

# **Manitoba UNESCO Associated School Network**

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## **Brock Corydon School UNESCO Associated Schools Annual Report 2011-2012**

Principal : Ira Udow ; Lead Teacher: Oriana Copetti and other teachers took on roles as required

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### **School Structure**

Brock Corydon is an elementary school located in the South District of the Winnipeg School Division that offers a Nursery program and a dual track program (Kindergarten – Grade 6) where students have the option of an English Program in addition to a Hebrew Bilingual Program. Brock Corydon School is one of two public schools in North America, which offers a Hebrew Bilingual program, Both the English and Hebrew tracks integrate Special Education students and diversity is celebrated throughout the school enriching the life lessons learned at Brock Corydon. The school is committed to developing strong academic and social skills in children in an inclusive and nurturing environment.

In January 2002, the Canadian ASP Network was launched in the Legislative Building in Winnipeg. Brock Corydon School was one of ten Manitoba schools to join the pilot project. Along with five other schools attained status as a National UNESCO ASPnet schools in September 2006.

Brock Corydon School takes special care to promote a culture of peace that is sustained from one year to the next. Students are encouraged to make healthy choices and take care of their own well being as well as to consider the well being of others less fortunate. Students are encouraged to take action, learning about local and global issues and developing plans to make a difference.

As a UNESCO school, we give top priority to Education for Sustainability. This priority is based on the belief that an educated citizenry is vital to implementing informed and sustainable development and that good community-based decisions - which will affect social, economic, and environmental well-being - also depend on educated citizens. The teachers have developed active and participatory learning activities throughout the year to engage students in gaining knowledge, values and theories related to sustainable development. The goal is for our students to learn to ask critical questions, clarify their own values and envision more positive and sustainable futures so they can make informed decisions about creating sustainable actions in their own lives and within their local and global community.

Strengthening and Enhancing Aboriginal Education continues to be a provincial, divisional, district and school priority for students to develop an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures and traditional values, contemporary lifestyles and traditional knowledge of Aboriginal peoples. The teachers have embraced this priority integrating the Aboriginal Perspective within their curricular studies.

### **Evidence of demonstrated commitment from Administration, Division, Staff, Students and Parents.**

- The current administrator continues to promote the UNESCO Associated Schools' themes and pillars by ensuring that updates are included in monthly Staff meetings, Parent Advisory Council meetings, and School Newsletter; by meeting with student leadership groups and actively participating in the monthly provincial meetings.
- The administrator continues to raise UNESCO initiatives at South District Administrator's meetings.

- The administrator explains the school's connection with the UNESCO Schools' network to prospective parents looking to register their children at the school.
- Teachers are continuing to take active roles in participating in UNESCO related initiatives.
- Grade 2-6 Student representatives continue to volunteer to attend monthly UNESCO and Student Council meetings. These students plan fundraising activities, give reports to the rest of the student body at assemblies, write articles for the school newsletter, website and blog site to keep the community informed about UNESCO initiatives.
- The school's three year plan continues to reflect UNESCO Themes..
- Teachers developed various instructional approaches to engage their students in meaningful learning activities to promote an understanding of sustainable development:
  - collaboration and dialogue (including multi-stakeholder and intercultural dialogue);
  - engagement of the 'whole system', i.e. bringing in experts, use of various text and media, field trips,
  - innovative teaching and learning experiences within an integrated curricula
  - active and participatory learning.
- The students, along with the teachers, are gaining knowledge, values and theories related to sustainable development, and specifically are beginning to learn to:
  - ask critical questions;
  - clarify their own values;
  - envision more positive and sustainable futures;
  - think systemically
  - respond through applied learning;
  - explore the dialectic between tradition and innovation
- The school is mindful of the Winnipeg School Division's Nutrition policy when developing learning activities involving food. We are finding that many more students of all ages are demonstrating the ability to make informed decisions for healthy living related to personal health such as participating in extracurricular physical activities and bringing healthy choices for lunch. The school staff is committed to educating students in making healthy choices so that it becomes a part of the school culture and a part of the students' personal lives.
- Recognitions for our ESD Initiatives:
  - Manitoba Education's ECO Globe Awareness Level in Education for Sustainability for our work on local and global environmental, social and economic issues
  - The Nutrients for Life organization highlights our garden project in the Canada-wide School Garden Network.
  - The Provincial ESD Newsletter highlighted our Garden Project and our Cultural Diversity Program.
  - The Canadian Commission for UNESCO provided our Cultural Diversity Program with a grant of \$2500
  - Our Grade 5/6 City of Winnipeg Initiative received a \$2000 Hydro ESD Grant
  - Our Grade 3 and 4 Garden Project received a \$1500 and \$300 ESD Winnipeg School Division Grant

**Evidence of broad action to integrate UNESCO themes into school policy and practices.**

**1. World Concerns and the role of the United Nations**

- Students participated in the Farm to School Program promoting locally grown vegetables and in the Take Pride Winnipeg and Multi-Material Stewardship Program's Bag Up Manitoba Round up Challenge
- There has been an increase in the number of children volunteering this year for the various leadership opportunities offered: Green Team to collect composting, Student Mediators to

help resolve recess conflicts, UNESCO students to address community and global issues, Student Council to address school related issues.

- Grade 3 and 4 students visited the site of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and interviewed a representative of the Museum to have a better understanding of its purpose, the planning that went into it and its future plans.
- Through an in-depth study of the Human Body, Grade 5 students learned how important it is to have a healthy body in order for all the systems and organs to function properly.
- A group of Grade 6 girls attended a workshop called Girlz Jam 2011, the Power of being a Girl to help the girls understand about healthy relationships, body image, and taking a positive stance against bullying.
- The Student Council assists in organizing and running the yearly Remembrance Day assembly, giving messages of peace and non-violent conflict resolutions.
- Yearly events: Terry Fox Run, Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF program, aluminum cans and tabs collection for the Shriners
- Nursery, Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 students, in conjunction with the Natural Wellness Chiropractic Centre in Wolseley, organized a pajama drive to be donated to the United Way for distribution to local charities. Students understood that there are needy children across the city and that they have the responsibility to help others and that much can be accomplished by working and making decisions collaboratively.
- Grade 3 and 4 UNESCO students researched local charities to address the community's needs over wants. As a result they organized donations for Koats for Kids, Pennies from Heaven, Christmas Cheer Board and the Salvation Army. They also presented information at the school fun fair and raised funds for Winnipeg Harvest, the Lady Bug Foundation and the Humane Society.
- Grade 3 and 4 students have an on-going relationship with an inner city school in Guatemala city. They have learned that the majority of children at the school are from poor families and often do not have enough to eat. They learned that the school lunch program, which is financially in jeopardy, provides a necessary source of daily healthy meals. The students decided to donate the \$600 proceeds from their art sale to the school's lunch program. These students learned that although the Charter of Human Rights states that all children are entitled to healthy water and nutritious food, such is not always the case. Through their research, they learned that 80% of the school population is Mayan. This led to a study of the Mayan Culture. Class conversations demonstrated that the students understood how important it is to help make change in the lives of the less fortunate. They recognized how their actions positively affected others. The letters of gratitude they received in response helped them feel they were contributing to a worthwhile cause. An unexpected result was the students' abilities to compare and contrast the Mayan community with the Canadian Aboriginal communities.
- Grade 3 and 4 students organized the Farm to School fundraiser to promote and support local farmers through Manitoba's Peak of the Market
- Grade 5 and 6 students in Room 5 have been involved in a 2 year study of Winnipeg. The major strength of this inquiry is the greater awareness and understanding the students have of sustainability in the context of the city. This is evident in the students' abilities to naturally integrate word "sustainable" in their daily conversations and the concepts of ESD in their written inquiry and responses. The students were also able to demonstrate their understanding of the factors in our city that improve our social and economic systems such as the city's murals. Students were able to appreciate that they have the ability to affect change in their community. Highlights include:
  - Mentorships with community leaders and members: Chantel Sturk Nadeau, senior vice-president of Tourism Winnipeg; Tom Ethans, Executive Director of Take Pride Winnipeg; and John Orlikow, City Councillor.

- The study of beauty and how it pertains to our city including the understanding of how our murals affect the city
  - Field trips such as a specialized mural trip on a city transit bus and a behind-the-scenes tour of the MTS Centre
  - An understanding of how our economy affects our city plans through the development of our own city plans. These plans were created by the students and required a justification of the placement of buildings, parks, etc. to create a realistic sustainable city.
- During the Jewish holiday of Purim, students continue to learn about the Mitzvah of giving to others who are less fortunate. Grade 5 students ran a garage sale and bake sale donating the funds to the Jewish National Fund in Israel. Younger students bring in Kraft dinner boxes to donate to Winnipeg Harvest.

## **2. Human rights, democracy and tolerance**

- At the school's first assembly in September, students are informed of the various leadership roles they can volunteer for to become actively involved as responsible members of our school community for the school year. Class representatives are then selected for:
  - Student Safety Patrols – Grades 5 and 6 students ensuring children safely cross the busy Corydon Avenue.
  - Student Council – Grade 2-6 students discussing and recommending school improvement initiatives.
  - UNESCO – Grade 2-6 students raising awareness of and addressing local and global issues.
  - Student Mediators – Grades 6 students learning conflict mediation skills and helping younger children solve their recess conflicts in non-violent ways.
  - Ambassadors for Peace – Grades 4-6 students organizing and distributing recess equipment and helping out at recess in organizing games and supervising the toboggan run.
  - Green Team – Grades 4-6 students educating the school community about environmental issues, collecting food scraps for the composter and
  - Student-Run Assemblies participants help lead the assemblies, reporting to the school about the various leadership group initiatives and clubs, writing peace poems to be recited during the lighting of the peace candle giving words of thoughts to encourage peace at home and at school.
  - Hill supervisors – Grade 6 students supervise the sledding on the hill
  - Garden Club – each class take responsibility for the care of our gardens.
- Playground Peace Structures – Children are encouraged to build snow structures of peace instead of snow forts.
- Playground Expectations are that there is no play fighting of any kind. Children are expected to play in a safe, peaceful and friendly manner.
- Lesson discussions in our classrooms helped students understand the nature and impact of bullying and what each student can do to help create a safe and respectful school.
- Grade 5 students examined the roles of the bully, the target and the bystander in order to identify those roles in our own lives in and out of school. Students examined their own behaviors and worked on changing those that are hurtful to peers. They learned that getting involved by telling an adult if they see, hear, or know about another student's difficulties. "Getting someone out of trouble not getting someone in trouble" is the right thing to do.
- Grade 3 and 4 students visited the site of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and interviewed a representative of the Museum to have a better understanding of its purpose, the planning that went into it and its future plans.
- Through an in-depth study of the Human Body, Grade 5 students learned how important it is

to have a healthy body in order for all the systems and organs to function properly.

### 3. Intercultural learning

- The Living Bridge Partnership 2000 Program is an exciting project that builds a “**living Bridge**” (*gesher chai*, in Hebrew) between Jews in the Diaspora and Jews in Israel. The bridge between Winnipeg and Israel's Galilee Panhandle is regularly crossed as students from Brock Corydon School maintain contact with students in the Galil. Through email, letters and pictures, the students are learning more about each other and each another's countries. Partnership 2000 reinforces and builds the concept of a world Jewish Family. Through this partnership, teachers and administrators have been involved in reciprocal visits. This year, two teachers from Israel participated in an week long exchange program by visiting our school.
- Students continue to appreciate and understand the major Jewish and Christian holidays celebrated at our school,
- In December, the Early Years classes participate in the yearly Winter Extravaganza which involves the children in a variety of fun activities based on the winter theme while learning how people of different cultures celebrate this special time of the year. Students help set up a multicultural display featuring a Christmas tree, Chanukah Menorah and Solstice candles.
- Integrating the Aboriginal Perspective within the curriculum continues to be one of our school plan priorities.
- Grade 5 and 6 Cultural Diversity program is now in it's 6<sup>th</sup> year helping students appreciate and understand the diverse cultures that make up the mosaic of Manitoba.
- Cultural Diversity workshop - Grade 5 students from Al-Hijra School, St. Emile Catholic School, John Pritchard, First Nations school Niji Mahkwa and Brock Corydon came together again in June for a day of interfaith sharing and learning to promote and sustain socio-cultural diversity and intercultural understanding.
- Cultural Diversity Field trip – The grade 6 students from each of the four schools visited Niji Mahkwa school for a pipe ceremony in November, and the five schools participated in an all day field trip in December visiting the following houses of worship and to speak with the clerics at a Synagogue, a Mosque and a Church.

### 4. Environmental concerns

- The school has a comprehensive recycling program of paper products, newspaper, aluminum cans, and plastic.
- Grade 3 and 4 students participate in studying the Monarch Butterflies that breed in our Milkweed Garden every year.
- Students in Kindergarten – Grade 6 participate in the annual Community clean up, walking through the neighborhood picking up garbage.
- The Student Green Team continue to promote the culture of recycling and composting within the school.
- Our Grade 3/4 classroom and classroom teacher have taken charge of learning about and caring for the school's Ecosystem.
- Our goal has been to continue to have students learn to understand and maintain their world around themselves. Brock Corydon's school gardens are one of the places that students have learned to illustrate care, concern and responsibility for their environment, understanding how fragile it is and how all life forms depend on a healthy environment. By planting the tree and developing a vegetable garden, students will recognize how their actions can impact present and future generations. They will be able to watch it grow and appreciate the beauty in nature. They are planting the tree in the same location of where a tree in our school yard was cut down so they will also learn about the life cycle of a tree.
- Brock Corydon used the \$300 Division ESD grant and to plant a “Tree to Tell a Story” in our

playground. Students chose the tree, helped plant it and will continue to tell the story of this Manitoba tree as they watch and maintain it as it grows.

- Appreciation and understanding of environmental issues begins in our Nursery/Kindergarten classes in the study of plants, trees and animals.
- Grade 1 and 2 students learned to look at rainforest through the eyes of a scientist understanding the need to preserve this delicate ecosystem and its endangered species.
- Our Grade 3 and 4 classrooms used the Division's ESD grant of \$1500 to support an Inquiry and Action-Based Vegetable Garden Project. Students were actively involved in learning how to:
  - grow a farmer's field in the classroom.
  - monitor and care for their vegetable seedlings that grew under the classroom grow lights.
  - care for the school vegetable garden that will be used in the fall to prepare many foods for the school community.
  - plan days to maintain the vegetable garden.
  - monitor and deposit foods into the classroom composters which the school green team deposits into the large school composters.
  - use materials from the school composters to replenish the vegetable gardens with nutritious soils.
  - prepare 5 gallon pails so that they are ready for their home vegetable gardens.
  - share and communicate their understanding of plant growth (with the use of grow lights) and care during their student led conferences and in their plant journals.
  - look for healthy food recipes to use with the vegetables that will be used in fall 2012.
- Grade 3 students explored and identified natural and built environments and how they influence their daily lives. They were able to describe how the shapes of various natural and human built structures provide strength and stability while considering sustainable practice in working with natural material. These same students also demonstrated a high interest in plants and agriculture. They learned how plants grow from seeds using grow lights in the classroom, about the value of composting and how to transplant the plants into containers for home use.
- Grade 4 students, in their study of Manitoba rocks, learned about soil erosion and how changes in landscapes can be caused by human or natural phenomena. The students were able to design ways to prevent erosion. They also learned about the use of rocks, the effects of rocks on the environment and what can be done to sustain our use of rocks in our province.
- Grade 5 and 6 UNESCO students attended We Day which led to research of global health related issues in various third world countries.
- Through an in-depth study of the Human Body, Grade 5 students learned how man-made and environment disasters can effect on our health and that they too have an impact on their environment with the choices they make.
- Teachers developed various instructional approaches to engage their students in meaningful learning activities to promote an understanding of sustainable development:
  - collaboration and dialogue (including multi-stakeholder and intercultural dialogue);
  - engagement of the 'whole system', i.e. bringing in experts, use of various text and media, field trips,
  - innovative teaching and learning experiences within an integrated curricula
  - active and participatory learning.
- The students, along with the teachers, are gaining knowledge, values and theories related to sustainable development, and specifically are beginning to learn to:

- ask critical questions;
- clarify their own values;
- envision more positive and sustainable futures;
- think systemically
- respond through applied learning;
- explore the dialectic between tradition and innovation.

### **Aboriginal Perspective**

The teachers have continued to embrace integrating the Aboriginal Perspective within their curricular studies.

- They are continuing to incorporate the stories and cultures of various Aboriginal groups through children's literature.
- Our growing relationship with the First Nations School, Niji Mahkwa, brings our students authentic experiences with the Ojibwe and Cree cultures. As a result of this relationship, Grade 5 students from Niji Mahkwa and our school came together in October to visit a Jewish Sukkah in order to examine and understand two types of dwellings used historically by people in two geographical regions for common and differing purposes. The cultural advisor from Niji Mahkwa and a Rabbi, made presentations to the students. The student also explored and tasted various foods grown in Israel and were exposed to pictures of the seven sacred Anishinabe foods.
- Grades 1 and 2 students were engaged in an inquiry study focusing on respecting the earth. Their inquiry notebooks and pre and post self assessments demonstrated their understanding of how people lived in the past and how our actions in the present affect others in the future
- Grade 3 and 4 students gained a greater understanding and awareness of the Aboriginal culture, traditions, history and legends through their inquiry study of Aboriginal Art. They explored the use of line, color and geometric shapes in Aboriginal Art. By learning about the aboriginal Group of Seven the students were able to connect the artist's life and the theme of his/her paintings. They were exposed to such topics as the first nation's cultural celebrations, their relationship with the Europeans, their relationship with Mother Earth. Students' conversations with their parents at the concluding art sale of their own work demonstrated their understanding of the techniques and styles used in the Aboriginal art they studied.
- Grade 3 students learned about First Nations' structures. They gained a better understanding of how these first structures were built and how we can use their knowledge to build structures that can sustain the environment and work in concert with nature. These same students clearly showed their understanding of Aboriginal engineering techniques as shown in their structures that they built from recycled material.
- Grade 6 students learned to appreciate the historical living conditions of First Nations people after the arrival of the Europeans. Their learning was represented through their interpretations of legends, role-playing and projects highlighting the relationship between the early explorers and the First Nations communities.
- A number of teachers from each grade level, together with the principal and the Division's Aboriginal Consultant, undertook to learn more about the Aboriginal people in Manitoba in terms of what has been lost over the years, what has been retained and what is the current situation for Urban and rural Aboriginal communities. To this end, they visited Roseau River Reserve and met as a professional study group, with a number of Aboriginal speakers who discussed treaty issues.