“Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise.” (LS, 12)

“All of us can co-operate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.” (LS, 14)



Reflective Inquiries

See

My experience

What are the cultural influences (rural, urban, specific languages, customs, celebrations) where I teach?

Judge

Understanding experience in the light of faith

What gifts might be present in these cultural aspects of my environment that could serve a deepening of respect for Creation?

Act

What am I called to

As I contemplate the “joyful mystery” of the world in my neighbourhood, how can I help my students move from contemplation to praise?