

Report to the Community Via the Seine



Band pilot project sounds great

A pilot project underway in our division is music to the ears of parents and band teachers.

Our Board of Trustees is covering the rental cost of band instruments for about 1,000 students in Grade 6 to 8.

"I do know that in previous years families have struggled greatly to pay for their instrument," says Caleb Reimer, the music director at La Barrière Crossings and École St. Adolphe schools.

"I'm just really happy that we can have a program that regardless of where you are on the socio-economic scale, everyone is given the same opportunity to play an instrument."

The division owns some larger instruments such as tubas and euphoniums students can use for free, he notes. However, schools sometimes picked up the rental cost of other instruments to ensure every student had one and families tried to make payments.

Board Chair Wendy Bloomfield says the pilot project – which may be the only one of its kind in the province – was supported because band in Grade 6 to 8 is a compulsory subject. It's an option in high school.

"This way, every student has an instrument and there's no issue for parents," Bloomfield says. "We're getting a lot of people saying this is a good decision. I just hope we can maintain it."

Money for the rental program, estimated at \$95,000 for the first year, is coming out of surplus funds, she says.



Grade 8 students practise with instruments that are rented for them through a division pilot project.

"Band sometimes gets treated as an extra or unimportant subject but the board, by funding instruments for every student, is showing the community that music education matters and is a priority," Reimer says.

Our Mission...

SRSD engages students in learning experiences that develop literate, innovative and socially responsible citizens.

We Believe...

Children must feel valued.
Children will learn.
Children's learning needs must be met.

We Value...

Honesty
Empathy
Respect

Making a difference

A message from Wendy Bloomfield Chair, Board of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I'd like to thank residents for giving us their support so we can work toward enhancing our children's education during the next four-year term.

We appreciate the commitment made by our outgoing trustees, Jennifer Stefansson and Ed Mantie, and welcome new trustees Vicki Kiansky and Trina Wall.

One upcoming responsibility for the Board will be monitoring the provincial government's review of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education, which is slated to begin in January. We plan to be an active participant once the format has been announced.

Your new Board remains committed to our priorities of focusing on literacy and numeracy, strengthening all arts programs and supporting the well-being of students.

We're excited about a new pilot project underway in the division. The Board is paying the rent for instruments needed by our band students in Grade 6 to 8.

You'll read more about it in this issue, but one of the reasons we approved the initiative is because band is compulsory in those grades. We wanted families to be on equal financial footing as their children are exposed to the world of making music.

As always, the Board is open to suggestions – and listening to concerns – as we try to ensure our students develop into well-rounded individuals. 🍌

Our Board Priorities

- Expand evidence-based decisions that support excellence and innovative practices focusing on literacy and numeracy
- Strengthen all arts programs: visual, dance, music and drama
- Enhance students' emotional, cognitive, physical and social well-being
- Enrich early childhood education

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Enhancing learning through collaboration

A message from Michael Borgfjord Superintendent

We all know the benefits of students working together to share ideas and enrich the learning experience.

We are proud of how collaboration continues to grow among our teachers, educational assistants and support staff. This greatly benefits our students as teachers work together sharing effective practices and developing critical-thinking opportunities. This enhances our students' future learning, their well-being and development as citizens.

Our Grade 1 to 4 teachers are getting together five times during the school year to look at evidence of critical thinking, to plan and determine next steps. Co-teaching is allowing our teachers to refine their practices.

The reading apprenticeship program at our high schools is also making a big impact on our students' ability to analyze, summarize and develop strong written opinions.

While walking through Collège Lorette Collegiate in the fall, I saw co-teachers showing students how to look for key ideas in articles or written passages and annotate by adding explanations or opinions to their work with text or drawings. They were reading an article on sustainable development and the impact of throwing plastic into the ocean, so they were making real-life connections.

Teaching has never been more complex than it is today and it requires staff to work and learn together, not to critique each other, but to identify what the individual needs of students are and plan accordingly.

We are seeing that belief and understanding grow in our schools and it's due to the professionalism of our staff. 🍌

Connecting with the community



ESNI Grade 4/5 students made connections when they visited residents of the St. Norbert Personal Care Home.

When Karen Smit took her class to the St. Norbert Personal Care Home, she had some goals in mind.

She wanted the Grade 4/5 students from École St. Norbert Immersion to practise their communication skills, be comfortable with seniors and feel good about the connections they made.

Judging by the feedback from her students, Smit can tick off all those boxes.

“I felt nervous at first, but then I had a good time,” says student Divea K. “I think that they were very happy when we met them because they don’t get visitors very often.”

It’s the second year Smit has taken her class to the care home. They prepared questions ahead of time, asking the residents what life was like when they were kids and what kind of jobs they had.

“One resident was talking about how he studied geology and my students are now studying rocks so they made a connection,” Smit says. “The students asked another man about what it was like to be a pilot.”

Smit wants to continue the visits and says she hopes her students learn empathy and respect for elderly people.

That seemed to be the case for Daniel B., who was asked what he thought the visit meant to the residents.

“That we care,” he says.

And did he learn anything?

“That they are still people.”

Getting involved in politics

Even though they’re too young to vote, some students at École Lorette Immersion experienced what it’s like to be part of a Manitoba municipal election.

Tache mayoral candidates Justin Bohémier and Robert Rivard visited the Grade 3/4 class before the October election to answer questions from the students.

Students had been studying what it takes to be in a leadership role like mayor. They prepared for the visit by reading online articles, the candidates’ campaign brochures and fiction books about leadership.

Both candidates were asked: “What are the most effective strategies you use when solving conflicts? What is the most significant impact you would have on our community if elected/re-elected? How will we as children benefit from you being mayor? What are the most significant qualities of a leader that you possess?”

“Each candidate was well-prepared and sensitive to the age of the students as they used language which

students understood,” school instructional coach Liette Weir says.

Part of the students’ work included discussing the leaders in their lives such as coaches in sports, principals, teachers, parents, grandparents, certain friends and older students.

They also thought leaders should have qualities that included being calm, respectful, an attentive listener, organized, enthusiastic and trustworthy.

Some students discussed election issues with their parents, who told them they’d like lower taxes. The students outlined priorities for children in their communities such as a new arena, walking paths and a library, Weir says.

“They felt like their opinion mattered due to the candidates taking the time to come speak to them.”

The candidates’ answers were recorded and the students wrote about which one they would vote for and why.

Project is paying dividends



▶ Students and teachers continue to benefit from a division pilot project that gave each Grade 6 student their own iPad.

Students' creativity and learning skills continue to grow from a division initiative that puts a piece of technology in the hands of every Grade 6 student.

The Board of Trustees approved a pilot project in 2013-14 that paid for iPads for Grade 6 students in three immersion schools. The program's success led to its expansion a couple years later to every Grade 6 student in the division. The approximate yearly cost is \$161,000.

Now all current students in Grade 6 to 8 have devices provided to them by the division. Students also take their iPads to high school if they stay in the division.

École Lorette Immersion Grade 7/8 teacher Julie Gobeil says students use their iPads in a variety of ways.

"For example, instead of traditional written book reports, they can now be videos, comic books, digital drawings, voice recordings, et cetera," she says. "I love to see my students' creativity come through when they can choose their final product."

Students have instant access to learning tools and information, which can easily be shared between themselves and their teachers, enhancing collaborative and independent work.

"It would be difficult to go back to teaching without them," Gobeil says.

Division Technology Integration Support teacher Jonathan Waite says he's not aware of another division in Manitoba with a program like this on the same scale.

There are approximately 1,000 iPads being used by Grade 6 to 8 students, he says. He helps teachers with lessons, projects and activities. This school year, he's

assisting Grade 9 teachers for the first time.

He notes the iPads help remove barriers caused by students' different language or learning skills.

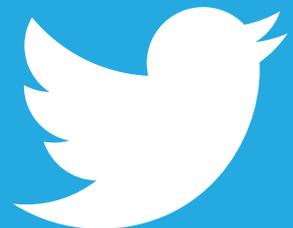
"This is a great equalizer in that sense," Waite says. "We identify their current learning needs and then help them improve, in many cases more than we could have without the technology."

Students are expected to care for their iPads and very few have been damaged and replaced.

"Without the financial support of the Board, iPads would not be possible for all students," Gobeil says. "Although students all use iPads differently to support their individual needs and preferences, they can all benefit from these tools." ▶

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Ice fishing derby is expanding

Nathan C. found out that being patient pays off.

The Dawson Trail School (DTS) student was sitting around a hole in the ice last winter, watching while other students were reeling in fish when he finally felt a tug on his line.

"I told my friends sitting next to me that I think I have a fish," recalls Nathan, a Grade 6 student. "We were all so excited as I started to reel up the line.

"As soon as I saw the fish at the top of the water in the hole, I was very excited that I caught a fish."

His response was a common one among the 300 students and staff from DTS, École Lorette Immersion, Collège Lorette Collegiate, Arborgate School and École Ste. Anne Immersion – as well as community members – who took part in the four-hour informal fishing derby in Lockport last February.

It was such a success that the second annual derby will welcome students and families from all division schools to take part. It's tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 2, depending on ice conditions at the popular Lockport spot.

DTS principal Randy Engel says the event gave students the opportunity to participate in a great Manitoba tradition while creating a sense of community.

"Kids these days are getting less and less outdoor active time and more screen time," he says.

"We need to give kids experiences that enable them to interact with our natural environment so that as they grow older they will stay active and feel a connection with our wild places, and therefore will be more invested in taking care of our forests, lakes and rivers for years to come."

There will again be no cost to participate, although fishers are asked to bring their own gear and bait. Nathan was one of 93 students who caught at least one of the 336 fish that were reeled in and released. Some lucky fishers even received a prize.

"The most fun about ice fishing that day was being with my friends and seeing them catch fish and getting prizes," Nathan says. 🟡



🟡 Division students, families, staff and community members can take part in the second annual ice fishing derby at Lockport.



Snow days and bus delays

It's wintertime and that means bad weather can force school closures or bus delays. You can find timely information from three sources:

- Our division website at www.srsd.ca
- The websites for all our schools that are affected
- Our division Twitter profile @SeineRiverSD

We have also developed a section on our division website with up-to-date bus information to help keep families of bus riders in the know. Visit www.srsd.ca, click on *About Us*, go down to *Transportation Department* and then *Bus Schedule*.

Rocketing to the top

There were days when Sydney Dillabough and her immersion schoolmates wondered if all the early mornings and stress of putting together the play *Kosmonavt* was worth it. The answer was yes.

For the third time in five years, Collège St. Norbert Collegiate took home the trophy for best production at the Festival Théâtre Jeunesse in May 2018.

"I think the fact that we had all pushed so hard to achieve our best possible performance is why it was so meaningful to us when we won," says Dillabough, who was in Grade 11 when she also won bronze for her lead role as Russian cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova.

"The tears and mental breakdowns became stepping stones to what would be the best performance we could have possibly put on, and in that moment it all felt more than worth it."

The play was set in the Soviet Union in the 1940s and based on the real-life experiences of Tereshkova. She battled the restrictions of being a female in that time period and achieved her goal to become the first woman in space in 1963.

Nineteen other students participated. They were responsible for lighting and sound, costumes and décor, choreography, writing and acting. Aside from claiming

CSNC immersion students won best production for their play at the 2018 Festival Théâtre Jeunesse. (L to R) Lead role Sydney Dillabough, main writer Kristina Besason and supporting actress Jayme Dillabough.



the "Meilleure production" against 15 other plays, the students also won gold for sound and visual effects, silver for best written text, staging and supporting actress Jayme Dillabough (Sydney's sister) and best school spirit.

"We were most proud of the fact that our school received best school spirit," says Mathieu Fontaine, who oversaw the production with fellow teacher Joanne Comte. "This is discerned to the group who maintains a positive attitude and speaks French throughout the festival, on and off stage."

The school also won best production in 2014 and '16. Students are already working on their 2019 entry with a play about "what chocolate bars do at a convenience store when we are not around," Fontaine says. 🍫



Some Grade 7 to 10 immersion students attended French improv matches and met the competitors.

Friday night French

How do you order popcorn and a soft drink in French?

Some immersion students from our central and western regions had that opportunity when they attended two improvisation matches at the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre in November.

The Grade 7 to 10 students watched members of a local adult improv league compete in their weekly matches.

"I'm always looking for opportunities for students in French immersion to live the French experience outside of the school walls and to see the value in learning French," says division French Programming Co-ordinator Francine Lepage-Lemoine.

"All the improv was in French. The students also had to use their French-speaking skills in the venue to buy popcorn or drinks, so it was an authentic experience."

A total of about 30 students went to this year's shows, the second year Lepage-Lemoine has set up the outings.

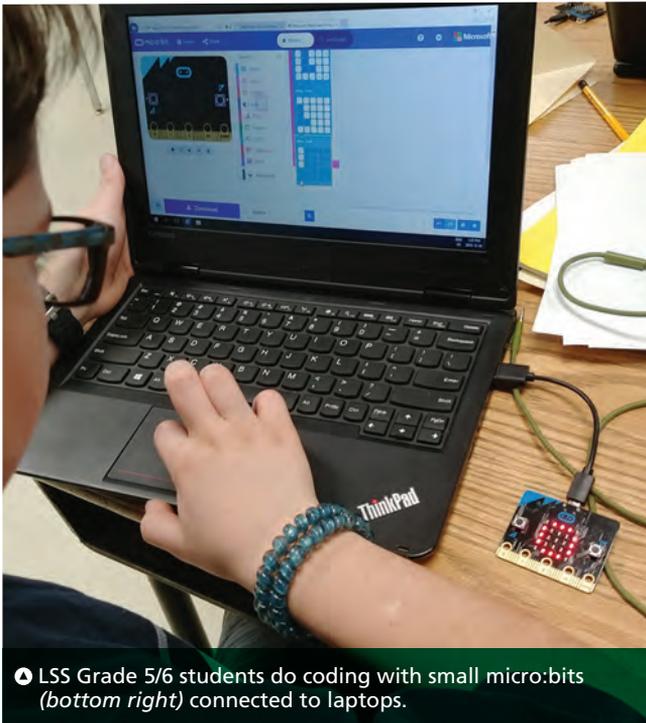
"I thought it was a really fun experience in French and I learned how to better express your emotions and thoughts in such a short amount of time," says Lachlan W., a Grade 7 student at École Lorette Immersion.

Students were proud they understood the jokes and most wanted to try improv in class, says ELI teacher Julie Gobeil.

It was great that students chose to spend a Friday night with their teachers, École Ste. Anne Immersion teacher Shawna Gosselin adds.

"It was fun to show them that French is cool." 🍫

Creators of code



● LSS Grade 5/6 students do coding with small micro:bits (bottom right) connected to laptops.

Using technology is a lot more than just turning on a computer or clicking on a smartphone's app.

Grade 5/6 students at La Salle School had the opportunity to learn how to do coding, which is the computer language/instructions used to develop software, apps and websites that are part of our lives.

La Salle participated in the Hour of Code Week in early December for the first time, which coincides with Canada Learning Code Week. Erica Hoiss, a Community Developer from Kids Code Jeunesse, did workshops with the students. The non-profit organization is dedicated to empowering children and educators with digital skills.

Hoiss introduced the students to computational thinking and how to code using a micro:bit, which is a handheld, programmable microcomputer about the size of a credit card that's linked to a computer.

La Salle instructional coach Heather Knight Wells says students used block coding to program the micro:bits to follow commands such as play rock, paper, scissors when shaken, display a name when a button was pressed or select a random number.

"The curricular connections are endless," Wells says. "For example, students are using the design process in science, and problem solving and reasoning in mathematics. By creating a random-number generator, students can collect data and use their micro:bits to test theories about probability."

The school received a set of micro:bits used in class and with the new Grade 6 Coding Club. ●

Strategies for solving problems

Students at Parc La Salle School are being taught how to take the guesswork out of solving problems with fellow students and friends.

A dozen Grade 4 students were nominated by their teachers to become leaders, who help their peers by strategies using a problem-solving wheel and the Zones of Regulation program.

The wheel graphic features 10 'spokes' or options for solving a problem such as "tell them to stop" or "walk away and let it go" or use an "I message," but not the common one linked to a smartphone.

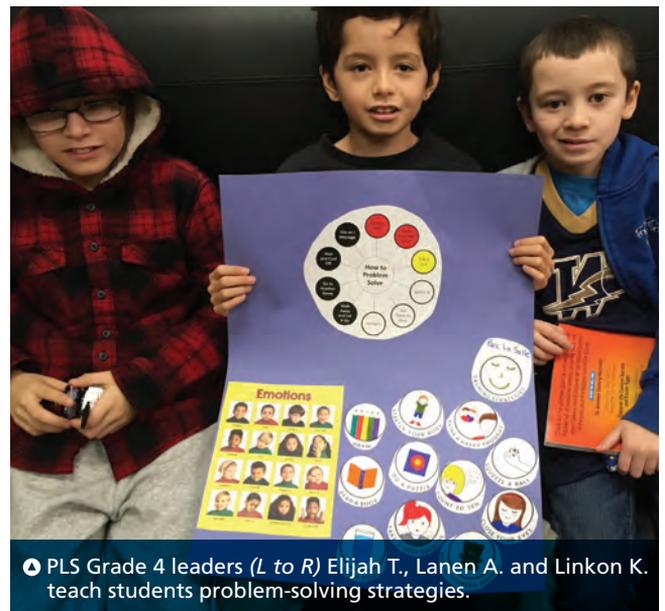
The leaders present the strategies to Grade 1 to 4 classes, including doing skits they created to simulate certain situations, says guidance counsellor Barb Moir.

In one skit, the leaders acted out someone taking another person's belongings without asking. They demonstrated how the person could ask for their stuff back using the "I message" strategy.

That strategy focuses on students making statements about themselves. For example, the owner of the belongings describes how they're feeling: "I feel annoyed when you take my things." They then say what they don't like about the situation: "I don't like it when you take my things without asking." Next they tell the person what they'd like them to do to fix the problem: "Can you please ask before you take my things."

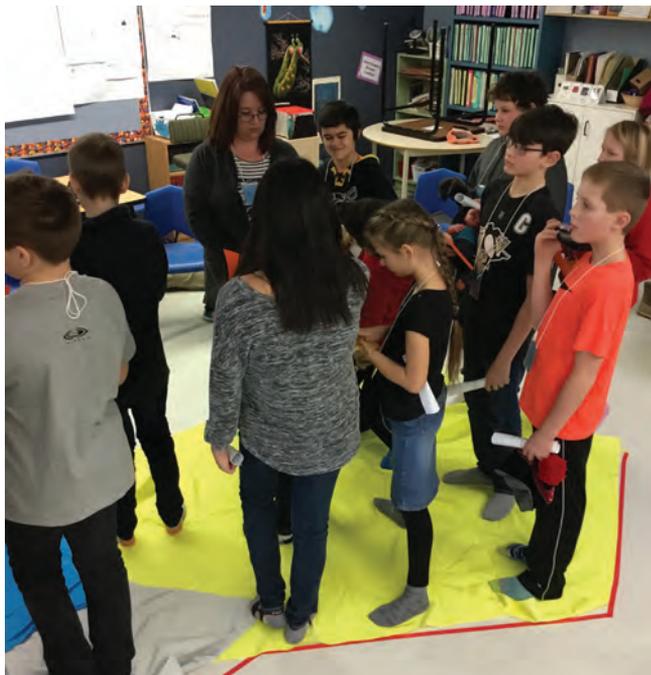
"All of the students around the school were very interested in the skits the leaders made to demonstrate some problem-solving strategies," Moir says.

The program supports our Board of Trustees' priority of enhancing students' emotional, cognitive, physical and social well-being. ●



● PLS Grade 4 leaders (L to R) Elijah T., Lanen A. and Linkon K. teach students problem-solving strategies.

Indigenous history comes alive



▲ Students from SAE (pictured) and LSS have taken part in the blanket exercise, which teaches Manitoba history from an Indigenous perspective.

An interactive history lesson won't soon be forgotten by La Salle School students.

Division Social Studies/Indigenous Education Consultant Sandy Turcotte led two classes of Grade 5/6 students in the fall through the Kairos blanket exercise, which presents history from an Indigenous perspective.

The exercise was adapted from Manitoba history, with students playing the role of Indigenous people from pre-colonization through the arrival of European settlers, residential schools and the '60s Scoop.

"The blanket exercise made a more lasting impression than only reading about first contact with Europeans," teacher Donna Cain says. "The students had a feeling of what it would be like to be an Indigenous person."

It wasn't a good feeling.

"I didn't know that many died at residential schools from mistreatment or from the diseases that Europeans brought," says Grade 6 student Sarah L. "I felt very upset that they were treated that way. They should have been treated the same as anyone else."

Chairs were placed in a big circle around a large outline of Manitoba that Turcotte made on the floor with electrical tape. Coloured blankets or fabric were laid inside the outline, with each colour representing a treaty area.

With Turcotte acting as the narrator and the teachers as a settler or government representative, about 45 students each wore a lanyard identifying their

Indigenous role. Some cards were black or white, others had the word Métis or '60s Scoop on them. Some students had a scroll with historical text to read, as well as photos or actual artifacts to use during trading.

Students moved to different blankets to trade fur pelts, beads or wild rice. They were smiling, having fun and Turcotte asked them to remember that feeling.

Dolls representing Indigenous children were given to some students. When settlers arrived, students with a black card had to come off their blanket because they had died from diseases the settlers brought. A white card sent a student to a white blanket off to the side that symbolized residential schools.

Others had to leave as part of the '60s Scoop, a period when the federal government took Indigenous children away to be fostered or adopted by non-Indigenous families. A settler or government rep also folded the blankets smaller and smaller to represent the loss of land to farming, mining, the railway and reserves.

"All of a sudden, by the time you get to the end of the script there are a fraction of the people still standing on blankets in the province, and the number or size of the blankets is tiny compared to the full size of the province," Turcotte says.

The end of the exercise included a debriefing and sharing circle with the students. Turcotte began offering the blanket exercise in the 2017-18 school year to students in Grade 5 and up.

"As they move into becoming adults, it's hoped that they will have that innate empathy to that post-trauma and past histories to make sure it's never repeated for any culture, for any group of people," Turcotte says. ●



▲ Dolls representing Indigenous children were given to some SAE students.

Portraying a mood with colours



● ELI Grade 5 student Talia P. with her mood portrait.

Being moody was a good thing for students from across the division.

Early and middle years classes from almost every school engaged in an art project creating mood portraits using soft pastel and co-ordinated colours that represented a mood of their choice.

“Often students who may have felt angry or sad at the time of creating their portrait chose to make their

portrait happy,” says division Visual Arts Consultant Gabrielle Doll. “Some students did the opposite.

“I feel it was worthwhile for that reason alone – a form of self-expression. In essence, an outlet for one’s feelings.”

Many students had already learned about Zones of Regulation, a program that relates emotional zones to colours such as red for anger and green for happy or calm.

In the portrait project, students used colour theory to ensure colours were cohesive. An element called value used the lightness and darkness of a colour to create a three-dimensional effect.

Students first chose a colour of paper that corresponded to a mood they wanted to convey. They then selected a soft pastel colour that related to the paper’s colour to begin the face. Following a step-by-step format, they used a medium colour and then a light colour to complete the overall look of the face ‘popping out.’

Students had to study expression in faces, including eyebrow and mouth positioning. They were also encouraged to add a theme if they wanted.

“For instance, anger could have fire in the hair,” Doll says. “Happiness could have a dolphin swimming below the face.”

Some students completed the project by reflecting on their finished work with a written piece. ●

Yoga at lunch

The battle at bedtime might be easier these days for parents of some students at La Barrière Crossings School.

Students had the opportunity to take part in a 10-week yoga program during the lunch hour and it appears to have been a fun experience with tangible benefits.

“When I’m at home and frustrated, I can do poses and it helps me fall asleep,” Grade 5 student Reese B. says.

“It helps me fall asleep easier and it’s relaxing,” Grade 6 student Fadil A. agreed.

Stephanie Baranowski of Modo Yoga Winnipeg led the students

through the free program, guidance counsellor Barb Moir says. Other people donated mats for students to use or supervised.

About 15 to 35 students took part in each weekly session, learning yoga poses and mindful breathing exercises. Students described coming away with increased focus and better body awareness, Moir says.

“When it’s close to the end of the day, I’ll do some poses (tree pose, downward dog) and it helps me calm down,” Grade 7 student Munirat I. says.

“If the day is going bad, I can make my day better,” adds Grade 6 student Yatri P. ●



● (L to R) Riley T. and Fadil A. do the tree pose at an LBC yoga class.

Braving the elements



▲ Grade 11 CLC students and teachers didn't have to pretend to be cold during a camping trip that included some chilly nights sleeping in tents.

Mother Nature tested some Grade 11 students during a hiking trip in September and they passed with flying colours.

Fourteen Collège Lorette Collegiate students and three teachers endured unseasonably cold weather during the Sept. 27-29 trip to Riding Mountain National Park (RMNP).

The hardy bunch slept in tents for two nights, with the temperature going down to about -8 C and the highs never above freezing at their campsite that was dusted with snow.

"It was a little chilly," teacher Nevin Giesbrecht recalls with a chuckle.

It was the school's second annual trip to the park. The year before, students trekked through the backcountry and spent two nights in tents, with the night-time lows about 6 C and daytime highs in the mid-teens.

The cold forecast nixed similar plans this time around. Instead of backpacking for two days, the students set up a base at the Moon Lake campsite in RMNP. They brought extra blankets for their tents and built a big fire to sit around, says Giesbrecht, who had teachers Erin

Playfair and Madelaine Crierie along to supervise.

"Seeing a moose and the stars on the second night when the skies finally cleared" was Brienz Leblanc's trip highlights. The low point? "Trying to sleep in a freezing tent!"

They hiked 10 kilometres around Moon Lake the first day and then drove the next day to do the Gorge Creek Trail on the east side of the park. One area had a lower elevation so the temperature was a balmy 2 C.

"It was probably the nicest hike I've ever done in the province," says Giesbrecht, noting they climbed the escarpment with its 277-metre elevation gain.

"The kids were just blown away with how high up you were, especially for a hike in Manitoba where we don't think we have lots of elevation change."

One student's comment confirmed the trip was worth braving the elements.

"Even though they'd lived in Canada their entire life, they said this was their first time feeling Canadian, just kind of being out there in nature," Giesbrecht says. ●

Invitation to fun learning



Kindergarten and Grade 1/2 ESAS students were inspired to draw and write about pumpkins using an “Invitations” teaching model.

You know you’ve hit on an authentic, successful teaching model when students want to work instead of having lunch.

That’s what happened with some of Laurie Orbanski’s students at École St. Adolphe School in the fall. Orbanski teaches Kindergarten and a Grade 1/2 class, where she introduced a new teaching model called “Invitations.”

The basis of the model is to inspire students to investigate a particular subject and draw and write about it.

“When we started it, it was lunch time,” Orbanski says. “A couple of kids, they didn’t want to stop writing even to go for lunch. They just wanted to get their thoughts down on paper.”

The subject matter she used was pumpkins. She bought three of different sizes and colours. Students read or listened to fiction and non-fiction stories about

pumpkins and helped make a chart of facts and words related to pumpkins, such as they grow on vines and have a stem.

One thing students wondered about was whether the pumpkins were the same colour inside as outside. They wrote about what they thought and why. On Halloween, Orbanski cut open the pumpkins so they could find out the answer and write about the results. The colours did match.

One pumpkin started to rot: “At first I thought, ‘Oh no,’ ” she says. “But it turned out good because then the kids were writing about why it went rotten, hypothesizing that perhaps it was too hot in the classroom.”

It ended up being a valuable teaching model.

“It’s authentic,” Orbanski says. “It really sparked excitement. They wanted to participate and were very motivated.”

Scientists for a day

Textbook facts came alive for Grade 7/8 La Salle School students.

Three classes had field trips to the Youth BIOlab Jeunesse at the St. Boniface Hospital Albrechtsen Research Centre, where students had hands-on experiences that were educational – and a bit disgusting.

Students learned about current research for heart and cardiovascular diseases, the different types of heart cells and how to culture live cells and look at them under a microscope. They also got to dissect a pig heart.

“I enjoyed looking at slides under the microscope,”

Grade 8 student Luc B. says. “I didn’t want to touch the pig heart because it looked nasty.”

It was the opposite for Camryn H.

“My favourite thing to do at the BIOlab was dissecting the heart,” she says. “I found it very interesting and it helped me understand how the heart works.”

Taylor A. was surprised at the size of cells.

“You hear people talk about how they are so small but this really put it into perspective.”

Gaining that knowledge through hands-on activities is invaluable, teacher Cristy Smith says.

“It enriched their understanding from what we were learning in the classroom.”

Making music in English and French

Songs don't have to rhyme all the time.

That was a common observation of students at École Ile des Chênes School, who were introduced to writing songs in English and French by Canadian singer-songwriter Raine Hamilton.

Hamilton spent two weeks at the school in November, with each class having five sessions with her.

The Grade 1 to 5 students wrote one class song, while the Grade 6 to 8 students each wrote their own song using the GarageBand music-making app on their division-supplied iPads.

"I learned that there is more to writing songs than just a couple of lines and maybe throwing in some rhymes," says Grade 8 student Samuel H.

"It's a lot of work. Not only do you have to make lyrics, but you have to make them good and then you have to put the beat and tone of the right genre of music or else it's nothing but you talking with a whole whack of just noise."

Hamilton was invited through the Artist in the School program. The Winnipeg-based bilingual guitarist and violinist was named Emerging Artist of the Year at the Canadian Folk Music Awards in December.

She explained the songwriting process to all students and also played musical games with the younger kids, says maternelle and reading recovery teacher Kathryn Reuter.

"It is important for (the French immersion) students to see the value in learning French and that a real artist can write and perform songs in French," Reuter says. "It also aligned with our divisional priorities of communicating through writing in an authentic and creative way."



Canadian singer-songwriter Raine Hamilton spent two weeks teaching EIDC students how to write songs.

The students had a concert on Hamilton's last day. The Grade 1 to 5 classes performed their songs and four older students – including Samuel – played their songs from their iPads.

"It was cool to have people listen to the song I helped write and the music I put with it," Grade 7 student Jessica F. says. "It's also a nice thought for the school to give us this chance." 🟡

Gathering knowledge to share

What do you get when you bring together 150 motivated student leaders from across the province?

The answer for six Collège Lorette Collegiate (CLC) students was two fun days of sharing ideas and making friends at the Manitoba Student Leadership Conference in Brandon in October.

Students were divided into groups based on the colour of a T-shirt they received and participated in activities they could share at their schools.

An "ice breaker" held on the second

morning was simple and really beneficial, says CLC teacher Erin Playfair, who attended as an advisor.

"Students were handed a card from two decks. They found their partner through matching cards and went for a 20-minute walk and had a conversation. Conversation starters were handed out for students who were shy or reluctant."

The conference was run almost exclusively by students, Playfair says.

"As an advisor, it was sometimes hard not to take over and organize

everything. This helped give the students confidence and the skills to be leaders in their schools."

The Grade 10 to 12 CLC students who attended are part of the school's Social Justice group, which runs student activities, raises awareness and supports charities. They've been sharing their new knowledge with leaders of other student groups such as the Sharing Circle and Gender and Sexuality Alliance. 🟡

Combining fun and critical thinking

ESAS Grade 8 student Hannah R. works on a marble run she built with teammates Cadence A. and Sadie S.



Creative juices are flowing during lunchtime at École St. Adolphe School.

Some students are part of the Cardboard Club, which meets in a classroom to build group projects using more than just cardboard.

Creations have included a four-storey parkade made from cardboard and wood with a working elevator, a forklift that moved and papier-mâché mountains with plasticine animals.

Students use critical thinking and give a blueprint of their project ideas to school counsellor Pat Liss, who runs the club.

Some kids enjoy using a hot glue gun or X-Acto knife for the first time, while others stretch their imagination and skills.

“They have these visions and they start building and it’s really quite something what they come up with,” Liss says.

He added a twist in November with a “challenge” open to all students to create marble runs using specific criteria. Nine teams of Grade 5 to 8 students finished the five-week challenge. The winners were Lucas C. and Brett B., who combined three runs into one.

Liss plans to make challenges a regular part of the club and add more technology. 🍌

Making change happen

Some École St. Adolphe School students were upset on a hot lunch day, but it didn’t have anything to do with what was served. Rather, it was how pizza was served to them.

The Grade 3/4 students noticed the slices were on Styrofoam plates and they asked teacher Dimitra Aglogallos if the plates were recyclable. They looked up the answer as a class.

“We discovered websites that talked about how harmful it is to the environment,” Aglogallos says. “We read, watched videos and decided we wanted to change hot lunch days.”

The class wrote a letter to school principal Laird Laluk outlining their research, concerns and alternatives. He replied with a democratic solution, suggesting the class poll the school population with their options and post the result on a bulletin board.

Aglogallos’s students went class to class to present their views. The poll listed four options: paper plates, napkins, Tupperware students brought or the purchase of plastic plates by the school that could be reused. Paper plates won with 102 votes, followed by 81 for plastic plates.

Styrofoam plates were still offered at the next hot lunch, but also paper plates and napkins. Her students used napkins.

“We talked about how change happens over time and we can’t give up,” Aglogallos says.

Her class was part of the Bag Up Manitoba Challenge with Take Pride Winnipeg in October, collecting more than 5,200 bags to be recycled. They’ve planned other initiatives such as starting a green team and reducing their classroom garbage. 🍌

A Grade 3/4 ESAS class polled students about how pizza should be served on hot lunch days.

	PAPER PLATES	NAPKINS	BRING YOUR OWN TUPPERWARE	SCHOOL TO BUY PLASTIC PLATES
MATRIEVELLE				
MME CHAN				
K I J Z E				
MRS ORBANSKI				
V J Z I				
MME EOBEL				
V J Z I				
MME HOWARD				
S J H I				
MME KODAK				
S J H E				
Mrs. Aglogallos				
H I S I				
MME JOSÉE				
S J H I				
MME SUDERMAN				
S J H E				
MRS. MARTINAK				
T J R E				
MRS. HEGRICH				
T J S I				
M. MACKAY				

102 17 58 81

Students teaching students

Students in our division are being taught how to use their influence in a positive way.

Over the past few years, students from Grade 7 through high school have been trained as youth facilitators in a Canadian Red Cross program called Beyond the Hurt.

The facilitators use their training to teach specific lessons to younger students about topics such as bullying, human rights and healthy schools and relationships.

The program is creating awareness – and action.

“I have heard a student step up and tell someone to stop it when they were saying something rude to a peer,” says Paige L., a Grade 7 facilitator from Ste. Anne Elementary School (SAE).

Grade 7/8 students from SAE, Richer School and Arborgate School (ARB) applied to be facilitators to teach the Beyond the Hurt curriculum for Grade 5/6 students at their schools this year. A total of 18 students were chosen based on a variety of qualities.

“Kids that kind of walk the walk,” explains Richer School guidance counsellor Carolyn Plett, who had five Grade 8 students from her school take part.

“This is all about using your own personal power and influence, teaching kids that they can make a difference in other people’s lives.”

In September, the division provided a full day of training for all the Grade 7 and 8 facilitators, which brought them together from their regions. Being together added a level of importance, Plett says. She and guidance counsellors Graham Bodnar from Richer, Corinne Ambrosio from SAE and ARB’s Trevor Zetaruk did the training, along with division social worker Joanne Vielfaure-Romaniuk and her social work student.

Youth facilitators are assigned classes in their schools and teach six to eight lessons over the school year that cover nine age-appropriate sections. They use scripts and interactive activities.

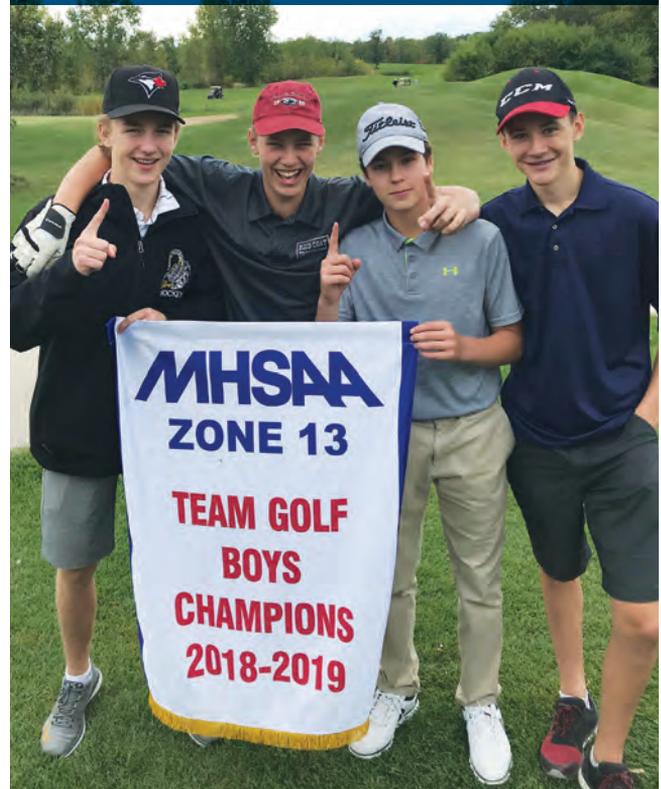
The program helps create awareness and empowers students with tools they can use to identify and deal with situations such as bullying, Plett says.

“I would say the amount of serious ongoing bullying is lower,” she says. “We have a lot more students who will stand up for others and not tolerate bullying situations.”

Not fore-gotten

There may be snow on the ground, but four Collège Lorette Collegiate students have warm memories of their success at the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association annual Zone 13 golf championships in September at The Links at Quarry Oaks.

The CLC foursome of (L to R) Owen K., Kaydyn F., Ty M. and Colby G. claimed the championship banner.



A statistic about bullying from the Beyond the Hurt program

Over
80%

of the time, bullying happens with peers around

57%

of the time, bullying stops within 10 seconds when a bystander steps in

Three decades of service – and counting



▲ Wendy Bloomfield, Chair, Board of Trustees

Wendy Bloomfield can thank her daughter for sparking her 35-year involvement with the Seine River School Division Board of Trustees – a rare span that makes her one of the longest-serving trustees in the province.

It all began in 1982 when Wendy's daughter, Victoria, was entering Kindergarten at St. Norbert School. The Board had just introduced full-day Kindergarten every other day, unlike the daily half days her sons, Allan and James, had attended.

With holidays and in-service days, the young children sometimes didn't go to school for five or six days, she recalls.

"I found it really affected my daughter," Wendy says. "She had part-time daycare as well. She would literally get up in the morning and be crying because she didn't know whether she stayed home with her dad, went to the daycare or went to school. It was not a good start for the year for her."

Wendy was on the parent advisory council and joined other parents to make presentations to the Board to try to reverse the change, which was made to reduce the cost of lunch-hour transportation, she says.

Their objections didn't sway the trustees and soon parents encouraged Wendy to run for the Board the following school year. She was elected – over and over again for four-year terms, most recently in this past October's election. She was first appointed Board Chair in 1990 and has held that position ever since.

"I never imagined," she says with a laugh about her longevity. "Victoria's son is now in Grade 9!"

Her motivation has remained constant despite a few "rocky" initial years caused by views that some schools or areas were favoured over others.

"So I wanted to stay to try and make things better and to start getting everybody working together for kids rather than working against each other," she says.

Helping children was a priority for Wendy even before she joined the Board.

The stay-at-home mom was on the board of a nursery school when she and another parent spearheaded the renovation of a side-by-side house to create a daycare in 1982. Ten years later, a new daycare was attached to the community centre. Wendy worked in daycare until 1996, when she got a job with the provincial Family Services Department for 17 years.

She and her husband of 47 years, Arthur, are now retired. Two of their three grandchildren attend school in our division. She's not sure when her time on the Board will end, but she's proud of the work our trustees have done over the years. She's also gained invaluable personal and professional growth, she says.

"I found a quote when I was re-elected as Chair. It's from Nelson Mandela: 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.' I believe that." 🍌

Did you know?

- Enrolment in our division for the 2018-19 school year was estimated to increase by 70 to 80 students. The final number was just over 120 students.
- Three teachers were hired to support the increase.
- The division's enrolment has grown 30 per cent since 2005.

Seine River School Division

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K-8E	Richer School (RCH) Box 9, Dawson Road, Richer, MB R0E 1S0	P: Karen Thiessen	P: 204-422-5490 F: 204-422-8625 E: rch@srsd.ca
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