



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

OUR SCHOOLS



MEETING THE CHALLENGE

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BRACELET AIDS COMMUNICATION

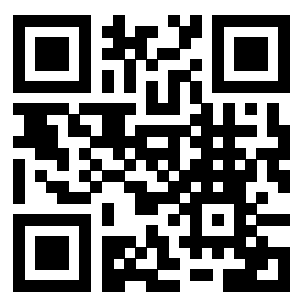
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"I WANT TO LIVE"

Back in 2000, Kevin Brooks was an outgoing young man who enjoyed skateboarding, snowboarding, hockey and going to a punk rock show.

But according to Kevin, he also liked to party—and many times, despite being intoxicated, Kevin and his friends would still drive. Whether they were the driver or passengers on any given night, it was always a risky ride.

"It is often in the best of times that we make these poor choices, just caught up in the moment," Kevin told students at Elmwood High School, where he was speaking as part of Manitoba Public Insurance's Friends for Life campaign. "And we suffer consequences that are life changing for us and the people around us."

Kevin rode his luck until one night in late June, 2000; he was drunk behind the wheel, with his friend Brendon in the passenger seat. Driving in excess of 130 km an hour when he hit a median, the ensuing crash left Kevin's car an unrecognizable heap.

He awoke weeks later in a hospital room, with severe upper body injuries and no

memory of the crash. His mother broke the news a few weeks later: Kevin Brooks was paralyzed from the sternum down.

"I'm laying in a hospital bed paralyzed, thinking things can't get any worse," Kevin said.

Kevin asked his mother about his friends, wondering if anyone was in the car with him. He finally asked about Brendon, his friend and hockey teammate. "My mom looked at me and said 'Kev, Brendon died. He's dead. I'm really sorry.'"

Physically and mentally, Kevin had a long road ahead of him.

"There's nothing that can prepare a person for the news that your friend is dead, and it's your fault," Kevin said. "Everyone who loved Brendon...what have I done to these people? I've ruined their lives."

Especially in the early part of his recovery, Kevin dealt with suicidal thoughts; he considered pulling out the breathing tube that was keeping him alive.

"I couldn't do it. I couldn't bail on life... and behind those thoughts of ending it all,

I could hear it echoing in my head: 'I want to live, I want to live, I want to live,' he said. "We make a stupid choice, it's not just about us. Because we're gone. It's our parents, our brothers, our sisters, our family, our friends who wake up every day and we're not there. We're not coming home."

Kevin went to court to face charges relating to the accident. Surprisingly, Brendon's parents spoke on his behalf in court, helping him to avoid a jail sentence. Their gift was a lesson in forgiveness.

Today, Kevin travels across the continent to share his story. He lives an amazing life; he swims, he snowmobiles and he still goes to punk rock shows. But there will always be regrets.

Kevin said he could have stayed at the house where the party was at and sobered up, or taken a cab with his other friends. Both Kevin and Brendon's parents had offered a ride whenever they needed it. Kevin advised Elmwood students to always take advantage of a safe ride home.

"Take the ride and get your friends home safe too. Looking back, I wish I had," he

said. "I could have called my family and picked up my car the next day...and I wouldn't be in a wheelchair today, telling you this story."

Also at the Friends for Life kick-off was Melody Bodnarchuk, President of the Manitoba chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Ms. Bodnarchuk's nephew Brett Yasinsky was killed in 2010 by a drunk driver; he was driving to pick up his girlfriend for a night at the movies when he died.

The MADD president said her family has never been the same since that night; but she sees hope in today's youth to make positive change.

"I trust you, I have faith in you. You are the most community minded generation we have ever seen," she said.

"Join me in committing in not drinking and driving, and not taking drugs and driving. Make this the generation that changes it all. I know you can do it."

The Elmwood event, which took place on Nov. 18, coincided with the National Day of Remembrance for road crash victims.



ESD IN ACTION

Elmwood High School hosted students from several of its feeder schools for a conference that looked at ways to put Education for Sustainable Development into action.

The Oct. 21 conference saw students in Elmwood's Sustainability Group delivering workshops in areas like watershed ecology, vermicomposting and more to their younger counterparts.

Students from École George V, Kent Road, Norquay and River Elm schools were in attendance.

"The most important thing about today is that students learn more about the environment and how we can take care of it by simple things like composting, reusing and recycling, instead of littering and wasting," said Elmwood Grade 11 student Mickey Thai.

Christina Nguyen, who serves as a

teacher-mentor to the Elmwood ESD group along with teacher Jenna Forslund, said the conference was a way to introduce the club to students who will attend Elmwood next year.

"We're planting the seed because we want to start young," she said. "Many of our group members graduated last year, so we're hoping to recruit some new members as well."

Organizers are hoping to attract more students like Mickey, who bring an enthusiastic spirit to the group year-round.

"I joined because I wanted to learn more about the environment and how I can help it," Mickey said.

Students also had the opportunity to attend a presentation by photographer John Dunn, who is a frequent traveller to Canada's far north (see related story on page 4).

SWEATMAN GYM OFFICIALLY OPENS AT QUEENSTON

Winnipeg School Division has officially opened the new Queenston School Sheilah Sweatman Gymnasium, a 9,590 sq. ft. addition to the original building. The Manitoba government provided support for the new gym, with parent and community fundraising, led by Gym Committee Chair Colleen McFadden, helping to make construction of additional space possible.

"I commend the Queenston gym committee for their efforts to expand the size of this new gym, which will create recreational opportunities for the entire community and encourage students to get active and participate in sports," said Education and Advanced Learning Minister James Allum. "Students who are active are more successful in their studies, and the Manitoba government is committed to ensuring they have more opportunities to be involved in sports."

"We have named the gym in memory of local hero Sheilah Sweatman," said McFadden. "In the summer of 2011, at the age of 29, Sheilah tragically lost her life during a selfless, volunteer mission with Nelson B.C. Search and Rescue. Her commitment to helping others is a value we hope to instil in our children."

Sweatman's parents, Wynn and Teddi Sweatman, were at the opening to share their memories and to talk about Sheilah's legacy.

The new gymnasium features an at-grade public entry, providing a new public face and foyer for the school onto Queenston Street, and safe playground access for students. There is a new elevator

and barrier-free access to all new and existing floors in the school.

"Winnipeg School Division is committed to making our schools completely accessible to all students, throughout the division," said Chair Mark Wasyliv, WSD Board of Trustees. "With every project our staff completes, we realize accessibility and environmental improvements." Trustee Wasyliv also acknowledged what the new building means to the community.

"We're very pleased to partner with Corydon Community Centre to make this space available during the evening, when not in use by the school, to its members and the general public," he said.

The Queenston School Sheilah Sweatman Gymnasium was designed to meet Manitoba Hydro Power Smart guidelines, in addition to being LEED Certified. Design includes a special 'bird-protection' glass along the west and east glass walls to protect native bird populations, while also providing expansive views of the neighbourhood. All finishes are low-emitting for healthy interior environments.

"One of the most unique features of this entire space, and something our students are intrigued by, is the oculus, which reflects Sheilah's signature onto the ground below," said Principal Wade Gregg, Queenston School. The oculus is a domed window located in the front entrance on Queenston Street.

The school's previous gymnasium is now a multi-purpose room used for daycare, lunch program and a variety of special events.



Wynn and Teddi Sweatman



BREAKING THE CODE

Robertson School students are getting their feet wet with coding as part of a new afterschool programming club.

Teacher Curtis Bilewitch started the club at Robertson this year after seeing successes with similar clubs he started at Machray School.

"I hope the students gain an interest in coding and programming...it's such an important part of our lives nowadays," he said. "Once they see that coding is fun and all of the neat things you can do with it, they'll take it from there."

Students are learning programming through developmental games and tools such as Beetlebots, Scratch, Kodu, Codecademy, Code.org and others.

Not all club members are computer aficionados; some are just using the club as a starting point.

"I'm not a computer person, so I thought, why not learn more about it?" said student Izabella Sanchez. "It's more complicated than I thought, but it gets easier the more you learn."

Other students, like Zachary Muise and

Logan Oliveira, are videogame fans who want to learn more about the back-end of gaming technology.

"Half the people I know that play video games, they didn't join the club," Zachary said. "But it's pretty fun learning how to program and make your own games."

The club has proven so popular that Mr. Bilewitch had to break it into two sessions: the Grade 6 students took part up until Christmas break, and the Grade 5 students are ready to go when school resumes in January.

"We're really happy with the turnout," Mr. Bilewitch said.

While the club has winded down for the Grade 6 students, Zachary said students can continue to use the many online tutorials and web tools on Robertson School's programming club page (www.winnipegssd.ca/schools/Robertson/Programs/skipping%20club)

"You can just keep doing it," Zachary said.

Logan echoed that sentiment: "You can be the smartest person in the world but



you can still always learn more."

That's exactly the kind of attitude Mr. Bilewitch is hoping for, as it ensures students will become the driving force

behind their own learning.

"This is a chance for students to get started on it and become self-learners," he said.

WINDOW TO THE NORTH

Sisler High School students recently had window to Canada's Far North during a visit by photographer/adventurer John Dunn.

Through Mr. Dunn's captivating images, students got a closer look at frontiers of Canada rarely seen by most people.

Growing up in England, Mr. Dunn was fascinated by geography, especially the less travelled areas of the world.

"Part of the reason for my interest in the wilderness was that England is this very much man-made, totally altered landscape," said Mr. Dunn, who is now a Canadian citizen. "By university, I had maps on my wall of places like Baffin Island, Canada, while most normal teenagers would have had pictures of the latest Hollywood film star or something back then."

Mr. Dunn, who is a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, has ventured to the Arctic for 20 expeditions over the years. This includes skiing and paddling on Baffin Island, as well as a journey through Ellesmere Island, the last stretch of Canadian land before the North Pole. For that particular trip, Mr. Dunn and fellow explorer Clive Rubens used a sled with removable wheels to haul their gear. The explorers chose light, wide tires to minimize their impact on the landscape.

"In the wilderness, you get the wonderful feeling that you may be the first person to walk up this particular valley, and it's quite possibly true," he said. "So if you take wheels in there, you want to be really careful. If you take mountain bike tires, they would cut into the ground, it's quite fragile."

When making one-time visits to remote sections of the Earth, it's difficult to measure human impacts, such as climate change. Mr. Dunn said the observations of locals, who see the same areas year after year, provide a better gauge of the changes occurring in the North. In Grise Fiord, aerial photos show a reduction in ice caps, and locals are able to get their



boats into the water much earlier into the shortened summers than in the past.

"When you're in one place at one moment, there's no way to judge about what the climate is doing. The people to ask are the locals...if you ask an electrician in Resolute Bay, he might say the power poles are falling over because the permafrost is getting deeper down now," he said.

Students Averie Allard and Ashlie Day, who were part of a Sisler contingent that travelled to Churchill in June, introduced Mr. Dunn before a packed crowd at Sisler's Taras Korol Theatre. Mr. Dunn's presentation stirred the imagination of

both students, who plan on returning to Churchill in the winter months.

"It's just so different from life around here, it's a whole completely different experience," Ashlie said.

On the Sisler trip, students had the opportunity to see beluga whales, a polar bear and even had a rare sighting of a grizzly bear near Churchill.

"For me, I really love animals, so it's all about going up there and seeing animals you would normally see here," Averie said. "People from all over the world come to our province to see that area, so having the opportunity to go there yourself is incredible."

NORTHERN TALES

Sisler High School students Ashlie Day (left) and Kaitlyn Marqueses visited Cecil Rhodes School in December to talk about their recent travels in Canada's North.

Grade 4 students at the school are currently learning about life in the north and Ashlie's mother, Terrie-Lynn, also teaches at the school; she invited the Sisler North program to visit Cecil Rhodes to share their experiences.

Ashlie travelled to Churchill last school year as part of the Sisler North program, while Kaitlyn has visited to see her grandfather, who is a tundra-buggy operator.

"One of our goals is to share what it's like up there, especially with urban-centred youth," said teacher Myriam Bara, who organizes the Sisler North program along with teacher Matthew Robak. "It's nice to show students what life is like in another part of Manitoba's backyard."

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MUSEUM IMPRESSES STUDENTS

When it comes to gauging students' reactions to the full Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR) experience, teachers have a front row seat.

Champlain School teacher Veronique Bedard asked her Grade 5/6 students to write down their poetic impressions of the museum following a visit last school year. The results were so poignant that she shared them with the museum for feedback.

"This group of kids was very engaged in the process all the way along," Ms. Bedard said. "There was a lot happening in our school related to the opening of the museum so the students were already very interested. When we got into the topic of the Second World War in Grade 6, the students couldn't get enough of it. They wanted to know more and more about the human rights aspects. The poems that came out of this were way beyond what I ever expected."

Museum officials were so impressed that they visited Champlain to meet the students in person last spring, and they also asked Ms. Bedard to speak at the CHMR's annual public meeting on Dec. 10.



"This annual public meeting is all about the impact the museum is having," said Rhea Yates, Communications and External Relations Advisor. "This is our first year of operation...and we're having an impact in lots of ways. One of the ways that is not known unless you're a teacher or a student is the impact we're having on students that come to the museum as part of our programs."

Tuesday to Friday, the CHMR has 8-12 classrooms visiting daily to take part in educational programming.

Ms. Bedard read four of her students' poems at the meeting.

"For us, the thing that's great about this is that it's showing that the discussions about human rights are ongoing," Ms. Yates said.

Ms. Bedard said the museum made a lasting impression on her students.

"I think it opened their eyes to things they weren't aware of yet. As you work your way through the museum it becomes more hopeful, and I think they came away with a feeling that they could make a difference and be a part of the change."

The Box

It's only a box
Or is it?

This box means change
This box means hope
This box stands up for human rights

Millions of people gathered to vote.

For the first time
They are heard,
They have a voice,
They are no longer divided,
They count.

It's only a box
Or is it?

THE TALKING BRACELET

Inclusive Education students in WSD are trying out a new communication tool designed to ease their interactions in the classroom—the Talking Bracelet.

The bracelets, which are made of Velcro and material similar to a watch strap, have windows that can hold simple images and words. Students and staff can point to the windows as a means to establish communication.

The bracelets are the creation of Millie Mercier, who has worked as an educational assistant in Mulvey School's primary life skills program for 11 years.

"I call it a communication device," Ms. Mercier said. "We have students who just don't have ways of communicating. They aren't able to use electronic devices... anything I can do to help these kids communicate, I'll do it."

Ms. Mercier works with a variety of special needs students, some of whom are on the autism spectrum. She regularly uses a program called Boardmaker to create sequential diagrams with words and pictures (somewhat similar to comics) to outline students' daily tasks and schedules.

"We may have students who don't speak or have challenges with reading. You can talk to students in the classroom, but they may not always understand. But if students have a visual, and see what's on their agenda for the day, they fully understand what's the next step in the classroom. A Boardmaker symbol tells it all, and they learn very fast."

Boardmaker diagrams are often put on students' desks or compiled into booklets, but portability can be an issue, especially

if children are on the go—such as playing outside at recess.

The impetus for the bracelets came about when Ms. Mercier was attending a workshop with Nancy Clarke-Shippam, a speech language pathologist with WSD's Clinical Support Services.

Ms. Clarke-Shippam issued a challenge to Ms. Mercier—who is known to be handy with sewing—to come up with something simple and portable for students.

"I didn't know how I would design or make them at the start—I spent hours at the fabric store and Michael's just to think about what I could design," Ms. Mercier said, noting that she's sewed together 70 prototypes so far. "It takes me anywhere from 30 or 40 minutes to make one of them, but it has been worth it. It was fun to do because it's all for the kids."

The wristbands holds four one-by-one inch image or word cards, and have room for the storage of other cards.

"Once you are finished with one task, you can move on to the next one," Ms. Mercier said. "You can modify it to whatever the children's needs are."

Clinical Support Services clinicians are in the midst of introducing the bracelets to students from kindergarten to high school who might benefit.

Speech-Language Pathologist Tara Perchaluk has recently introduced the bracelets to some of her students at Dufferin School.

She notes that the bracelets are another tool students may use for communication, along with speech, gestures, objects, symbols and line drawings, pictures/photography and a communication book



comprised of Boardmaker tiles.

"All of these methods work together to enable students to have the most success," she said. "With some students' communication difficulties, it helps to use pictures to communicate, make choices and understand what is happening."

Students are able to get the bracelets in their favourite colours, which helps younger students—who come from a generation where the wrist-watch is somewhat antiquated—to get use to wearing the bracelet.

Educational assistant Jem Torres said it only took her student a day to get used to wearing her Talking Bracelet.

"By the morning of the second day, she was waiting in class for me and pointing at her wrist for the bracelet," Ms. Torres said. "She looks forward to wearing it every day now."

Ms. Perchaluk said the bracelets,

which break down communication into manageable parts—and in a compact format—have shown promise when it comes to helping students. She's even asked for more bracelets so students can also use them at home.

"Helping people to communicate improves their quality of life," she said. "It provides opportunities, education, friendship and independence."

Ms. Mercier said the bracelet almost represents a contract with the students and their expectations.

"If the bracelet says we're going to work first and then you get to play on the bike, that does mean you are going to get to the bike. I promise. You have to follow through."

Ms. Mercier added the bracelets also be of value to English-as-an-additional language students who are new to the school/classroom setting in Canada.

NEW SUPPORTS FOR INNER CITY, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Looking to support student success, the Manitoba government announced new funding aimed for Inner City and community schools.

Officials announced over \$2 million in funding that includes \$900,000 targeted to inner city students in WSD who face barriers to their education. Other areas include \$240,000 to support family outreach coordinators at community schools, \$150,000 to address attendance issues in the inner city, and \$670,000 to increase all community schools funding to \$100,000.

"The Winnipeg School Division Board of Trustees is pleased the province recognizes the extensive work being done in the division to support our diverse student population," said WSD Board Chair Mark Wasyliv, who spoke at the Jan. 6 announcement held at Dufferin School. "The challenges for inner-city youth to stay in school and succeed are unceasing and as a division, we are unceasing in our efforts to help make a difference in their futures."

Also in attendance for the announcement were Premier Greg Selinger and Education and Advanced Learning Minister James Allum.

"We are investing in students in the

inner-city because all students in Manitoba deserve the same chance to succeed," said Premier Selinger. "Community schools bring community supports into the classroom and we want to make sure they have the resources they need so that students can focus on learning while they're at school."

Dufferin Community Support Worker Megan Brisco, parent Wendy Nelson and student Lexy Sapnu all credited the impact of the school's family room on impacting the lives of students and their families. Such rooms provide a hub for families, students, family and community support workers, teachers and others in many WSD schools.

"This funding would potentially allow community schools to remain a hub in the community, while members can continue to receive advocacy, various supports and services currently provided by community support workers, intercultural workers and home learning assistants," Ms. Brisco said.

Lexy said the school was fortunate to have a family room: "Without it, there would be no place for families to meet, plan and do worthwhile projects. Students can also go there to eat lunch with an adult, make a phone call, use a computer, read and play."



Hugh John Macdonald students in the University of Manitoba's Bridge Jazz Program were in attendance to provide a soundtrack to the announcement.

COLOURING IN THE LINES

Children of the Earth High School's student co-op program has a hot-seller on its hands with the creation of an Aboriginal-themed, adult colouring book.

Over the winter holiday season, the student co-op created and printed copies of *Colour Me Serene* and a companion 2016 calendar that features the original student artwork.

Art teacher Cindy Flett and community support worker Jackie Dolynchuk noticed the popularity of adult colouring books on Amazon and saw a lack of Aboriginal themes amongst the current offerings.

"I think they're popular because it's a way to reduce stress...it's art therapy," said Ms. Flett, who converted the students' original images into colourable versions via Adobe Suite.

The co-op held an official sale in December at the Assiniboine Park Conservatory that sold out most of the first print run. A subsequent print run similarly sold out. "We've even had a couple local bookstores that are interested in carrying the colouring book," Ms. Dolynchuk said.

CO-OP AROSE OUT OF PARTNERSHIPS

The COTE co-op was born out of an after-school program at the school, JASP (Journey and Succeed Program). The program provides students with employability skills, financial literacy and job training.

"One of the projects for students in JASP was to research and learn about creating their own student co-op," said Principal Jackie Connell. "There's the business aspects of how to run a co-op...where do the funds go, how do you decide on the products you'll be selling, how do you contribute in terms of time, etc."

The school partnered with the Manitoba Co-operative Association and SEED (Supporting Employment and Economic

Development) Winnipeg to make the co-op a reality.

Representatives from both partner agencies visited COTE to offer students afterschool workshops on the ins-and-outs of starting a co-op.

Since formally establishing the COTE student co-op last year, the organization has focused on projects that incorporate abORIGINAL, the school's student artist collective.

"Whenever we have events and there

is student artwork on display, people are always asking 'where can I buy this?' So it made so much sense to put these two groups together," Ms. Dolynchuk said.

The co-op has held several student art shows that have sold numerous works.

"We did our first two art sales at Neechi Commons," said student Kyler Harper. "Some of our co-op students are also members of the artists' collective...I've worked more on the co-op side of the operation, helping to set up sales."

COTE students Kyler Harper (left), Neia Patzer and Michelle Postoj with their co-op's popular calendar and colouring books.

The calendar and colouring book project was another way to utilize COTE's vibrant artistic community.

"The final result was very professional," Ms. Connell said. "This co-op project has done many positive things for our students and community...and it allows our students to share their many talents and gifts in a positive way."

The student co-op will be expanding to include students at R.B. Russell Vocational High School in 2016.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB



SOCKS FOR A CAUSE

The Lord Nelson School community brought out their warm and woolies to help out with a sock drive for Winnipeg's homeless and needy.

It was Grade 1 student Olive Chornotyski who got the campaign going and recruited her classmates in teacher Christine Stanus's room for the humanitarian project.

"We want to get three or four big bags full of new socks, then me and daddy are going to take them to a homeless shelter," Olive said.

Olive promoted her sock campaign by speaking at a school-wide assembly.

"We also made up a big huge sign and put it at the front of the school, and we even stapled real socks to it," Olive said.

The campaign ultimately amassed 560 pairs of socks, which were in turn donated to Siloam Mission.

Olive said she was pleased with the response to her public appeal.

"I just felt like helping. People might not have enough money to buy warm clothes and they might get cold."

STRATHCONA WINS MERIT FOR DANCE FLOOR OF TREES PROJECT

Nestled among some big names like Stantec, Canada House and Millenium Library you will find the Folly Forest in Winnipeg. The names can be found in the 2015 Premier's Award for Design Excellence, and Folly Forest can be found at Winnipeg School Division's Strathcona School.

The unique design idea is attributed to Straub Thurmayr Landscape

Architects and Urban Designers. It demonstrates the immense potential of landscape architecture by repurposing old materials into a new context that magically transforms 50-year-old asphalt into a dance floor of 100 trees.

Strathcona School won an award of merit for the project, which was one of 69 entries to the Premier's Award of Design Excellence this year.

RECONCILING FROM THE HEART

Winnipeg School Division's (WSD) students and staff examined the residential schools legacy during the opening ceremonies for The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Over 1,700 students and 350 educators from across Manitoba came to the RBC Convention Centre for day two of the event, which focused on educating students about the history of residential schools.

WSD's Aboriginal Education Team played a major role in the day's activities, including a workshop on the Project of Heart.

The national project, designed to honour the survivors and victims of Canada's residential school system, has students exploring the history and legacy of the tragedy during their classroom studies. Among the many projects is the creation of tile mosaics featuring students' impressions and messages of hope. While a Project of Heart mosaic is already located at The Forks, students and teachers are being encouraged to create tiles for similar works.

Also in the works is a Heart Garden, which will feature students' messages to residential school survivors.

Students at the workshop had a chance to create their own tiles and heart-shaped messages, while having a chance to hear the story of WSD Cree Language Support Teacher and residential school survivor Rudy Okemaw.

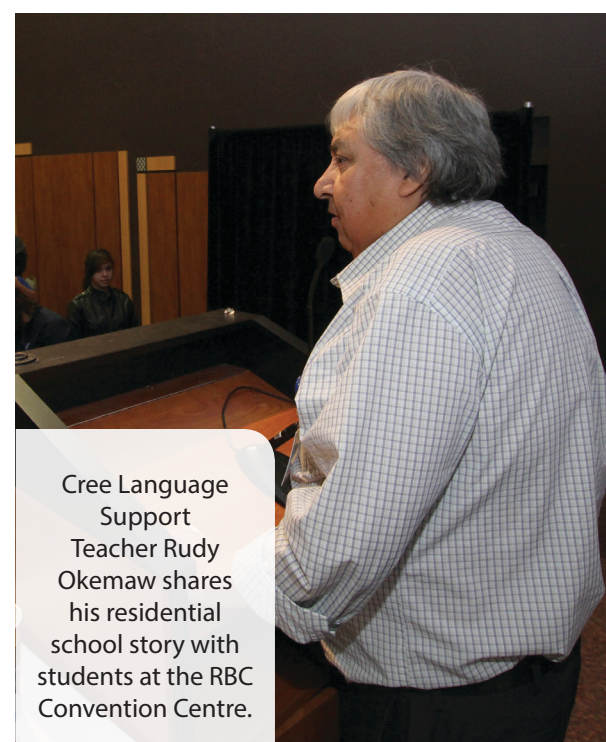
Students also had an opportunity to take part in a youth dialogue panel, a blanket exercise, musical presentations and more during a packed day.



A student designs his own tiles for the Project of Heart.



Aboriginal Education Support Teachers Crystal Millar-Courchene and Ollie Zirka play an honour song.



Cree Language Support Teacher Rudy Okemaw shares his residential school story with students at the RBC Convention Centre.



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NEW FUNDING FOR REFUGEES

The Manitoba government announced an additional \$1.6 million for newcomers and refugees, including specific supports for Syrian students in the classroom and community.

Premier Greg Selinger announced the funding Jan. 11 at Hugh John Macdonald School.

The funding includes: immediate funding of \$750,000 to help schools receive and assess refugee children; \$450,000 in increased funding for English as an additional language (EAL) students in schools; \$300,000 in increased funding for the Intensive Newcomer Support Grant, a targeted grant for refugee and war-affected children; \$50,000 in support for the Peaceful Village/Manitoba School Improvement Program; \$25,000 in support for the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM); and \$25,000 in support for the Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services Centre.

“Schools are the hub of our neighbourhoods and it’s through the relationships made in classrooms, parent rooms and student events, for both children and adults that we connect with the community,” said WSD Board Chair Mark Wasyliv. “We commend the Manitoba government for this critical investment in the education and inclusion of our newest residents.”

Premier Selinger said that to date, 254 government-assisted refugees from the Syrian crisis have come to Manitoba.

Hugh John Macdonald has already had ample experience in working with

newcomer and refugee students.

“Schools such as Hugh John Macdonald have been a part of our Canadian society’s ongoing effort to welcome and settle newcomer students and their families in a coordinated, sustained and responsive manner,” said Principal Vinh Huynh. “We are thankful that the province recognizes the importance of this work and is responding with the support to ensure that all newcomer students have access to the learning opportunities that they need.”

Hugh John Macdonald students Dimah and Hazo Abdulkareem shared their own newcomer stories with the media at the announcement, telling of their journey from Iraq to Turkey to Canada.

“It’s very important that we are welcoming them (the Syrian refugees),” Hazo said. “The life of a refugee is so hard.”



PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

“EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED”

Hugh John Macdonald School students recently had the chance to meet successful Somalian immigrant Hamse Warfa in a visit sponsored by the United States Embassy.

Mr. Warfa is the Somali-born author of *America Here I Come: A Somali Refugee’s Quest for Hope*. Now based in Minnesota, he also runs a consulting firm.

Mr. Warfa was born in Mogadishu, Somalia before having to flee with his family due to civil war. He spent three years living a Kenyan refugee camp before coming to the United States.

“Everything was scarce, we had to line up hours and hours just for things like water and food,” he said of the camps. “Fortunately you don’t have to do that. You are in a good position. You don’t have to worry about what you are going to eat or where you are going to sleep tonight in your homes. Life in the camps was very difficult.”

Eventually, Mr. Warfa’s family was sponsored by a church and came to the United States, touching down in Denver, Colorado.

“We had never seen snow,” he said. “When we saw it outside, my Mom thought it was salt and my sister thought it was sugar.”

Mr. Warfa said in today’s multicultural society, immigrants couldn’t simply stick together in their own cultural groups. For students at schools like Hugh John



Macdonald—where many cultures thrive and learn about each other—students will have distinct advantages.

“Now we’re becoming more global. Everything is interconnected. You’re not

going to be able to survive with just being stuck with your own cultural group. You have to reach out and work closely with students of different backgrounds. The kind of jobs you get will depend on your cultural competency

and how you’re going to work with other people. The opportunities you have here, don’t take them for granted. You’re in good hands. Make sure you reach out to students of other backgrounds.”

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY TO INSPIRE AND INNOVATE

WSD NEW GRAD RECRUITMENT FAIR

Ready to inspire students of all ages, 240 new education graduates met with Winnipeg School Division staff recently for the New Grad Recruitment Fair.

The fair, held January 12-16 at the Canad Inns Polo Park, offered many graduates their first job interview in their field, as well as providing WSD with a first-look at new educators, with the goal of finding the best possible candidates for our schools.

“We’re looking for dynamic educators who will thrive in the diverse setting Winnipeg School Division offers,” said Director of Human Resources Eric Barnaby.

As in previous years, WSD administrators conducted the interviews with the new grads. These are principals and vice-principals who have worked in schools for many years, both as administrators and as teachers. When it comes to adding new teachers to the teams at their schools, administrators have a solid idea of what they want.

Vincent Audino, Principal at École Lansdowne, and Chantelle Deslauriers, Principal at École River Heights School, interviewed French-speaking bilingual teachers on the second day of the fair. They said that while they are looking for strong educators, they are also looking for other assets when it comes to new teachers.

“We want someone who is enthusiastic and passionate, someone who clearly loves kids and wants to teach,” Mr. Audino said. “This is a calling for them, not just a vocation.”

Administrators are also looking for teachers who can enhance students’ school experience through clubs, sports, humanitarian groups and other extracurricular activities. Whether teachers are assisting with these activities or taking part in school planning and other tasks, the reality is that teachers must be prepared to spend time at school outside of their classroom hours.

“We’re looking for someone who will contribute to school life...someone with a good work ethic who can put in the extra hours,” Ms. Deslauriers said.

Another asset for candidates is previous experience in a diversified setting similar to WSD.

“If they understand Winnipeg School Division and the diversity we have culturally, social-economically and academically, and have some experience in working in that kind of environment, that always helps,” Mr. Audino said.

University of Manitoba graduate Winnie Huynh and University of Winnipeg graduate Amy Webb both said the WSD’s diversity was a key reason why they applied with the division.

Ms. Huynh attended WSD for much of her own education and also worked two of her practicums in WSD schools (Gordon Bell and Hugh John Macdonald).

“The staff was very welcoming and supportive and you could tell that they cared about the kids. I just really enjoyed



that atmosphere,” she said. “I wanted the opportunity to be part of a staff that is so caring for their students and their learning. And the students here are so diverse and interesting, I’d love to work with them.”

Ms. Webb previously had the opportunity to work with Inner City students while working as a dance teacher.

“That experience is what inspired me to go into teaching,” she said. “I had my first placement at Victoria-Albert School, which is across the street from IRCOM (Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba). Working with those students again and seeing the difference you can make in their lives through dance, and how you can take that into all of their subjects, has made me want to continue working with Inner City students and in particular, immigrant students.”

Following their interviews with WSD administrators, teacher candidates took the time to chat in the informal “WSD Café” that was set up beside the interview area. The café offered a relaxing environment for new teachers to enjoy a cup of coffee and discuss working in education.

“We found the waiting area in previous years was a little too formal...we wanted to create a welcoming, relaxing space where teachers could have those conversations and reflect,” Mr. Barnaby said.

Teacher candidates who were interviewed at the fair may be added to the WSD substitute roster for May and June, or they may be offered term positions if available.





TOGETHER, WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

On Nov. 16, thousands of WSD students went to MTS Centre to share their humanitarian spirit at WE Day 2016.

Schools use WE Day to ignite school projects that benefit local and global causes such as hunger, education in developing countries and access to water projects.

Students can't buy a ticket to WE Day—they earn their way to the event based on their ongoing humanitarian efforts at school and in the community.

Sisler High School students Shania Pruden and Justin Papoff were among the inspirational speakers for the day, with a line-up that included Free the Children founders Marc and Craig Keilburger, Spencer West, JR Martinez, Henry "The Fonz" Winkler, Kardinal Offishall and more.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB



ART "ISMS"

St. John's High School students recently celebrated the launch of a new book featuring students' Aboriginal artwork.

The official launch for *ART "isms"* took place in December, with students and their families touring a mini-gallery of the original paintings in the school library.

The book was made possible with a Building Student Success with Aboriginal Parents grant.

Teacher Marie Zorniak said the book was borne out of a project that had students creating visual connections to spirit animals and cultural teachings that had impacted them throughout their lives.

"This is the culmination of a year of learning and a celebration of their successes," she said. "I felt the artwork was so amazing that it needed to be brought forward so other people could see it. Students who didn't think they could do art came up with incredible pieces to fill that blank square."

Student Christina Guimond ended up doing two pieces for the book, including a stirring piece of a chief at sunset. She plans on giving the original to her grandparents.

"I wanted to challenge myself because these were the first paintings I ever did," she said. "I like pen and pencil, but I really enjoyed painting and playing around with colours."

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

Student Dylan Olson with his piece depicting an anonymous peacekeeper.

Dylan Olson was also relatively new to art, but he was able to create two paintings for the book.

"Both pieces were about 80 hours of work, just going over it and making sure everything was done properly," he said. "I didn't I know had the talent, but Ms. Zorniak gave me the tools to express it. I'm not going to lie, I'm really happy with the results."

Destiny Morgan used Haida style

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

artwork to create a painting of a polar bear; the piece was selected for the cover of the book.

"It feels cool that other people will see it," she said, adding that she often draws when the mood hits her. "I've done other work but just my family has seen it before this. Art is fun...it keeps you occupied and it's beautiful to look at. It's just something that I like."

Destiny Morgan with her Haida-style painting, which was selected for the cover of *ART "isms"*.

TRADES DISCOVERY

WSD students in the North End will be exploring career possibilities in the skilled trades through a newly announced program.

The North End Trades Discovery Initiative will provide students with opportunities to learn about skilled trades starting in elementary school; the program will also provide students with first-hand trades experiences.

The initiative is a partnership between WSD, Skills Canada Manitoba, the Community Education Development Association (CEDA) and the provincial government.

The province announced the initiative Jan. 7 at Niji Mahkwa School.

"With Canada's fastest-growing economy, Manitoba employers need tens of thousands of new skilled workers over the next decade," said Jobs and the Economy Minister Kevin Chief. "Fortunately, our neighbourhood has one of Canada's youngest and fastest-growing demographics to help us meet that demand. This initiative will help north end students learn about opportunities that are waiting for them right here at home."

Students living in the Lord Selkirk Park, William Whyte, North Point Douglas and Dufferin neighbourhoods will have the opportunity to take part in the planned two-year project.

"This initiative will help get even more students in Winnipeg School Division excited about their futures," said Mark Wasyliw, board chair, Winnipeg School Division. "We are reaching them at an

age when they are beginning to focus their studies and interests on what kind of career they want as an adult."

The initiative, which is funded with \$78,000 from the province, will include: trades awareness experiences for Grade 5/6 students at David Livingstone, Niji Mahkwa and William Whyte schools with in-school projects and summer camp programs at R.B. Russell Vocational High School; opportunities for some Grade 7/8 students at Niji Mahkwa involved in the CEDA Pathways to Education Program to go on industry tours and experience an after-school trade activity at R.B. Russell; and trades awareness experiences for Grades 9 to 12 students involved in the CEDA Pathways to Education Program at Children of the Earth, R.B. Russell and St. John's schools such as industry tours, after-school and summer programs, and participation in work co-operatives at social enterprises.

Before and after the provincial announcement, Niji Mahkwa students were able to visit several trade booths in their gymnasium, with guests that included the R.B. Russell Hairstyling program and members of the United Association Local 254, which represents pipe-fitting trades such as plumbing, steam fitting, sprinkler fitting, refrigeration and welding.

Niji Mahkwa Grade 5 student Tristina Boulanger said she was interested in two different career areas: "I liked doing the make-up and hairdressing at the R.B. Russell table...or I could be like my dad, he does roofing."





2016/2017 DRAFT BUDGET



HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2016/2017:

Investments to improve student success

- Four additional full-day Kindergartens
- Support for science enrichment programs
- Strengthening Indigenous education

Savings to align resources with needs

- Exploring universal subsidy programs to better focus on needs
- Managing program lifecycles to suit current needs

Improving business administration

- Savings on print copier leases
- Reduced fees for office, information systems and research services

QUICK FACTS

33,190
students

2,196
graduates

1,786
nursery students

4,328
students in language programs

6,567
English-as-an-additional-
language students

The Winnipeg School Division Board of Trustees is now working on WSD's 2016/2017 budget. The Board develops the budget based on WSD's guiding principles which include leading education innovation, high quality education, employing competent, qualified and caring staff and managing tax dollars responsibly.

LANGUAGE OPTIONS

WSD Bilingual dual-track language programs (50% English 50% second language) being offered in 2016 include: Indigenous Cree, Indigenous Ojibway, Hebrew, Ukranian and Spanish.

French Milieu is offered in 5 WSD schools.
French Immersion is offered at 12 WSD schools.



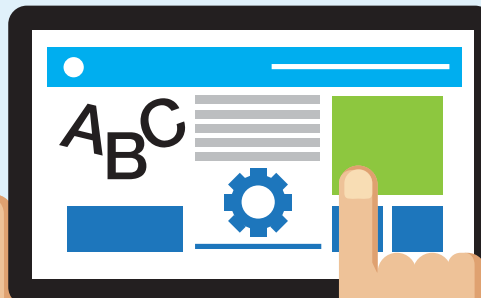
EXPANDING EDUCATION

WSD full day kindergarten pilot program was expanded from four schools to a total of nine starting in September 2015



PAST INVESTMENTS IN SCHOOLS

- Upgraded school security
- Energy improvements and green building initiatives
- Technology and business systems to control long term costs
- WiFi in all schools
- Mental health programs to support student health and wellness



EDUCATION FUNDING

WSD has two major sources of funding: The Province of Manitoba and the property tax levy. In the current budget, the WSD Board focused on maintaining programs and services.

Costs have increased by about **2.3%** from the 2015/16 budget

Provincial funding of schools increased by just **1%** of 61% of WSD budget

The Board proposes increasing the property tax levy by **5%** or about **\$62** a year on a typical home in Winnipeg School Division.
* 2016 average assessed value \$203,900 in WSD.

THE NUMBERS

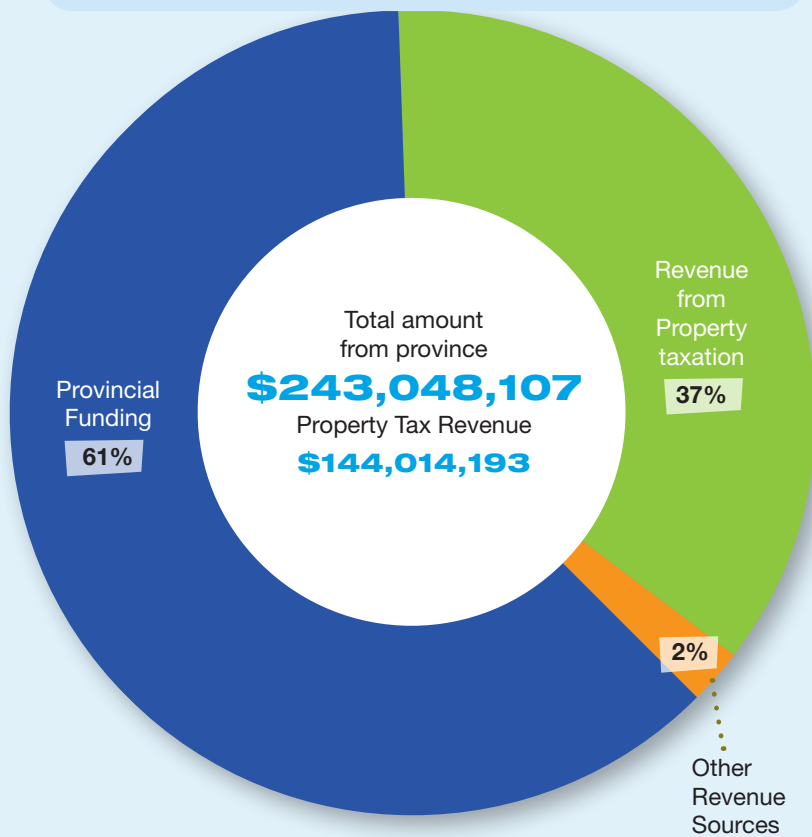
PROVINCIAL/PROPERTY TAX AND OTHER REVENUE

School taxes are calculated the same way as municipal taxes. As the mill rate for school divisions vary within the City of Winnipeg, this may cause your school taxes to be different due to the property tax revenue required, assessment levels and specific programming for students.

Portioned Assessment	X	Municipal Mill Rate 1000	=	Municipal Taxes
			+	
Portioned Assessment	X	School Division Mill Rate 1000	=	School Division Taxes
			-	Education Property Tax Credit (EPTC)
				Total Current Taxes (Net)

- * Homeowners – maximum \$700 EPTC offset on property taxes
- Renters – claim up to \$700 EPTC on income tax form MB479 – Manitoba Credits
- Senior households with income below \$40,000 – claim up to an additional \$1,100 EPTC on income tax form MB479
- Senior School Tax Rebate – Apply for up to \$2,300 tax rebate on property taxes

See tax calculator on WSD website: winniegsd.ca



EXPENDITURES

INSTRUCTIONAL

REGULAR INSTRUCTION	\$209,205,850	52.8%
Costs related directly to the Kindergarten to Grade 12 classroom including instruction and supplies.		
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	\$91,687,650	23.1%
Costs specifically related to students who have exceptional learning needs, as well as counselling and guidance and resource costs for all students.		
COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SERVICES	\$9,955,100	2.5%
Costs related to providing services such as community use of facilities and gym rentals, and non-credit courses through WSD's Life Long Learning program to community groups and individuals. Includes pre-kindergarten education.		
INSTRUCTIONAL AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES	\$9,643,900	2.4%
Costs related to support services for students, teaching staff and the educational process, such as libraries/ media centres, professional development and curriculum consulting and development.		
SUPPORT		
ADMINISTRATION	\$10,620,500	2.7%
Cost related to the administration of Winnipeg School Division such as computer and information services, business and human resource functions, Board and central administration.		
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	\$6,646,200	1.7%
Costs related to operation of school buses		
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE	\$49,870,200	12.6%
Costs related to the upkeep, maintenance and minor repair of all 77 WSD schools, as well as additional buildings and grounds		
FISCAL AND CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS	\$8,899,700	2.2%
Payroll tax; banking charges and capital transfers		
2016/2017 Draft Budget	\$396,529,100	100%
2015/2016 Final Budget	\$387,505,400	
Change from 2015/2016 Final Budget	\$9,023,700	2.3%

LEARN MORE ABOUT WSD BUDGET 2016/17

- Budget webpage – winniegsd.ca
- Discuss with other parents/guardians at parent council meetings

Attend Board of Trustees special meeting on the budget
Monday, Feb. 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. 1577 Wall Street East
To address the Board you must register in advance by contacting (204) 789-0469.
Registration deadline is noon, Feb. 18, 2016.

GIVE FEEDBACK

Complete our survey online at winniegsd.ca
Email board@wsd1.org
Written feedback can also be mailed to:
Winnipeg School Division
Attn: Board Office
1577 Wall Street East
Winnipeg, MB R3E 2S5



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

There was a full house at Norquay School's gymnasium for the annual Breakfast with Santa event.

A contingent of volunteers and staff arrived at the school in the early morning hours before school to help cook the pancakes. Many of the volunteers came from Lafarge, a construction materials supplier with whom the school has had an ongoing partnership since 2007. Lafarge employees often volunteer at the school and the company also provides financial support and other donations.

"Any community event we have, they're the first to offer their support," said Principal Leslie Last. "Their volunteerism is always stellar."

Many parents took the opportunity to share the morning with their children.

"We always encourage parents to come and sit with their children," Ms. Last said. "They all love to sit and talk with their kids, and who doesn't love breakfast?"

The highlight of the morning was the arrival of Santa Claus, who took time out from his busy schedule to chat with the students and share holiday cheer.

TOP TEACHER

Meadows West School teacher Elvera Stoesz is already popular with her students, but her approval rating is through the roof after earning her class a pizza party for winning CityTV's Top Teacher Award.

Erica Natividad, Morning Remote Host of Wheeler in the Morning, presented Ms. Stoesz with the award on Dec. 8. Following the presentation, the whole class received a free pizza lunch courtesy of Pizza Hotline.

Ms. Stoesz was nominated for the award by one of her students, Makayla Mashinter. "I did it because she's really nice," Makayla said, adding that she felt "lucky and proud" that her teacher and class won the prize.

Student Kalen Umali thought Ms. Stoesz won the award because of her caring nature. "She takes care of people when they're hurt," he said.

Jayden Janzen said Ms. Stoesz was selected because of her teaching abilities: "I think she won because she's great at doing math with us."

The Grade 2 teacher said she was honoured to win the award, which is presented to one Manitoba teacher monthly. But she was quick to credit the Meadows West staff.



Erica Natividad, Morning Remote Host of Wheeler in the Morning (right), presented Ms. Stoesz with her Top Teacher Award.

"Our school is just a wonderful place to work as a team, our administration and the rest of the staff that work here are fabulous," she said. "It would be presumptuous to think I could do this on my own. You need

to work with a tight team to be considered the top teacher."

She added she was thrilled that it was a student who nominated her for the award: "It's absolutely touched my heart."



PUT THE STING ON HUNGER

Tec Voc High School students drum up support for the school's Sting Hunger drive, which took place in December. The school managed to fill a bus with food and collect \$1,500 for the Christmas Cheer Board. Well done!

PHOTO BY ANNA CHRAMOW, TEC VOC PHOTOGRAPHY



KINDNESS STILL THE ULTIMATE IN COOLNESS

Sister MacNamara School and Virgin Radio personality Ace Burpee played host on Dec. 11 for the announcement of this year's Cool 2Be Kind grant recipients.

The Winnipeg Police Association gives out the grants yearly to support school projects that build positive relationships amongst students.

In addition, members of the Winnipeg Police Service regularly appear in schools to deliver anti-bullying speeches.

"The proposals have been awesome," said Winnipeg Police Association President Moe Sabourin. "This is the fourth year running the program, but that being said, it's not our thing. It's the kids that are putting the proposals together and showing the other students that it's cool to be kind."

Among the schools that received grants was Sister MacNamara. The school plans

on using its grant to create a unique multimedia project.

"The Grade 6 students from Sister MacNamara School are creating a motivational music video highlighting 101 ways they can make a difference in their school, local community, and the larger world community," said teacher Brenna Bacchus, who added that she would be working with teachers Samantha Villaneuva and Tasia Karagiannis.

"This will promote understanding, community building, acceptance, and make them a driving force for change. They believe everyone can contribute to making our world a better place for all. The students were very honoured and excited to receive the Cool 2B Kind grant to help put this project and some of its generated ideas into action."

COOL TO BE KIND

Sargent Park School celebrated a month of kindness with a spirited assembly featuring a hundreds-student-strong performance of “The World Kindness Dance.”

Computer support teacher Deanna Einarson said the school chose November for its kindness campaign because World Kindness Day falls on Nov. 13.

“The creator of the dance, Orly Wahba, has a quote that I love: ‘Kindness isn’t something you do, kindness is something you are,’” Ms. Einarson said. “We’re hoping that at Sargent Park, after this whole experience, the students will all see being kind is a way of life.”

All through November, every class in the school demonstrated and promoted the act of kindness through words, deeds and special class projects. Students tracked their progress on kindness wreaths located on their classroom doors and the school’s “Wall of Flame” (a reference to the Sargent Park team name, the Flames).

“One of the things we talked a lot about in Grade 8 was encouraging each other,”

said student Zachary Wynne. “Grade 8 can be challenging for some people, so just complimenting and encouraging people can really help them out.”

The school received a \$500 Cool 2B Kind grant from the Winnipeg Police Association to support the project. The money was given to five classrooms that best embodied kindness throughout the month; the classes will in turn give \$50 to a charity of their choice, with the remainder going toward classroom initiatives.

Teacher Gina Florendo worked with Sargent Park’s dance troupe to learn the World Kindness Dance. The students led a school-wide performance of the dance at the assembly and also organized a flash mob performance at the Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex.

Even though November 2015 is past, students say they plan to continue to follow the path of kindness.

“We plan to keep being kind because that’s the right thing to do,” said student Joshua Salisi. “We should always be kind to each other...that’s how we’ll make the world a better place.”



Teacher Susan Macfarlane Penner’s Grade 2 students wrote down their acts of kindness on paper bracelets that were linked together in a massive chain.



A HEALTHY DONATION

Sister MacNamara School was the recipient of a cheque presentation from Cargill Foods on Nov. 23. The school received \$5,000 to help support the healthy snack program at Sister MacNamara. “We are very grateful for their generosity,” said Principal Debbie Lenhardt Mair.



HOLIDAY FUN

Lord Nelson School students, staff and families enjoyed a morning of Christmas cheer at the school’s Dec. 17 Santa Breakfast.

Seasonal spirit is not in short supply at the school. Some Lord Nelson parents even established a caroling group, donating any proceeds to the school’s parent advisory council. The carolers managed to raise over \$150 in just two nights of singing.

A STELLAR CLASS AT MAYAA

WSD students were well represented at the 2015 Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Awards (MAYAA).

Among the students honoured at the recent ceremony at the Victoria Inn were: Jimmy Thomas, St. John's High School; Tristen Lambert, Tec Voc High School; Sarah Keizer-Contois, Tec Voc; Gordon Parisian, Children of the Earth High School; and Sila Rogan, Kelvin High School.

Jimmy Thomas won in the Artistic Performance category for his rap video "Heaven," which he released under his MC name, Jimmy the Jamster. The video was created in collaboration with the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre program JUST TV, where Jimmy honed his skills. The program provides youth aged 16-24 with a creative outlet and training in music and video production.

"They treat me like family there," Jimmy said of the program. "When I gave my speech, I thanked everyone for their love and support."

Jimmy, who added that his biggest influence is Eminem, is continuing to work on tracks for an album.

"I've got 15 tracks lined up for an album, but I have to work on them and make sure I've got all the right beats lined up."

Gordon Parisian was recognized in the Culture category. Gordon is a vital part of the Children of the Earth community, actively participating in traditional activities, as well as extracurricular activities such as the Thunderbird Café and the school's co-op.

"I participate in my culture quite a bit. Nowadays it feels like this generation is losing that," Gordon said. "When I'm taking part in culture, it feels like I can inspire my peers and friends to get involved as well. It may seem like it's not important

in today's society, but to our people, it's very much alive and it's still important."

He said that he was in turn inspired just being with the other students at the MAYAA awards ceremony: "It felt good to be there with other students who are very involved in their community."

Sila Rogan received the award for the Academic Junior category; the Grade 11 student maintains an over 90 per cent average in Kelvin's International Baccalaureate program.

"I wanted to get the best education I could get, and this is an internationally recognized program, so it's definitely beneficial," she said. "I've been really lucky to work with great teachers and students."

Sila, who has an interest in medicine, hopes to one day serve with an organization such as Doctors Without Borders: "I like science and I also want to help people, so medicine would be a good combination."

She added that she was impressed with the other youths she met at the MAYAA ceremony.

"There were lots of really talented people there," Sila said. "It was definitely an honour."

Tristen Lambert won in the Artistic Visual category based on her work in Tec Voc's Photography program. The selection committee was impressed with Tristen's portfolio, which covers a breadth of studio and location work.

"I just like shooting whatever I can," Tristen said.

She added that accepting the award in front of a large audience was challenging.

"I was nervous about speaking, because I'm not normally one to speak in front of a crowd."

Fellow Tec Voc student Sarah Keizer-Contois was presented with the award for the Personal Achievement Junior



PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

WSD's 2015 MAYAA Award winners (clockwise from left): Gordon Parisian; Tristen Lambert and Sarah Keizer-Contois; Jimmy Thomas; and Sila Rogan.

category. Sarah participated in Tec Voc's Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program, the Aboriginal Students' Association and took part in Aboriginal language lessons in Ojibwe.

"Because I was a new student here last year, I went out of my way to get out of my comfort zone," Sarah said.

Getting a call from MAYAA stands as a

highlight in her academic career.

"I was excited to get the call about it," Sarah said. "I didn't believe it at first. It meant so much to me to bring Mom to the awards and see me win this for her, because I just want to make her proud."

Elsewhere, former R.B. Russell Vocational High School student Chantalle Young won in the Senior Athletics category.

SERVICE WITH A SMILE AT COTE

A student run café is offering warm drinks and service with a smile at Children of the Earth High School.

The Thunderbird Café, which open on morning break and at lunch, offers students a chance to gain work experience right at school.

Student Kashtin Mekish has worked at the café for two years running.

"I just love serving coffee and talking to the customers," he said. "You make new friends and get to know everyone better. I had to learn that part of it at first, but I got used to it."

The café was born out of the school's Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative's Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Program last school year.

Business and ICT teacher Tanis Kobewka said the café has grown in scope this year.

"Because of the café being such a success last year, it has been able to grow and become a whole-school employability tool," Ms. Kobewka said. "Any student from any program can come to work in the café."

Students can work the till, serve beverages and work on clean-up

crew to ensure the café meets health standards. Servers wear Thunderbird Café t-shirts and aprons for an added level of professionalism.

"The students are really running this independently," Ms. Kobewka said. "They'll make arrangements with their teachers so they can come early and make sure the coffee is brewed and the kettles are warmed."

Students also look at other aspects of the business, such as branding. They explored getting branded cups but that proved to be cost ineffective, so they are stamping their own cups with their logo instead.

Students have also used the café to help raise money for causes such as the COTE graduation fund.

"One of our goals is also to support in-house programs here," Ms. Kobewka said.

Student Ronald Kastel, who works with the clean-up crew, said the experience was beneficial.

"I think it's a great advantage, as there aren't many students who look for employment these days," he said. "So a place like this is a great stepping stone to help you get noticed by other employers."

COTE students Kashtin Mekish (left) and Ronald Castel between shifts at Thunderbird Café.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

WORKING TOGETHER

SCHOOLS PART OF THE RECONCILIATION

Every day, WSD's Clinical Support Services works with schools and families to provide specialized supports to students; many of these students and families have been impacted by the legacy of Canada's residential school system.

Clinical Support Services invited Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to speak with clinicians and staff at Centro Caboto Centre on Oct. 22.

"The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in bringing the stories of Survivors to light is tremendously important," said Tim Thorne-Tjomslund, Service Director of Clinical Support Services. "The residential schools had a profoundly negative impact on many generations of Aboriginal children and their families, an effect that is very much in evidence today when you consider the high number of Aboriginal children in care, the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people admitted to sentenced custody relative to the non-Aboriginal population, and the high number of Aboriginal children living below the poverty line. We felt that it was absolutely essential as Canadians to understand what happened, why it happened, and what we can do to be part of the process of reconciliation."

Much of the TRC's work has involved gathering statements and testimony from the thousands who attended residential schools. Over 6,200 statements have been

collected, most of which were recorded on video and audio to preserve survivors' stories. There are stories of physical, emotional, mental and sexual abuse, and a disconnection from their traditions, culture and families.

"I can tell you all sorts of statistics about things that happened in the schools, but you're not going to get a proper impression from me," Justice Sinclair said. "You're only going to get a proper impression from listening to a survivor tell you what happened to him."

After showing some video footage of survivors' testimonies, Justice Sinclair said the intergenerational impacts of the residential schools are still a factor for today's youth.

"The implications of residential school life...on the children of survivors are very strong," Justice Sinclair said. "The question that we very quickly identified was important for us to deal with was what about the intergenerational survivors, the children and grandchildren of survivors. The people that you (working in the education system) deal with."

Schools can play a critical role in helping youth discover their cultural identity and their future possibilities.

"If you talk to kids today about why they drop out of school, and they say it's because school is not giving them what they need. It doesn't give them a sense of who they are," Justice Sinclair said. "Schools, like every other element of society, should



help us answer four questions: where do I come from...where am I going...why am I here...and whom am I?"

Mr. Thorne-Tjomslund said Justice Sinclair's speech had a strong impression on the staff in attendance: "We are very grateful that Justice Sinclair spoke to us today. He is a very busy man and very committed to sharing his wisdom with educators. The response to his presentation from Clinical Support

Services staff was overwhelmingly positive. We have begun planning with our staff on what we are going to do next to keep building our understanding and to find ways to bring this to our work in the Winnipeg School Division."

Drummers from Children of the Earth High School opened the speaking engagement with an Honour Song.

- With files from Clinical Support Services

REMEMBERING JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

BY COLLEEN OMAND, TEACHER, GREENWAY SCHOOL

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission made 94 recommendations to call of action in its report; Jordan's Principle is number 3 on the list.

As a triple AAA representative of Greenway School I was driven to bring awareness to my Grade 1 students as part of our Human Rights and Aboriginal Perspective unit. I shared my idea with the staff of Greenway School and all agreed to be part of the project school wide. I was overwhelmed by the decision of the staff and as a one we worked together to collect socks.

Jordan River Anderson was my cousin Ernest's son. He was born with complex medical issues and was not able to go home to his family in Norway House due the cost of his medical expenses. The two levels of government did not agree on who would pay the costs after the family was given permission to take him home to his reserve Norway House. (Norway House Cree Nation Reserve has a hospital in the community) For two years they disagreed and Jordan eventually passed away in the hospital at a very young age.

I would visit Jordan through out the years while he was in the hospital, I would take my daughter Trinity with me on many of the visits. One day my daughter Trinity



noticed he was wearing plain white socks and she offered to bring her colorful socks for him. Trinity and Jordan were the same age and I agreed with her to do so. This is where the idea came from to collect socks in his memory. The socks that were collected will be donated to HSC Children's Hospital as Jordan spent much of his short life there, as well as the WSD Adolescent Parent

Center and Greenway Parenting Room.

Students of Greenway School wrote a message using the socks that were collected; the message said Everybody had the RIGHT to go home. Greenway School took part in an event that showed dedication and awareness to his memory so that no child in Canada will go through what Jordan and his family experienced.

We plan to write letters to our Prime Minister Trudeau to ensure that Jordan's Principle is honored and that his memory will be remembered and to make positive changes for all children across Canada because Jordan's rights were not met.

A package of socks in various sizes was also sent to Jordan's family in Norway House Cree Nation.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

About 320 Winnipeg School Division (WSD) students checked-in with the Mayor of Winnipeg on Jan. 12. It was a mid-year student summit responding to Mayor Brian Bowman's challenge at the Oct. 13 kick off to WSD Everybody has the Right 2015.

The mayor challenged students to increase their understanding of diversity to help create "One Winnipeg."

"Mayor Bowman's challenge made me want to find a way to change the negative image of our city," said St. John's High School student, Sylas Parenteau. "I believe we all have a responsibility to help beat racism through knowledge." Parenteau, who is *Métis*, feels everyone is born without racist thoughts and awareness, starting at a young age, will help prevent racism from developing.

"The Mayor's challenge has created an opportunity for dialogue in safe classroom settings, where students are learning about and sharing their naturally receptive attitudes toward inclusiveness of all Canadians, regardless of colour, race or religion," said Fatima Mota, WSD Superintendent of Education Services, Equity & Diversity, Inclusive Education.

Former St. John's High School graduate, Michael Champagne, spoke at the summit, sharing his perspective on racism in Winnipeg. "There's a change happening - and it's because of what young people are doing to broaden minds and create a balance," said Champagne. "I'm seeing what students are doing at schools around the city and it makes me proud to be a graduate of the Winnipeg School Division." Champagne cited activism for Shoal Lake 40 and Students Against Racism Today (START) march as examples of awareness and involvement.

Elder Myra Laramée opened the summit following the Grand Entrance of the Eagle Staff. The Brock Corydon School choir and Peaceful Village Drummers entertained

attendees. The major action of the summit involved group discussions led by special guests, identifying what schools were doing to rise to the mayor's challenge.

"I want to congratulate all the students at St. John's High School and across the Winnipeg School Division for their leadership and commitment to teaching empathy and growing understanding," said Mayor Brian Bowman. "All of your efforts are an important part of changing the future of our city by educating the next generation to be empathetic and inclusive, and ensuring we are all heard and treated equally."

In addition to school and community projects, WSD students are creating artwork on silk banners that will be hoisted during an event and march at the Forks to be held on May 20. About 3,000 students will walk in the march.



HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK AT DMCI

"Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status." (United Nations)

Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute's EAL department celebrated the Human Rights Week from Dec. 7 to 11. The focus was to share identity, build community, and celebrate diversity through many different activities. Activities included:

On Dec. 7, all the English EAL classes cut out shapes of people. Inside the dolls, students wrote an answer to the question "HOW WILL YOU MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?" They were put all together on a bulletin board by the school's main office.

On Dec. 8, the EAL students were divided into two groups to participate in storytelling. Two students from the advanced English EAL level read the story *As Long As The Rivers Flow* by Larry Loyie about Residential Schools. The EAL teachers prepared comprehension and discussion questions for afterwards.

On Dec. 9, former and actual EAL students shared their own stories. Yahye Farah, Mustafa Mahdi, Wali Korane, Kristiana Sabater, and Kohplorsay Desjardins talked about the reasons they left their home countries and immigrated

to Canada, their feelings during the whole process of leaving their home countries, families, and friends behind and arriving in a new, strange country and school. The biggest challenge for all of them was the cold winter in Winnipeg and the lack of English language. The best part of their stories was when they all shared great strategies to overcome the difficulties and to be successful at a Canadian school.

The English EAL teachers also showed a video about LGBTQ issues. The video is about two transgender children and their struggles at school and in society. The goal was to show the students the importance to accept and respect each other without discrimination.

On Dec. 10, Human Rights Day, the advanced English EAL level students handed out candy canes with positive quotes attached. Later on that day, the entire school was invited for a gallery walk where the EAL students' human rights projects were showcased. Last but not least, the DMCI students and teachers were encouraged to wear their cultural dress on this day as well.

On Dec. 11, EAL students donated a non-perishable food item to Winnipeg Harvest and had a pizza party to close the week.

- Files courtesy of DMCI



A WARM WELCOME

With a large number of Syrian refugees heading to Manitoba in the coming months, students in Winnipeg School Division want to make sure they have a warm welcome.

For example, General Wolfe School's Human Rights Club, which has approximately 20 student members, has organized a clothing drive to help refugees as they adjust to Canadian winters.

Homerooms are collecting new toques, mittens and scarves, which will be given to Welcome Place to distribute to refugee families.

It's a positive message that the school is proud to share.

"It's not a coincidence that a lot of the students in our Human Rights Club were either refugees themselves, or their parents were," said teacher Anita Riedl. "They know the importance of cultural identity, learning a new language and what it's like to come to a new country and making it your own. They're paying it forward now."

The club had actually decided to focus on helping refugees at the start of the school year.

"We've got a really enthusiastic group that wants to help out with any initiative that's out there," said teacher Alicia Pierson. "They brainstormed at the beginning of the year about projects they

wanted to do, and from watching the news and seeing what's going on in the world, they wanted to focus on refugee issues as the club's global initiative."

Students thought that helping refugees handle the cold was one way to introduce them to Canada.

"We wanted to help, because they don't necessarily know what winter's like here," said student Jason Li.

When it comes to accepting new neighbours, the students want everyone to see refugees as people first.

"We want everyone to know that they're people too," student Linn Gebreyesus said. "And we all share this land, together."

The Human Rights Club also collected donations at the school's winter concert and is holding a bake sale for the cause.

Elsewhere, the group helped wrap presents for the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba's current toy drive.

"It isn't just about fundraising, it's also about giving our time and gaining a deeper understanding of the world we live in," Ms. Riedl said.

You can view the General Wolfe Human Rights Club's short online Prezi presentation for its refugee campaign at: https://prezi.com/sjhx6xnm_ee/refugees-welcome/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

SWIMMING TO A NEW LIFE

The journey to Canada is a long one for many refugees around the world; but Yahya Samatar had a few more rivers to cross than most.

Mr. Samatar was a human rights worker in his home country of Somalia, but he had to flee in 2014 to escape the persecution of militants. The militant group, al Shabaab, killed his brother and had imprisoned him for several months. It was only when his captors had to abandon the prison after fighting that Mr. Samatar was able to escape.

He paid smugglers to help him travel to Brazil, Central America and then the United States. After being denied refugee status in the U.S., and still fearful for his life, Mr. Samatar made the decision to jump into the Red River in North Dakota and swim to Manitoba.

"When I was a kid, I used to swim. We don't swim in the rivers because of the crocodiles, but I used to swim in the sea," Mr. Samatar said, adding that the Red River was a lot colder than the water he was used to.

A Canadian passer-by found Mr. Samatar, shivering in his underwear. After an emergency team examined Mr. Samatar, Canadian authorities sent him to Hospitality House Refugee Ministry in Winnipeg.

It took some time, but in September, the federal government granted Mr. Samatar protected status, meaning he can't be deported back to Somalia. His

journey to becoming a Canadian citizen is still ongoing.

Mr. Samatar visited the General Wolfe School in the fall to speak with students about his experiences; in particular, he made an impression on English-as-an-additional language teacher Anita Riedl's students, many of whom are also refugees.

"We talked about his story all day after he left, and the kids all wanted to know if he was coming back," Ms. Riedl said.

Ms. Riedl invited Mr. Samatar back to General Wolfe in October to answer questions students still had for him.

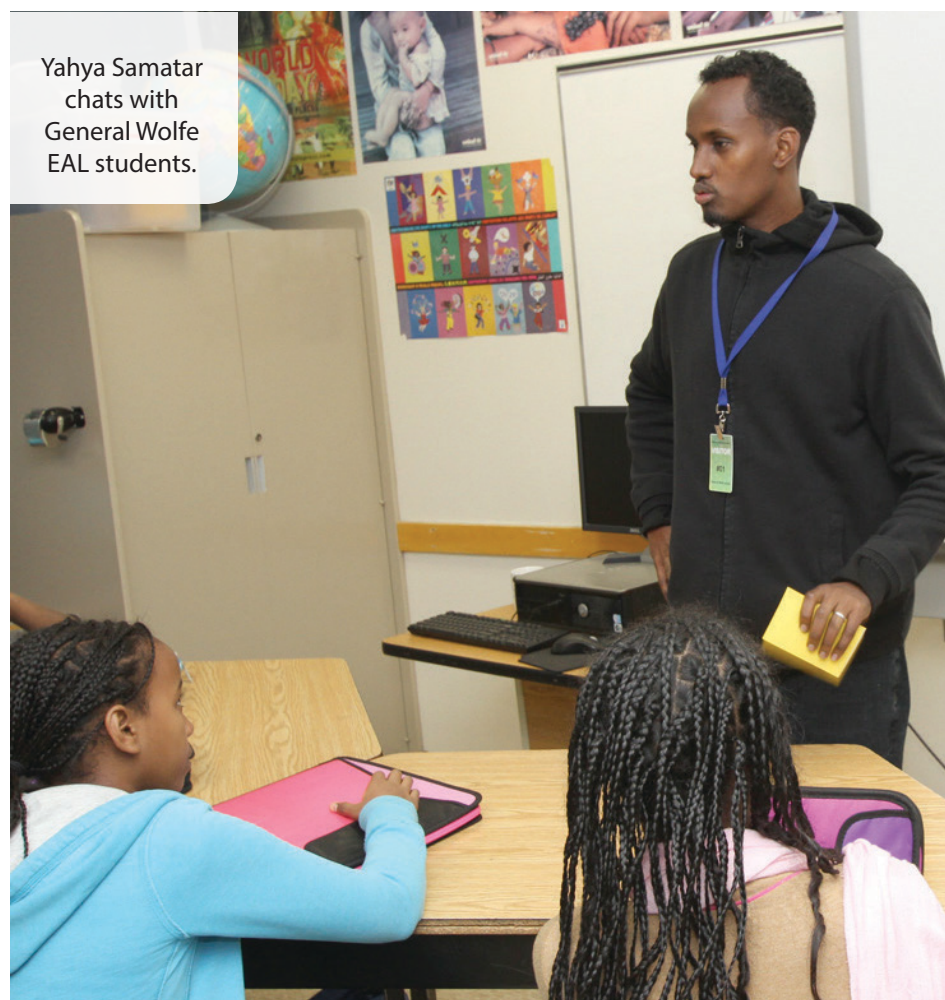
"We were doing a unit in our EAL class on coming to Canada, and the different reasons people come here," Ms. Riedl said. "I wanted the students to connect to a personal story of having to leave a country due to conflict or war. When you get a personal story and it's someone from their own community, it makes it all the more real."

Mr. Samatar talked about the humanitarian work he did while in Somalia.

"I did mainly education and health projects, and youth employment programs," Mr. Samatar said. "There are a lot of young people in Somalia joining militia groups...some are forced to join, others go because they don't have any other options. I went to a military camp and met young people like you...and I gave them the opportunity to learn for free."

He added that he missed his family.

Yahya Samatar chats with General Wolfe EAL students.



"You are very lucky, you are still young and live with your parents," he said. "They make you who you are."

General Wolfe students Yakub Abdi and Khalid Korane, who were both born in Somalia, said Mr. Samatar made a positive impression.

"He had to do all of this because of human rights, it's really interesting that he cares so much for these rights," Yakub said. "We talk about human rights in class too, and we also have a human rights group at General Wolfe."

They said Mr. Samatar could expect it to take time to adapt to Canada.

"It took me a while to get used to Canada," Khalid said. "It takes time to make new friends."

Khalid doesn't hesitate when asked about the best part about life in Canada: "school." That's an answer that would make both Ms. Riedl and Mr. Samatar very happy.

Ms. Riedl said she hoped the visit would help dispel any negative connotations students might have to the word refugee.

"I want students to see that refugees like Yahya are heroes. He was doing humanitarian work, but it led to him to being persecuted in his country."



ART GOES LOW-FI

Thanks to a generous grant from the Manitoba Arts Council, several Grade 9-12 Visual Arts classes at St. John's High School had the chance to work with artist Lasha Mowchun during the months of October and November.

Students worked with older "low-fi" media such as pinhole cameras and stop-motion animation on Super-8 film. Other "obsolete" technologies, such as cassette players, were used for mixed media sculptures.

"We see students using technology all of the time, but they usually don't think about what we were using before the current technology—a lot of them didn't know what film was," said teacher Allison Foster. "We wanted them to think about the technology they use and how often they're using it."

Some of the technology dated as far back as ancient times.

"We even made camera obscuras, which are super archaic," Ms. Mowchun said. "It helps students understand how cameras work. If you take a photo with a digital camera, you don't always understand it because it does all the work for you. This gives some context into what is actually happening inside a smart phone."

Students Alyanna Lana, Rica Imperial and Vanessa Santos made a stop motion movie that had Pac Man navigating circuit board.

"You'd take one object, take five pictures, then move it and take another five pictures," Rica said. "The cameras were weird, we're more used to current technology. It took longer to make."



On Nov. 27 during the school day, the students held a showcase of their work in the art room. The event featured live music and screenings of all of the students' Super-8 movies.

SMOKE-FREE PLEDGE

Representatives from the Manitoba Lung Association and the provincial government visited David Livingstone Community School recently to talk about the dangers of smoking and to honour some students who made a smoke-free pledge.

Seven David Livingstone students who took the smoke-free pledge in March, 2014 were recognized for their achievements.

Minister of Healthy Living Deanne Crothers commended students for sticking with the pledge.

"You're not just making a choice for yourself, you're setting an example for other kids around you, especially the younger ones," Ms. Crothers said. "If you keep with this, it will be very helpful for everybody, not just yourselves."

The students live in a community where smoking rates are twice that of most neighbourhoods; some students begin smoking as early as 9-10 years old.

"Smoking is really bad. In my family a lot of people have died from smoking and I don't want that to happen," said student Garrett Steiner, who took the pledge in 2014. "I wanted to be a role model since that day to not smoke."

The smoke-free students said they could see the impact they were having on others.

"I told my dad about the smoke-free pledge and he said that he'd quit. And he did," said student Ayan Muhmed.

Other guests in attendance included Lung Association Manitoba Executive Director Margaret Bernhardt-Lowdon, Lung Association reps, nursing students from the University of Manitoba and Elder Madelaine Hatch.

After participating in some special lessons and activities that taught students about the dangers of using tobacco, the schools' Grade 5 students signed the Smoke-Free Pledge. Nearly 200 students signed the pledge last year.

"Some of you may be tempted to try smoking," Ms. Crothers told students. "But I want you to remember the pledge and have the courage to say no."



GOVERNOR GENERAL WINNERS

WSD's 2014-15 Governor General's Medal and Board Post Secondary Scholarship winners stopped by Admin. Building No. 1 on Dec. 7 to be officially recognized by the Board of Trustees.

The Governor General's Medal is awarded to the student who achieves the highest academic standing in the graduating class of their secondary school; the WSD Board Post Secondary Scholarships provide \$1,000 to a senior student to further their post-secondary education. The two awards are considered the highest honours a WSD graduating student can achieve.

Pictured here are: Bonnie Tang, Sisler High School; Precious Reyes, St. John's High School; Kane Kirton, Argyle Alternative High School; Shaina Bird, R.B. Russell Vocational High School; Ocean White, Children of the Earth High School; Tyler Woodhouse, R.B. Russell Vocational High School; Daniel Reimer, Collège Churchill; Stephen Sward, Children of the Earth High School; Harley Bray, Churchill High School; Victoria Jeffery, Winnipeg Adult Education Centre; Anabelle Salonga, Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute; Stephanie Chacon-Vega, Elmwood High

School; Huong Nguyen, Gordon Bell High School; Deepak Singh, Elmwood High School; and Glaiden Magsumbol, Tec Voc High School.

Missing: Justice Brewster, Argyle; Danica Engen, Churchill; Dominique Smith, Collège Churchill; Amanda Wong and Elizabeth Hellsten, Grant Park; Carlyn Allary and Hannah Lank, Kelvin; Jeinmetz Dela Cruz, St. John's; Raphael Tolentino, Tec Voc; and Zaidee Lepine, WAEC.

Along with meeting the board, students were also presented with a gift certificate to purchase a book.

BOOST FOR INDIGENOUS SUPPORTS

The Manitoba government is boosting supports for Aboriginal students in public schools.

The province announced several targeted funding initiatives Jan. 6 at R.B. Russell Vocational High School.

The supports include: \$500,000 in new funding to provide transition supports for students leaving First Nations schools to attend public schools; 500,000 to increase funding to the Aboriginal Academic Achievement grant that helps Indigenous students with literacy, numeracy and culturally appropriate learning; and increasing funding to \$375,000 to support the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative and pilot a model school for First Nations students that incorporates traditional languages and targeted literacy supports.

"Today's funding announcements will assist in our continued programming to support our students and the broader community," said Mark Wasyliv, board chair, Winnipeg School Division. "We have seen the positive results of the Aboriginal Academic Achievement grant and how it helps students succeed in school through improved literacy, which in turn means improved attendance, classroom engagement and pride in learning."

Advanced Education and Learning Minister James Allum said the moves are in part a response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommendations relating to indigenous education.

"We are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation in our schools by making sure that Indigenous students have the supports they need to be more successful in school," Mr. Allum said. "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's



final report makes clear there is an achievement gap for Indigenous students across Canada. In Manitoba, we're committed to making targeted investments and doing our part to close this gap."

R.B. Russell student Kattie-Lee Fontaine also spoke at the event; she noted several programs in place that are already making a difference, such as R.B. Russell's tutoring centre.

"It's helped me get my assignments done and catch up on missing work... and it's also helped me understand my assignments better and gain confidence about passing my classes," she said. "With this program, I know I can graduate."

Kattie later added that she was confident that gaps in Indigenous education could be closed: "I think we will, it just takes one step at a time."

The TRC recommendations included

making more Indigenous academic achievement data available to the public. The province has launched a new website that will make data on academic achievement, including achievement data broken down by gender and self-identified Indigenous pupils, available for the first time.

More information can be found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/grad_rates

WHAT'S COOKING WITH KENT ROAD?

STORY AND PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER

A casual conversation that started amongst friends that met on a project in Ecuador has turned into a pilot program for 10 students and their parents or caregivers.

Will Burton teaches Grade 5 at Kent Road School, and after observing a large number of students attending the schools breakfast club, he wanted to do more to help.

The Kent Road Breakfast Club offers a nutritional start to the day and also provides a wonderful social environment for all students at no charge.

Mr. Burton explained to his friend from the University of Manitoba about the challenges that his students faced and he wanted to help teach them about better eating choices and easy recipes that they could make at home.

With great help and coordinating from Joyce Slater Associate Professor, Departments of Human Nutritional Sciences and Community Health Sciences, three Nutritional Sciences students were selected in conjunction with their senior practicum program to create a class that they would administer to 10 students from

Kent Road School.

The program that the students created covers health, nutrition, kitchen safety, cooking and cleaning and having a whole bunch of fun at the same time.

"While the Nutritional Sciences students were working away at creating the program, I was at Kent Road getting students excited to join the after school cooking program. Due to the large space that we would require for such a large group I reached out to Elmwood High School to see if we could use their food lab to facilitate the class and they welcomed us with open arms. It was also a great opportunity for the students from Kent Road to become familiar with Elmwood where they will most likely choose as their high school," Mr. Burton said.

Darren Fife, one of the Nutritional Sciences students who teaches the program, said the goal was to offer healthy food suggestions, teach proper kitchen safety and to enjoy lots of delicious foods that the students make together with their adult partners.

"All the hard work is totally worth it when you see how much fun everyone is having," he said.

On the afternoon *Our Schools* visited



the food lab, the class started with a mystery food item in a paper bag that turned out to be baby potatoes for one of the recipes. The full menu also consisted of spinach and mandarin orange salad and mini meatloaf. After a quick lesson at the demonstration table, the groups were off to their kitchens to work on their recipes.

"The (U of M) students deserve all the credit for designing this program, these were all their ideas and I am very proud of them. The students designed the program to have easy to follow simple recipes with the goal that the class could then recreate the recipes at home," Ms. Slater said.

Shanice, who is in Grade 4 at Kent Road, said she was learning a lot at the classes. "Today we learned that when you are cutting you have to tuck your fingers in so you don't cut them. And you never cut vegetables and meat on the same cutting board because it will cause contamination and you can get very sick."

Organizers hope to have a diverse menu exploring a variety of ethnic dishes, as well as a couple special days celebrating the winter holidays and possibly a special farewell dinner at the last session.

The free after school program, which started in November, runs for nine sessions and wraps up in March.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION

PHOTO AND STORY BY VANESSA LEWIS

Sisler High School is the home of an amazing social justice group. Associated though Free the Children, Sisler has one of the largest groups of over 70 students.

Students learn about injustice issues around the world. Meeting regularly every week, the students and their head advisor, teacher Orysa Petryshyn, have discussions about power, starvation, equality rights and other issues.

The group also takes on many humanitarian projects such as helping Winnipeg Harvest or other global initiatives.

Because of their notable size and humanitarian efforts, Sisler was selected to host the Investors' Group Social Innovation Workshop with Free the Children representatives.

In one activity, students were challenged to visualize and express on paper what life looks like for people of different social statuses. It was an inspiring workshop that built leadership skills and humanitarian spirit.

Two leaders in Sisler's Free the Children group, Shania Pruden and Justin Papoff, also happened to speak at We Day (see related story on page 10).

"It was great to get that visual of everybody [and to] make that connection with them," Shania said.

These two individuals are a prime example of youth who are making a change in our world, regardless of grade or age, gender or background. Sisler High School is paving the way and readying the next generation to take on the world and make a serious difference.



LITTLE STEPS

Gladstone School welcomed Lil' Christabelle the Therapy Goat (pictured), Bloom the Cat, Rusty the Rooster and Storm the Rabbit into their Primary Language Centre (PLC) classroom in early December.

Lil Steps Miniatures and Wellness Farm taught students about emotions, emotional regulation and wellness with these adorable miniature animals as teaching supports.

The workshop was funded by WSD's Clinical Support Services through their South Special Therapy Fund. School Social Worker Monique Tellier, School Psychologist Sara Guzzo, and School Speech Language Pathologist Ashley Roth partnered with Gladstone School Principal Cristina da Mata and PLC teacher Angie Shynkaruk and with Lucy Fouasse at Lil Steps Miniatures and Wellness Farm to develop a unique and effective workshop for the PLC class.

Gladstone and their CSS team are excited to continue their partnership with Lil Steps Miniatures and Wellness Farm and will be pursuing school funds to provide a three part workshop to their Grade 3 and 4 classrooms in Spring, 2016.

For more on Lil Steps Miniatures & Wellness check out lilstepswellnessfarm.net.

- With files from Clinical Support Services



MEADOWS WEST GETS A VISIT FROM SANTA

He's everywhere!

Meadows West School students were thrilled to meet the big man himself, Santa Claus, when he stopped by the school in December to check if students and staff were being naughty or nice. After a careful audit, he later confirmed that the school was indeed nice!

PHOTO BY SAM SPEIRS, TEC VOC PHOTOGRAPHY

SERVE IT UP!

Tec Voc High School's culinary arts students were busy with several major productions over the past several months, including the Grey Cup Buffet and a Christmas Buffett.

TOP PHOTO BY SAM SPEIRS, TEC VOC PHOTOGRAPHY
BOTTOM PHOTO BY JOE NAI, TEC VOC PHOTOGRAPHY



SCIENCE CONSULTANT HONOURED

WSD Science Consultant Mary Lucy Rocha St. Lawrence has received the Science Teachers Association of Manitoba (STAM) award for Outstanding Science Individual for Science Education over the course of her career.

The award was presented Oct. 23 at the Annual Manitoba Teachers Society Professional Development Day annual general meeting.

“Thank you to STAM and all of those responsible for this recognition,” Ms. St. Lawrence said. “I would not have come this far, if it were not for the hard work and support from all the people who have worked with me over the years in helping to create enriching science experiences for our students. This includes my students, teachers, colleagues, mentors, superiors, family and friends. Thank you for inspiring and challenging me to do my best and for working with me to achieve our common goals. This has been and will continue to be a team effort and I feel honoured to be part of your team.”

Criteria for the award include contribution to science education in a significant way. Nominations are made by the STAM Board or by individuals in the province.

Ms. St. Lawrence joined Winnipeg School Division in 1990, becoming a Science Consultant for the division in 2007.

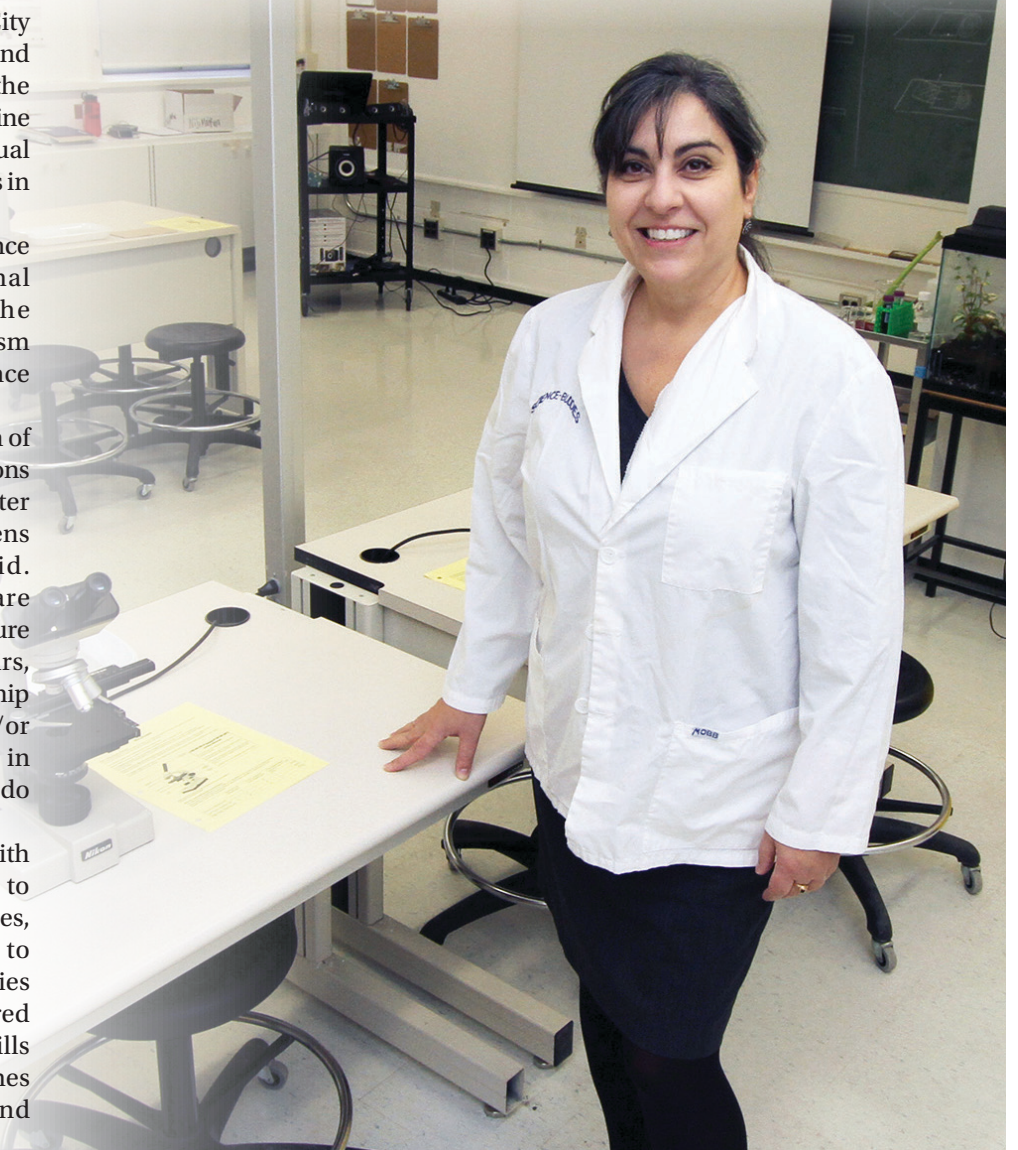
“Ms. St. Lawrence has contributed a great deal to WSD including her work with the University of Manitoba and Dr.

Francis Amara (founder of the Inner City Science Centre), WSD Administration and Niji Mahkwa School in establishing the centre,” said Chief Superintendent, Pauline Clarke. “Her work to promote the annual WSD Science Fair and engage students in the study of sciences is inspiring.”

An avid learner herself, Ms. St. Lawrence actively participates in professional development programs across the country, bringing back the enthusiasm and discoveries that help add excellence to WSD science programming.

“Science is often defined as a system of acquiring knowledge through observations and experimentation in order to better understand and explain what happens around us,” Ms. St. Lawrence said. “Everyone uses it, whether they are working in a science lab looking for a cure to a disease, doing household repairs, working with a team to design a spaceship that will take humans to Mars, and/or trying a new recipe for Crème Brûlée in the kitchen. In the end, everyone can do science to a certain degree.”

“Our job is to provide our students with the experiences and skills necessary to be able to face and overcome challenges, present and/or future. Our goal is to provide our students with opportunities that will help them be better prepared to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and leadership in the various disciplines and fields of science, innovation and technology and life, in general.”



REMEMBERING A GAME-CHANGER

École Stanley Knowles School Principal Darryl Stevenson represented Winnipeg School Division and his late mother, WSD Trustee Inez Stevenson, at a special legislative ceremony honouring the 100th anniversary of the women’s right to vote.

The Jan. 12 ceremony, which took place at the Manitoba Legislature, was also meant to mark 2016 as the Year of Women Trustees in the province.

In 1974, Ms. Stevenson was elected to the Board of Trustees for the Winnipeg School Division. She was the first black woman to be elected to office in Manitoba, and was also the second black woman to earn the

distinction across Canada.

Ms. Stevenson was honoured along with: Marie-Antoinette Lamoureux Leclair, the first francophone woman elected official; Rose Cherniak Alcin, the first elected Jewish woman; and Mary Dyma, the first elected Ukrainian woman in Manitoba.

“Something my mother has instilled in me, and still resonates to me, as an educator and principal at Stanley Knowles, is that kids come first. It’s all about the kids. We have to advocate for children and students to do what’s best for them,” said Mr. Stevenson, who spoke at the ceremony along with his brother Bruce.



IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In advance of Remembrance Day, WSD schools held assemblies on Nov. 10 to honour the sacrifices of Canada’s armed forces members in wartime and peacekeeping missions.

That included Kelvin High School, where students heard a recitation of the famous wartime poem *In Flanders Fields* from Kelvin graduate Cameron Kilgour (Class of '09).

Mr. Kilgour is great, great nephew to Lt. Col. John McCrae, who composed the poem while serving in the First World War. McCrae wrote the poem following the death of his close friend Alexis Helmer at Ypres. The poet died of pneumonia in 1918, before the end of the war.

The Kelvin ceremony also included a scrolling honour roll of the over 2,000 Kelvin students who fought in both

world wars, including 280 who died in the line of duty.

“It needs to be stressed that the vast majority of those Canadians that died or returned forever changed were much closer in age to you than to me,” Principal Jim Brown told students. “We are honouring the sacrifices of the young, who had so much to live for.”

“Since the first Remembrance Day service they have also been a time to reflect on the horror and costs of war. At this service today and at services tomorrow, it is a time to both honour the past but also to look to the future. What kind of country do we wish Canada to be? What are our values? What kind of world do we want to live in? It is you, the young, who will soon be making these decisions.”



WSD Children's Heritage Fund
Supporting inspired learning

Donate for a positive future

Your donation to Children's Heritage Fund plays an important role in ensuring children attending school in Winnipeg School Division enjoy experiences that instill a positive attitude and build confidence to achieve their goals.

You can help support:

- Multicultural and cultural enrichment
- Outdoor education and sports
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For information on Children's Heritage Fund and how to make your donations:

(204) 775-0231 x 404 | childrensheritagefund@wsd1.org
| www.winnipeg.ca/CHF



ONE FOR THE ANGELS

Mulvey School played host to what is unofficially the world's largest congregation of angels.

A grand total of 1,273 people donned halos, wings and white clothing and packed the schoolyard on Dec. 1. Students, staff and community members managed to break the previous record of 1,039, which was set in Germany. The Winnipeg total still needs to be verified by Guinness World Records before it becomes official.

The event was organized by the neighbouring Misericordia Health Centre to kick off the hospital's annual fundraising drive.



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