



MEDIA INVITE/NEWS RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division North End students aspire to restore meaning of “Treaty” through mosaic project

May 31, 2018 (Winnipeg, MB) – David Livingstone Community School in Winnipeg School Division is hosting a celebration on June 1 to share the meaning of “Treaty” for students in the North End community. The celebration includes a mural project designed and created by the students.

As a part of an ongoing response to the Truth and Reconciliation’s 94 Calls to Action, school Principal Tim Cox and Vice Principal Pat Mainville encouraged students and teachers to build and uphold classroom treaties in the fall of 2016.

In June 2017, after consultation with students, families, community members and staff, the school unveiled its own David Livingstone Community School Treaty and hosted Treaty Days for the community. This treaty is now proudly displayed at the front entrance of the school for all to see. “I feel like the people from the community that come to the school and school celebrations are part of the treaty, as well as parents and families and students and teachers,” say Liberty Oetting, a Grade 7 student at the school.

The mural has been a continuation of these initiatives and aspires to deepen student understandings of treaty in a pursuit of Truth before Reconciliation.

The project, under the direction of Integrated Arts Teacher Talitha Kaethler, began with an invitation to parents, teachers and community members to participate in the design and creation of the mural to tell the story of the four groups that came together to form David Livingstone Community School, what they value, and their commitment to each other.

“In a time where the word treaty reminds many Canadians of broken promises, Grade 5-8 students at David Livingstone Community School are using art to communicate that treaty is a commitment that belongs to all of us,” says Kaethler.

Over 150 students, staff, family and community members worked on constructing the mosaic over the course of the month of May. A Mosaic Student Advisory Group, made up of nine junior high students, was consulted and participated in making all decisions around the mosaic project. The community celebration on June 1 is a gathering to recognize all those involved and their hard work and dedication to the community. “I feel like [the mural is] accepting everyone in the North End who comes into the school. It’s good vibes,” Oetting says.

This community beautification project, made possible by The Winnipeg Foundation’s One-Time Community Grant of \$11,000, allowed the school to partner with Winnipeg mosaic artist Ursula Neufeld. “A tremendous amount of learning has taken place to reconfigure the democracy of a balanced treaty. Students have learned to use their voice, and that their voice will be heard and respected,” Neufeld says. Ursula Neufeld’s instruction provided students, parents, staff and community members with the mosaic art skills necessary to collaborate and complete an art project that should last for generations to come.

The celebration is open to community members and will take place on **Friday, June 1st, at 9:30am in the Upper Gym of David Livingstone Community School at 270 Flora Avenue.**

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 78 schools, 33,000 students and 6,000 employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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