



Hugh Coburn
Chair of the Board



Marilyn Seguire
Vice-Chair of the Board



Mike Daoust
School Trustee



Mike Ducharme
School Trustee



Gary Gervais
School Trustee



Louise Johnston
School Trustee



Tom Parker
School Trustee



Dave Richardson
School Trustee



Wayne Ruff
School Trustee

Maintaining our focus on student learning realizes our vision...

We are pleased to present our annual Report to the Community to share the progress of the work on Board Priorities during the 2008–2009 school year, achieved through the governance of the Board of Trustees, the leadership of the Superintendent of Schools & CEO in collaboration with the Secretary-Treasurer and their respective departments, and the dedication of the school administration teams and staffs of the Division's 40 schools.

While many actions support student learning and achievement, this year's Report focuses on major initiatives that will continue to require multi-year planning and resource allocation, consistent with their scope, complexity and relevance to all of the Division's students:

- Assessment, evaluation and reporting of student learning - intensified focus on instructional planning to meet diverse student needs
- Our Social & Emotional Learning Framework (SELF) Project - an initiative that unifies existing Student Services projects to support a critical aspect of student growth
- Student literacy - our preliminary work and research to develop a comprehensive plan
- Technology initiatives - providing equitable opportunities for all students and supporting curriculum and instructional planning
- Promoting diversity - strategic planning supports Aboriginal Perspectives and student success and welcomes our Division's growing community of new Canadians
- "Green" initiatives - our commitment to action for responsible global citizenship, sustainable development and the environment

Goalsetting...a continuous process guided by research about learning

To advance all of these initiatives, the Board and the administration reviewed research and assessed the outcomes of multi-year projects to identify new goals for student learning—and the professional practice and culture and climate development to support that learning.

Applying feedback obtained from students, teachers and parents during that research increasingly focuses our yearly goals as part of the three-year planning process supported by Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth. The progress described on pages 2-8 of this Report includes this background to clarify new goals already identified for 2009–2010.

We also extend our appreciation for your supportive and constructive feedback.

Hugh Coburn
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Terry D. Borys
Superintendent of Schools & CEO

A new stage of our AER journey focuses multi-year instructional planning

A multi-year process to develop divisional student progress reports and a common reporting cycle, and teacher-led refinements of Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (AER) practices in LRSD schools, has included data collection to identify next steps. This review of AER practices included an elementary school Pilot Project for student portfolios. The review will begin a multi-year focus on instructional practice that meets learners' differing abilities and needs.

Board Priorities emphasize the interdependence of school and divisional planning processes:

- Supporting the Values of Public Education
- Student Learning
- Professional Practice
- Culture & Climate
- Resource Management

Teachers in LRSD have continued their collective efforts to implement the AER initiative. Significant progress has resulted in this area of professional practice during the last three years and efforts to consolidate practices will continue during the 2009–2010 school year.

Provincial curriculum outcomes must guide instructional and assessment activities. However, heightened attention to varied instructional practices has occurred in LRSD to engage all learners:

- providing balanced instruction throughout a student's school years
- using rubrics to make learning goals (targets) visible to students
- moving beyond "pen-and-paper" assessments to use varied evidence for fair and reliable judgments about student learning
- using student self-assessment and peer assessment to encourage students to identify appropriate personal learning goals
- developing common understandings about student performance to apply program designations: *Regular, Adapted, Individual Education Plan, English as an Additional Language*

Several elementary schools have learned about how a portfolio can illustrate student growth over time and engage students in self-reflection and goal setting. Their conversations have led to a working document to summarize key ideas for an effective portfolio process in elementary schools.

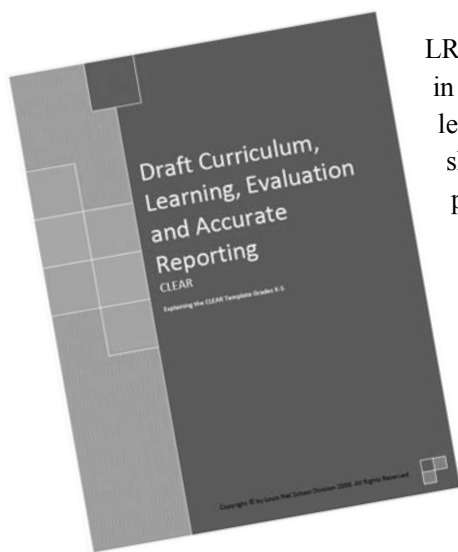
Our elementary schools' shift from norm-referenced to criterion-referenced instructional planning and assessment has led to a draft document and materials to guide further discussions. These conversations will continue during 2009–2010 to focus on outcomes in provincial curriculum documents. The result is instruction to help students hit learning "targets" rather than being compared to other students.

Professional learning networks advance student achievement

LRSD supported groups of interested teachers from elementary and high schools to participate in several meetings throughout the year to discuss professional topics. These "professional learning networks" allowed more than 200 teachers to explore instructional practices and share ideas and strategies. Feedback from teachers indicates that the networks promoted practical discussions on specific curricula and they will continue during 2009–2010 to focus on student learning at all levels.

CLEAR Planning—curriculum, learning, evaluation & accurate reporting

An important outcome of professional dialogue in LRSD is the involvement of elementary teachers in reviewing unit plans to focus instruction on key learning targets. CLEAR Planning templates link directly to provincial curriculum outcomes and allow teachers to focus instructional planning and assessments. This will be one of several important planning supports for multi-grade and combined grade classrooms, which now comprise over half of Grades 1 to 8 classrooms in LRSD.



A progress report for the AER initiative in LRSD high schools

During the second year of implementation, good progress has occurred in all high schools to assess and report student progress. The following key areas have been identified for further focus:

- continue to adjust practice to link student evaluation to the MECY learning outcomes, and reassess student achievement when more recent evidence of learning is available
- grading only for learning of curricular outcomes will be fully implemented by the 2010–2011 school year (mark deductions for unrelated behaviours will not occur)
- defining appropriate and effective practice to deal with late assignments, and reduce their occurrence, remains a goal

Professional agreement will focus important next steps

In a division-wide survey after our February professional development day, a sample of more than half the Division's teachers yielded 96 per cent agreement about the importance of consolidating AER practices:

- identify important learning goals (enduring understandings) across subject areas and grades
- link instructional planning, instructional practice, record keeping, evaluating student learning, and calculating percentage grades
- engage students in their learning
- encourage and support collegial networking to benefit student learning

Student engagement emerges as a major topic for discussion

LRSD teacher colleagues demonstrate growing support for careful consideration of practices that can effectively engage students in learning. Professional dialogue that began in 2005 has continued in the Division's elementary schools, with specific outcomes:

- schools have reviewed awards and recognition practices for their effects on student learning
- principals view this as an important leadership topic that merits ongoing research
- teachers are engaging in inquiry about instructional planning that removes extrinsic motivators (rewards) and focuses students on the value of the learning experience

Reporting on personal and social development

Division-wide understanding of the need to separate academic (subject) achievement from factors such as behaviour, attendance and punctuality honours provincial policy. Commitment to accurate reporting has resulted in LRSD teachers' support for improved methods of reporting about students' social and emotional development from Grades Kindergarten to 12. Understanding the link between student engagement and grading practices means that LRSD will focus on refining this important area of reporting student progress during the 2009–2010 school year. The SELF Project (pages 4 and 5) has also supported professional understanding of the factors that build students' resiliency and self-management—in the classroom, at play, during out-of-school activities, and in the home and community.

Learning is a social process that occurs through interpersonal interaction within a cooperative context. Individuals, working together, construct shared understandings and knowledge.

– David, Johnson, Roger Johnson and Karl Smith

The SELF Project supports professional practice to help children and young people develop their social-emotional capacity and resiliency

LRSD will use the foundation provided by Core Competencies to unite existing initiatives into a cohesive “curriculum” that touches every stage of a student’s learning in our schools. Our teaching colleagues, concerned parents, and partners in the broader community support efforts to help students build resiliency to cope with unprecedented social change and challenges. The Social and Emotional Learning Framework (SELF) Project will be supported in the Division’s classrooms by specific initiatives that focus the work of Student Services teachers in all schools.

The powerful connection between student achievement and emotional health has led the divisional administration and school-based staff to strengthen the divisional response to emotional health needs of students. In March 2008, the Division approached the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) to collaborate on a joint project for this purpose. A process of planning and activity occurred from March 2008 to June 2009.

The LRSD initiative became the SELF Project and now offers a process to respond to the increasing emotional needs of students with a cohesive whole-school strategy, founded on best practice and responsiveness to the needs of the specific school community.

Accomplishments in 2008–2009

- Establishment of relationships between LRSD and WRHA and between LRSD Student Services and the LRSD Clinical Services Unit
- Mental health promotion capacity-building workshops for approximately 130 LRSD administrators, clinical services and student services staff
- Professional development for mental health promotion and mental health literacy to approximately 200 members (20 per cent) of the Division’s teaching staff
- Completed site visits for all schools to gather information about current mental health promotion activities for all high schools and elementary schools (Environmental Scan)
- Developed school profiles (risk and protective factors and priorities) to develop an emotional health promotion plan for each school and include it in the school plan
- Two student services coordinators trained as instructors in Mental Health First Aid; Project Coordinator trained in Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health First Aid for Adults who Interact with Youth
- Developed an evaluation framework for the Project—emotional health promotion and prevention programs and policies must use evidence-informed practice and ongoing evaluation. The SELF Project will be evaluated to determine its impact on students and the school environment
- Implemented Friends™ Anxiety Prevention program in Grades 4 and 5 classroom setting and evaluated impact/outcomes
- Developed and implemented a Mental Health survey for Grade 9 students in LRSD (page 5)
- Implemented CMHA Mental Health Curriculum to Grade 9 and evaluated its impact/outcomes
- Offered three Mental Health First Aid Workshops to various audiences throughout LRSD
- Established process for student and community input and strengthened community connections

Since 2002, LRSD has focused Student Services planning on the development of Core Competencies to guide professional practice and student learning:

- behavioural autonomy
- social competence
- academic development
- transition management

Key findings of the Grade 9 Mental Health Curriculum Implementation

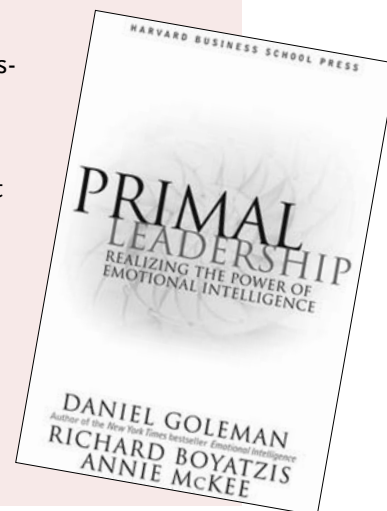
The Grade 9 Mental Health Curriculum was delivered to Grade 9 students by student services teachers, clinical services and physical education teachers within the Health Education program. The pre- and post- Mental Health Survey was implemented. Two staff forums reviewed the implementation process and provided feedback—several key themes emerged:

- The Mental Health Curriculum is a necessary and essential part of student learning
- The piloted curriculum benefited from the collaborative teaching model
- The presence of student services teachers and clinical services helped students to identify mental health resources for their schools
- Physical education teachers identified a need to develop a greater level of comfort and knowledge to discuss mental health issues
- Delivery of the Curriculum by physical/health education teachers benefited from their ability to cultivate relationships that continue over several years with the same students
- The Mental Health Curriculum can become more user-friendly for students and staff; identified changes will focus on coping strategies, anxiety and depression, substance abuse and brain anatomy
- The Curriculum's strengths were its focus on stigma, coping strategies and group discussions
- The Project required significant time and coordination of school and health sector timetables
- School "Champions" are important for mental health promotion, and policies and other initiatives must support the Project
- The Project must have long-term investment to continue to yield its observable benefits
- Piloting a leading anxiety prevention program (FRIENDS™) in Grade 4 classrooms and a well-ness program within Grade 9 Health Education will support the SELF Project.

Our professional development experiences confirm the critical importance of responding to the social-emotional needs of learners, if they are to benefit from instructional experiences that develop their individual talents, address their individual needs and help them to develop personal visions of excellence. Priorities for student learning therefore value the "whole child."

Other LRSD initiatives support emotionally healthy learning environments

- The LRSD Leadership Council's study of Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence and Primal Leadership* has provided a foundation to promote resiliency and professional growth for school-based colleagues, and includes the development of support documents such as the *Leadership Transition Protocol*
- A protocol for the use of behaviour modification with students will define guidelines for its appropriate use to support leadership discussion and research begun in 2005
- LRSD elementary schools will continue to research the potential of the Responsive Classroom™ philosophy to support the SELF Project
- The annual divisional staffing process supports schools' increasing use of the Behaviour Support Teacher model to promote understanding about foundational behavioural principles



Focused research on student literacy renews a foundation of learning

During the 2008–2009 school year, LRSD reviewed its existing initiatives to support student literacy. Our AER initiative and SELF Projects have demonstrated the continuing clear connection between students' achievement and behaviour, and their acquisition of literacy skills.

LRSD's multi-year use of the Intervention précoce en lecture (IPL), Early Reading Intervention (ERI) and Reading Recovery™ models and tracking of outcomes for students who received these interventions has confirmed that no single approach is “best” to teach all learners to read.

Samples of students, the interventions they received, and their progress following the interventions has yielded findings that will focus the effective use of our schools' literacy staffing allocations:

- Direct instruction in reading and writing is essential for all students to develop their literacy skills
- To teach reading effectively, understanding language development is essential. Speech-Language Pathologists provide professional development for classroom-based colleagues.
- While parents may be most familiar with the Reading Recovery™ model, which provides intense supports to students with specific profiles, it is one of several models, it meets certain learners' needs, and therefore it cannot be the only or primary intervention to assist struggling readers in the primary grades.
- LRSD Literacy Teachers have reviewed *Foundations for Literacy: An Evidence-Based Toolkit for the Effective Teacher of Reading and Writing*, to identify effective ways to enhance professional practice; the most effective professional development for classroom colleagues; and questions requiring more research, including the best time to identify and intervene with struggling readers.
- Multi-year research has confirmed the need to enhance the Kindergarten to Grade 4 literacy instruction plan for elementary schools, beginning in 2009-2010.
- The AER initiative's goal of identifying enduring understandings in provincial curricula (page 2) during 2009–2010 will also support student services and classroom teachers to collaborate on literacy instruction for all students.

Technology provides equitable opportunities for the students of LRSD

Our Information Systems Department has conducted research to determine the most effective way to allocate technology hardware in the Division's classrooms. Meeting the individual needs of school communities and providing equitable access to technology honours the mandate of public education and provincial curriculum, ensures success for all learners, and challenges all students to achieve their potential.

An important aspect of our planning ensures that students have age-appropriate access to technology, and that limited computers are used with maximum effectiveness in all LRSD schools.

- LRSD now employs whiteboard capture devices that replace many blackboards with great success—every school has a minimum of one device, with allocations according to student population. To support mimeos, LRSD schools received a total of approximately 150 LCD Projectors.
- A highly successful pilot during 2008–2009 supplied personal laptops for Grades 4 to 8 students in one of the Division's schools. It demonstrated observable gains in time-on-task and student engagement. The pilot will expand to include three other schools during 2009–2010 and repeat the research to determine its large-scale effectiveness.

The desired outcome is the increased understanding, by all members of our divisional community, of the important relationship between divisional and school culture; the learning experienced by students in those cultures; and the appropriate balance of consultation and research to influence decisions that affect student learning.

A strategic vision promotes respect for diversity and success in a community with a unique cultural identity

The Board of Trustees of the Louis Riel School Division believes that principled governance provides support for children and young people who have experienced specific and systemic challenges arising from external, political and historical factors. As part of a Canadian society whose social and economic progress is founded on embracing diversity we have used data to develop specific strategic action plans.

Aboriginal Perspectives and student success

LRSD has experienced significant success with its process to encourage self-declaration by Aboriginal students and families—1,074 of nearly 14,500 students have affirmed that status. Since the release of the provincial document Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula in 2003 the Aboriginal student population in the LRSD has grown to represent seven per cent of LRSD's total high school student population in 2007–2008. However, the current high school graduation rate for Aboriginal students remains an important goal for improvement: of the self-declared Grade 12 Aboriginal students registered in September 2006 and September 2007, an aggregate average of 58 per cent graduated, contrasted with an average of 77 per cent of all other groups.

During 2008–2009 we developed our long-term strategic plan to support equitable opportunity and promote Aboriginal Perspectives, including but not limited to the following actions:

- Direct support of teachers' efforts to integrate Aboriginal Perspectives into curriculum
- Professional development opportunities for teachers to support Aboriginal student learning
- High schools to offer an optional full-credit Division-Initiated Course in Aboriginal Studies
- Offer Aboriginal language courses in high schools with significant Aboriginal student populations
- Grades 4 and 6 students in LRSD to receive educational experiences about Aboriginal culture
- Consultation with Aboriginal students to identify factors that can assist successful graduation
- Aboriginal high school students as mentors for Aboriginal students in Elementary Schools
- Career development programs to assist Aboriginal youth to develop visions for success
- Support Aboriginal students' transitions from rural to urban environments
- Develop a policy commitment that supports provincial and federal directions in this area

Newcomer students receive support to acquire English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Previous Reports have highlighted the significance of our Division's population of newcomer students whose families form a vibrant and growing part of our community. Professional resources at the LRSD Newcomer Centre (located at the René Deleurme Centre) provide reception and assessment services to newcomer students and families, and liaise with home schools. LRSD also provides added professional staff supports to schools with significant populations of newcomer students.

Total students with identified EAL profiles in LRSD in 2008–2009	783
# in English program schools	736
# in French language program schools	65

To date, during the 2008–2009 school year, LRSD welcomed and assessed 296 newcomer students through the Newcomer Reception Centre—an increase of 25 per cent over the 2007–2008 school year. As we review data about our newcomer students' experiences, needs and abilities, we have defined a goal to increase newcomer student graduation rates to support their success in their new community.

The divisional focus on continued AER refinements (pages 2-3), the SELF Project (pages 4-5) and a comprehensive literacy initiative (page 6) are critical foundations to support the achievement and success of students who contribute to our diverse community mosaic.

Commitment to sustainable development drives “green” initiatives

Developing “responsible global citizens” motivates initiatives that guide students to understand the impact of personal values and actions. The impact of collective human behaviour on the natural environment provides the most powerful reason to cultivate “caring, literate and capable people.”

LRSD has committed to tangible action that children and young people can observe daily through environmentally responsible practices. However, “sustainable development” also guides the “bigger picture” of divisional planning, to ensure that we focus limited human and financial resources for their greatest possible impact on student learning. During 2008–2009, specific initiatives supported practices and principles:

- Student and teacher consultations identified priorities for environmentally responsible actions; one outcome was the development of a policy draft that defines specific annual targets to reduce and eliminate non-recyclable materials from LRSD schools and workplaces, with polystyrene as the first target for elimination from LRSD by January 1, 2010
- The Information Systems Department coordinated a division-wide review of all educational printing services and practices. The resultant recommendations will inform future printing services and technology purchase plans that support quality instructional resources while promoting responsible use of consumable materials
- The Board’s School & Community Initiative Partnership (SCIP) grants include support for parent groups’ and schools’ greening projects
- The divisional Facilities Department concluded environmental audits to improve existing practices for waste management and collection of recyclable materials, and to model commitment to responsible practices for students
- All new construction and capital improvements comply with environmental standards

*Guided by Board
Priorities and direction,
the Superintendent
of Schools & CEO
coordinates continuous
foundation support
from the divisional
staff for students and
staff in LRSD schools:*

- Curriculum
- Student Services
- Human Resources
- Facilities,
Maintenance
& Information
Systems
- Financial & Budget
Operations

Policy development continues to support student learning

Among the policies adopted during 2008–2009, those listed below focus on instructional, managerial and leadership practices to support Board Priorities for student learning.

Initiatives to Support Sustainable Development

Partnerships with Members of the Community

Reporting of Child Abuse - amendments to safeguard student privacy

Research and Surveys - amendments to reflect provincial resources and divisional needs for data collection that advance student learning

Risk Management - Out-of-Class Physical Activity in Grades 11 & 12 Physical Education/Health Education and Appendices A to D

Technology Resource Selection & Adoption - Installation of Software on Divisional Computer Facilities