

2020-2021



DIVISION SCOLAIRE
LOUIS RIEL
SCHOOL DIVISION



ANNUAL REPORT

“

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”

– HELLEN KELLER



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) brings together a community of schools on the traditional land of the Anishinaabek, Ininewak, and Dakota. Our division is located on the homeland of the Métis. We recognize that Manitoba is also the traditional land of the Anishininwak and Dene.

We respect the treaties made on this land and acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and present. We dedicate ourselves to authentic alliances with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation.

The ongoing development of LRSD's land acknowledgement is guided by the Indigenous Council of Grandmothers and Grandfathers. We thank them for their continued generosity and collaboration.

OUR VISION

Our Vision is for all members of our community to excel as caring, confident, capable, and resilient life-long learners who contribute to a democratic and sustainable world.

OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment, where personal and collective learning are valued, and each one of us reaches our full potential.

OUR MOTTO

Thriving Learners ∞ Flourishing Communities

Des apprenants épanouis ∞ Des communautés florissantes

Gegwe-gikenjigewaad ∞ Mamino-ayaang Eyaang



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This year was marked by much change and disruption. Together, we were faced with unfamiliar circumstances and uncharted experiences in education due to an unprecedented global pandemic. Throughout this time, keeping sight of our students' needs remained the highest priority for the Board of Trustees and all staff in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). Although it was a year unlike any other, we are pleased to share highlights and progress on our Multi-Year Strategic Plan in the 2021 Annual Report to our Community.

Despite the challenges, we are extremely grateful and proud of the professionalism, dedication and resilience LRSD staff showed in supporting students and one another. We would like to thank all students and families for their patience, flexibility and understanding as we navigated these uncertain times together. The past year clearly demonstrated that when we work together in support of students, we can foster engaged and innovative learning where everyone achieves success and well-being.

Through our work together, we are living our collective vision and mission statement. Our Vision is for all members of our community to excel as caring, confident, capable, and resilient life-long learners who contribute to a democratic and sustainable world. Our Mission is to provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment, where personal and collective learning are valued, and each one of us reaches our full potential.

I am fiercely proud of how we have continued to move forward and do our very best for every student in LRSD. It is a true privilege to serve as Board Chair during these times. Together we have done our best and learned new ways to have meaningful consultations and meetings. The 2020-21 Annual Report to the Community shows progress and promise. I invite you to spend time immersing yourself in this report. THIS IS YOUR LRSD!

– LOUISE JOHNSTON

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is governed by a nine-person Board of Trustees elected every four years by the LRSD community. The board advocates for, and is accountable to, the LRSD community on matters of public education throughout the division.

Elections are held in conjunction with the Winnipeg Civic Election and are run on behalf of metro school divisions by the City of Winnipeg. To see how the division is divided into Wards and to find out which Ward you live in, please visit our website at www.lrsd.net and click on the School Board heading.

WARD ONE:



Louise Johnston
Chair
(204) 612-7121



Cindy Turner
(204) 294-3047

WARD TWO:



Chris Sigurdson
(204) 230-4601



Robert Page
(204) 541-1303

WARD THREE:



Sandy Nemeth
(204) 230-6475



Neil Vadeboncoeur
(204) 254-7636



Josie Landry
(204) 292-4661

WARD FOUR:



Tom Parker
(204) 298-9249



Pamela Kolochuk
Vice-Chair
(204) 297-5339



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The 2020-2021 school year began like none other. Since the moment students and staff stepped into schools in September, they were met with a new normal that included two metres of physical distancing, cohorts, masks, and more. Our community was faced with an extraordinary amount of uncertainty, and yet, through it all, we were still able to lean into the future and continue the journey toward achieving the goals outlined in our Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP).

Evidence of that resilience and optimism is highlighted throughout the following pages of our Annual Report to the Community (ARC). The stories showcase the kindness and incredible collective effort of students, staff and families who were instrumental in helping us continue to thrive under challenging circumstances.

We also faced uncertainty with the announcement of Bill 64: The Education Modernization Act and its Four-Pillar Strategy. No matter the outcome of this ill-conceived, once-in-a-generation change to Manitoba's education system, the Louis Riel School

Division (LRSD) will continue to be a community of 40 schools with a shared history, culture and future.

In 2022, LRSD will celebrate its 20-year anniversary. Just two short decades ago, the former St. Boniface and St. Vital School Divisions amalgamated into the thriving and flourishing community we know today. Those legacy divisions are symbolized in our logo; two flames ignited to a path toward a bright future.

Building a culture and community does not happen overnight, though. The journey to where we are today has required a collective effort and commitment. It has required genuine dialogue backed by action. And although the culmination of 20 years of work has led to progress and innovation, there is still work ahead as we continue to cultivate and nurture an exceptional learning and teaching environment for all.

As our MYSP makes clear, each one of us plays a vital role in supporting our growing divisional community of more than 15,400 learners and 2,200 staff. Despite the uncertainty of what the future holds, I'm confident the LRSD community will remain committed to doing the important work necessary for positive and lasting change.

– CHRISTIAN MICHALIK

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) works with managers and coordinators at the divisional level, along with principals and vice-principals, to undertake the work of the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD).

MISSION

The central focus of the SLT is to nurture learning and well-becoming in LRSD by cultivating the conditions for impactful collective practice in all LRSD schools.

VISION

The SLT's vision for LRSD is one in which every person is cared for morally, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally on their journey of learning and well-becoming.



Christian Michalik
Superintendent & CEO



Lisa Aitken
Assistant Superintendent, Staff Services
Glenlawn Collegiate Family of Schools



Marna Kenny
Secretary-Treasurer & CFO



Jeff Anderson
Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
Collège Béliveau, Collège Jeanne-Sauvé and Windsor Park Collegiate Family of Schools



Marlene Murray
Assistant Superintendent, Student Services
Dakota Collegiate, J.H. Bruns Collegiate and Nelson McIntyre Collegiate Family of Schools



Henri Peloquin*
Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
Collège Béliveau, Collège Jeanne-Sauvé and Windsor Park Collegiate Family of Schools
*retired May 2021



What we do is more important than what we say or what we say we believe.”

– bell hooks

BRANDTOWNERS

STUDENTS, SCHOOLS & STAFF



15,405

Students



2,212*

Total Staff



1,202

Teachers



1,010

Non-Teaching Staff



17

Average Class Size (K-Grade 3)



20

Average Class Size (Grade 4-8)



22

Average Class Size (Grade 9-12)



26

English Schools



13

French Immersion Schools



01

Community Learning Centre



01

Learning from Home School**



01

Technical & Vocational School

*Active permanent and term as of June 20, 2021

**For the 2020-2021 school year

LOUIS RIEL ARTS & TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

The Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre offers courses to students in trades, hospitality, media, early childhood education, business management and more!



192

Program Certificate recipients, including one high school and five mature student graduates



89

Receiving Apprenticeship Accreditation



13

Programs and Online Academics



06

Programs Accredited by Apprenticeship Manitoba

PREPARING FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

LRSD Board Office staff worked through July and August 2020 to build a plan that would achieve two meters of physical distancing for all students and staff in all 40 schools. This was in place from the first day of school in September, allowing the majority of students to benefit from in-school learning for almost the entire school year. This investment included:

 **941,000** Disposable masks distributed to schools

 **36,750** Reusable cloth masks distributed to schools

 **900** Students supported through the Learning from Home School/ L'École Apprendre-chez-soi

 **306** Students from four schools relocated to satellite school communities

 **150** Teachers deployed to new assignments or locations

 **25** School buses added to our current divisional inventory

SHIFTING TO CRITICAL (RED)

On May 9, the Manitoba Government announced a move to Critical (Red) for all kindergarten to Grade 12 schools in the City of Winnipeg. This shift required LRSD staff, students and families to quickly adapt within a matter of days. Learning from home remained the reality for most students throughout the final weeks of the school year. The move to Critical (Red) included:

 **11,345*** Students learning from home

 **3,514** Laptops and tablets distributed to students

 **4,041*** Students of Critical Services Workers or with additional needs learning in-school

*As of May 30, 2021

Between May 11 and June 9, 2021

 **3,997,958** Chat messages sent

 **26,987,342** Minutes in video time

 **30,583,443** Minutes in audio time

 **95,000** Classes and meetings organized in Microsoft Teams



DOLLARS AND CENTS

The 2021-2022 budget was approved by the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) Board of Trustees on March 9, 2021. The goal was to achieve a balanced budget while maintaining manageable class sizes and protecting core investments. Some of those core investments include teachers and educational assistants, student and clinical services, investments to increase equity and inclusion and an ongoing ability to navigate the pandemic.

When pandemic expenses were coupled with an \$8 million teacher salary arbitration award, the only way to protect core investments was to use every dollar in the division's accumulated surplus, a first in the division's history.

Without government's support for the arbitration award and covering the full cost of the pandemic, the International Student Program revenue had to be used to make up the shortfall rather than funding summer learning opportunities, nutrition programs and other equity-based programming in the same way it had in past years.

"The LRSD Senior Leadership Team and Board had extensive deliberations about our budget and have exhausted every option in trying to find a solution to the financial pressures we now face," said Christian Michalik, Superintendent. "The conclusion is that we can't do it alone. We need government support to help rebuild our accumulated surplus or risk a precarious future financial situation. We will continue these important conversations into the 2021-2022 school year."

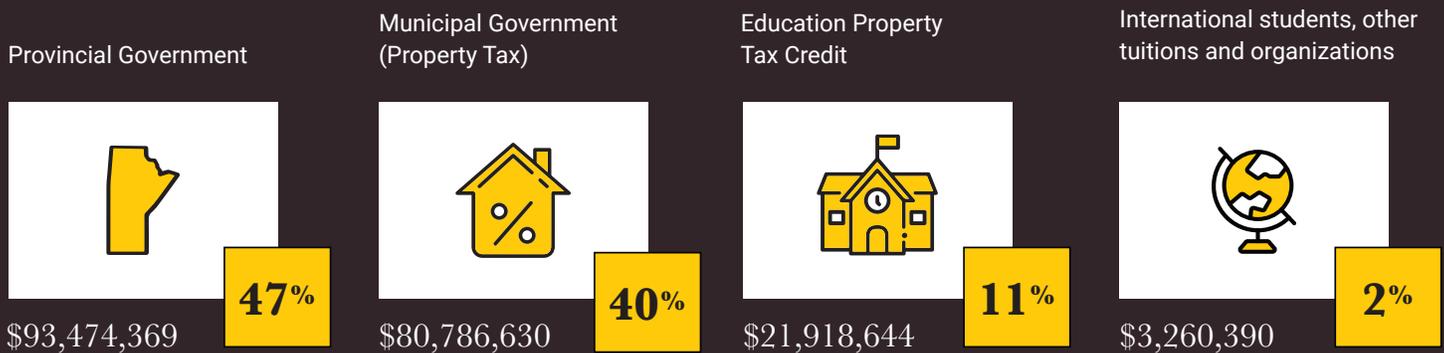
A SNAPSHOT OF LRSD'S BUDGET 2021-2022

\$199,440,033

WHERE THE MONEY GOES (EXPENDITURES)



WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM (REVENUES)



PROTECTING TEACHERS, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS AND CLASS SIZE*

 **2,088** TOTAL STAFF

 **1,057** Teachers

 **580** Educational Assistants

 **325** Support Staff

 **69** Principals, Vice Principals & Coordinators

 **48** Board Office Staff

 **09** Trustees

 **20.5** Average Class Size (K-Grade 3)

*These numbers are based on post-pandemic projections

HOW EACH DOLLAR IS SPENT



56.8¢
Regular Instruction



19.3¢
Student Support Services



10.6¢
Operations and Maintenance



4.7¢
Instructional and Other
Support Services



2.7¢
Transportation



2.6¢
Divisional Administration



2.2¢
Fiscal and Other



0.9¢
Community Education Services



0.2¢
Adult Learning Centres

BALANCING THE BUDGET



\$7.7M

Accumulated Surplus
as of June 30, 2020
(3 to 4 per cent of the overall budget)



\$0

Projected Accumulated Surplus
due to pandemic expenditures
and unbudgeted salaries

WHAT DOES THIS BUDGET MEAN FOR PROPERTY OWNERS?



Based on an average home in LRSD valued at:

\$345,000



Results in a property tax decrease of:

0.33% or \$6.68

after applying the Property Tax Offset Grant





PROJECTED PANDEMIC EXPENDITURES*

55%
\$6,613,735

Salaries

17%
\$2,025,066

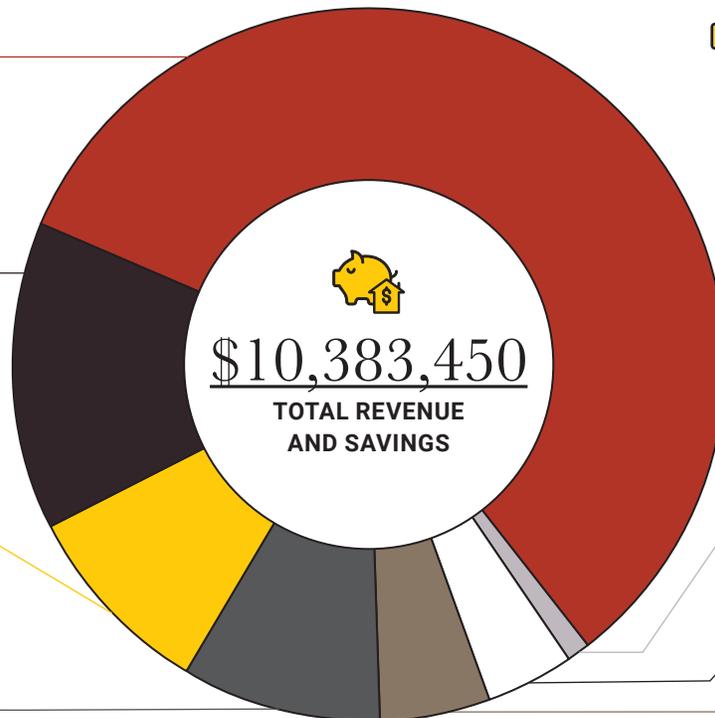
Technology and Equipment

10%
\$1,199,866

Cleaning and Sanitizing Supplies

9%
\$1,010,312

Infrastructure and Social Distancing Measures



 **\$13,027,979**
TOTAL PANDEMIC EXPENDITURE AND LOST REVENUE*

 **\$2,664,529**
TOTAL PROJECTED PANDEMIC SHORTFALL WITHOUT ADDITIONAL FUNDING*

1%
\$97,941

ASPIRE Summer Learning Program

4%
\$444,278

Transportation Costs

5%
\$636,779

Learning from Home School (Includes technology, furnishings and supplies)

*Projection to June 30, 2021



BRICKS FOR BRAND

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) made approximately \$9.8 million dollars of investments in LRSD infrastructure between July 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

LRSD invests in spaces where learners can excel as caring, confident, capable and resilient lifelong learners who contribute to a democratic and sustainable world.

TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

\$9,753,526

A combination of mostly provincial and divisional investments, as well as contributions from the City of Winnipeg, parent advisory councils for playground improvements, and private donors.

INVESTMENTS IN LRSD INFRASTRUCTURE



\$1,433,749

Lavallee School: Daycare



\$1,237,522

Glenwood School: Steam System Replacement



\$933,011

Victor Mager School: Roof Replacement



\$318,906

École Guyot: Multi-Purpose Room



\$236,830

Dakota Collegiate: Tennis Courts



\$162,755

Highbury School: Grooming Room



\$114,209

Nelson McIntyre: Food Lab Renovations



\$108,110

Island Lakes Community School: Playground

LRSD also announced three multi-year capital projects in LRSD as part of the Manitoba Government's Budget 2020 commitment:

MARION SCHOOL

The renewal and renovation of Marion School will include the improvement of the building envelope and windows as well as accessibility upgrades such as the addition of an elevator and modifications to the current entrance. The proposed project is estimated to cost \$3.5 million with construction expected to commence in the summer of 2022, subject to provincial budget approvals.

A NEW SCHOOL IN SAGE CREEK

Among seven land acquisition projects announced by the Manitoba Government in Jan. 2021, a kindergarten to Grade 8 school in the Sage Creek neighbourhood was identified as one of the future school sites in LRSD. The project is planned to be completed within a timeframe of six to 24 months following the award of tenders and start of construction.

COLLÈGE JEANNE-SAUVÉ

This major addition project at Collège Jeanne-Sauvé includes a two-storey, 16-room expansion with an elevator, a new science lab, and a fitness facility and storage room addition to the gymnasium. It also includes a new teacher collaboration space, an expanded music space, and student breakout spaces. This \$10.1 million expansion is set to begin in the 2021-2022 school year, subject to provincial budget approvals.

DID YOU KNOW?

LRSD maintains more than **2.5 million** square feet of buildings and learning space across the division.



The LEEDhers team measured and gathered data on Archwood School to build a more sustainable and innovative model in Minecraft: Education Edition.

A SHOUTOUT TO STAFF AND STUDENTS

With 40 schools and more than 15,400 students and 2,200 staff, there's a lot to celebrate in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). Here are just a few of the noteworthy highlights and achievements from the 2020-2021 school year:

GIRLS WHO GAME

LEEDhers, a talented team of students at Archwood School led by teacher Melissa Burns, were crowned national champions in the 2021 Girls Who Game Build Challenge. Girls Who Game is an extra-curricular program that provides opportunities for girls and underserved students to experience gaming and use Minecraft as a learning tool while developing global competencies like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity.

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Keith Moen, school psychologist in LRSD, received the Award of Excellence from the Manitoba Association of School Psychologists. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the practice of psychology in Manitoba schools. Moen has been recognized for his innovative professional practice, advancement of the profession of school psychology, and advocacy for children and families.

AN OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL

Lisa Reis Tymchuk was selected as one of the recipients of the 2021 Outstanding Occupational Therapist Award by the Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists (MSOT) Awards and Nominations Committee. These awards are provided to MSOT members who have made outstanding contributions to the profession.

MAKING AN IMPACT

Mariah Meilleur, student at Collège Jeanne-Sauvé, won the Manitoba School Boards Association Student Citizenship and George Harbottle Memorial Award. She has been involved in countless leadership and volunteer opportunities both in and out of school, including the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, the Beyond the Horizon Youth Summit and L'arc-en-ciel avec Janelle, to name a few.

SET UP FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

Emily Scott from Dakota Collegiate accepted a full NCAA scholarship to Minot State University to play women's volleyball for the Beavers. During her Grade 11 year in 2019, Scott was a key member of the provincial championship-winning Lancers team that won the Manitoba high school AAAA varsity girls volleyball final.

HONOURING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Two current LRSD students and two alumni won Manitoba Indigenous Youth Achievement Awards (MIYAA) in 2021. Congratulations to Erin Anderson-Bruce from Windsor Park Collegiate, Emma-Leigh Guay from Nelson McIntyre Collegiate, Robyn Chow, a recent graduate of Dakota Collegiate, and Emily Mandamin, a former Dakota Collegiate student.

AN EXERCISE IN INNOVATION

Four LRSD physical education teachers have been acknowledged with a Physical and Health Educators of Manitoba Innovator Award for their professional contribution to the promotion of physical and health education. Kudos to Johnathan Wolfe, Joël Bohemier, Christian Brunel and Neil Crockford.

LEADER OF TOMORROW

Manhattan Leslie-Toogood, a student from Nelson McIntyre Collegiate, received an \$80,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship, the largest Canadian STEM scholarship in Canada, to study sciences at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. More than 6,000 students applied for the scholarship, and Leslie-Toogood is one of 100 recipients across Canada.



Mariah Meilleur—Photo taken in 2019

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In 2019, the LRSD community engaged in a series of conversations about visioning for our future. The themes that emerged informed our renewed Vision and Mission and helped illuminate four strategic priorities that frame the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) for 2019-2023. Moreover, the collective aspirations of our community as well as a multitude of conversations inspired our efforts to identify meaningful and measurable strategic goals for each priority. There are desired outcomes detailed in each strategic goal that we will use to inform and guide our collective efforts as we move forward. We feel confident that the four-year journey our MYSP is taking us on will result in a thriving and flourishing future that every student, staff and community member can celebrate.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2019-2023

Our four strategic priorities parallel the quadrants of the Circle of Courage, an Indigenous inspired whole-learner framework for a holistic learning journey that incorporates concepts of Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity. These values are consistent with the landmark study by Stanley Coopersmith who identified these four foundations of self-worth.



BELONGING

THE UNIVERSAL LONGING FOR HUMAN BONDS IS CULTIVATED BY RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST SO THAT THE CHILD CAN SAY, "I AM LOVED."^{*}



^{*}Principles of the Circle of Courage: From *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future* by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern

EXPLORING IDENTITY



As outlined in our Multi-Year Strategic Plan, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is committed to equity and inclusion in the school community. Understanding the level of representation among staff and students is an important step toward co-creating an action plan to improve the ways we build a more equitable and inclusive community of schools in the months and years to come.

We have been asking families to voluntarily provide information about their children's self-declared identities through the annual registration process. In the 2020-2021 school year, 35 per cent of families completed the self-declaration question. We recognize that self-declaring can often be a question of trust and feeling safe in that declaration. We continue to work toward creating environments where all people can feel comfortable if or when they want to share their heritage.

In June 2021, the Senior Leadership Team began an audit of the current student registration form to discover ways to improve the process in future years. This will help the division learn more about the self-declared identity of students to become culturally responsive to the needs of learners. Similar to exploring the identity of students, we began asking questions about the level of representation among staff. In March 2021, the LRSD launched its first-ever Indigenous, BIPOC, and Ethno-Cultural Diversity Employee Survey.

Following the recommendations of the State of Equity Reports and Calls to Action from the Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle and the Newcomer Education Coalition, LRSD set out to gather employee data regarding the self-declared identity of Black, Indigenous or People of Colour (BIPOC), members of a racialized community and all ethno-cultural identities. The voluntary survey was developed in consultation with staff, members of racialized communities and the division's various unions.

OVERVIEW OF THE 695 STAFF RESPONSES:

 21% self-identified as BIPOC or a member of a racialized community

 15% self-identified as Indigenous

31 PER CENT OF STAFF* RESPONDED:

 56% of school administrators

 38% of clerical employees

 33% of teachers

 29% of library technicians

 23% of educational assistants

*Active permanent and term as of June 20, 2021

SCHOOLS WITH THE HIGHEST RESPONSE RATE:

76% École Henri-Bergeron

51% Island Lakes Community School

49% Marion School

48% Minnetonka School

44% Highbury School

The survey also included a question about language. The highest proportion of respondents indicated they speak English and/or French fluently; however, many indicated they speak an additional language such as Urdu, Spanish, German or Hindi.

This survey was anonymous, but staff were provided with an option to include their name. More than 200 staff members took the opportunity to identify themselves and express an interest to participate in an open dialogue about the ongoing refinement of current policies and employment equity strategies.

Moving forward, LRSD intends to continue the conversation and build trust with students, families and staff to improve participation in the self-declaration of identity. Asking the question "Who are we?" is an important step to ensuring students see themselves represented in their learning journey and experience positive changes in achievement, engagement and well-becoming.





MANITO AHBEE AKI

In February 2021, Microsoft Canada, Minecraft: Education Edition and the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) announced the completion of Manito Ahbee Aki, the first Minecraft teaching resource in the world that honours, celebrates and explores a Manitoba Anishinaabe community.

Players in Manito Ahbee Aki, which translates to “the place where the Creator sits” in English, are transported to Manito Ahbee, a site located in Manitoba’s western Whiteshell area, before European contact in North America.

“In the true spirit and intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, this project gives students in our schools and around the world an opportunity to learn and develop a deeper understanding about an Indigenous nation in Canada,” said Christian Michalik, LRSD Superintendent.

To create an authentic experience, members of the LRSD Indigenous Council of Grandmothers and Grandfathers (ICGG), along with Frank Deer, LRSD Scholar in Residence, and Knowledge Keepers from the Manitoba Anishinaabe community, guided and informed the development of the project. After 14 months of development with stakeholders located in Canada, the United States and Australia, Manito Ahbee Aki allows players to explore a fun and interactive world while gaining insight into Indigenous teachings and perspectives.

“Seeing my People and our ways of knowing and being captured in this game and having our traditions and culture told in a good way makes me very proud,” said Chickadee Richard, a member of the LRSD ICGG and a key contributor to the project. “I am one of the non-player characters (NPC) in the game who students will speak to for information that will help them explore and understand the Anishinaabe world we’ve built for them. This is the first-time students will be able to interact with an authentic representation of our Peoples’ history and way of life.”

Minecraft: Education Edition is a game-based learning platform that helps build key 21st century skills such as coding and creative problem solving, which is why several teachers in LRSD use the platform as a way to help students explore learning on a variety of topics. Christopher Heidebrecht, teacher at Minnetonka School, and Mark Lesiuk, teacher at Highbury School, were co-developers of the game and beta tested Manito Ahbee Aki alongside their grade 5/6 students.

“The team has worked incredibly hard to create a game that has many entry points for teachers and students,” said Heidebrecht. “It can be the basis for an entire unit, a whole month or two of study, or it could be completed in an afternoon. There are also a ton of extension activities and resources to support teachers however they choose to use the game.”

The Anishinaabe digital world includes flora, fauna and locations from Manitoba that were specially created for this world and did not exist in any other Minecraft property. The non-player characters (NPC) in the game are also unique and are modelled after Grandmother Chickadee, two LRSD staff and three Anishinaabe Knowledge Keepers from Manitoba.

“As an Indigenous educator and Indigenous parent, there aren’t a lot of resources that show our people, culture and practices in a respectful way—but this game changes that,” said Bobbie-Jo Leclair, Divisional Vice-Principal of Indigenous Education and Inter-Cultural Understanding and one of the NPC’s in Manito Ahbee Aki. “Not only will this game inspire and engage Indigenous students who don’t see themselves reflected in games, but it also provides an opportunity for all people to learn how Anishinaabe people respected the earth and all living things.”

Since its launch, Manito Ahbee Aki has been used in classrooms throughout LRSD and across the world to teach students about Indigenous Peoples and their history.

“

Not only will this game inspire and engage Indigenous students who don’t see themselves reflected in games, but it also provides an opportunity for all people to learn how Anishinaabe people respected the earth and all living things.”

– BOBBIE-JO LECLAIR

Divisional Vice-Principal of Indigenous Education and Inter-Cultural Understanding



Chickadee Richard and Diane Maytwayashing, Knowledge Keeper, during a Manito Ahbee Aki consultation session.



BUILDING A SCHOOL DURING A PANDEMIC

Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, students, staff and families in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) continually showed a commitment to learning and adapting to our new reality. Prior to the start of the school year, LRSD surveyed students in Grades 4 to 12 to gather feedback about their experience with

remote learning in the spring of 2020. More than 3,000 students replied to the survey and their responses reflected a full range of experiences, including an appreciation for the connection to their teachers, a desire for clear expectations, frustrations with technology and more.

The students' feedback was foundational in the rapid creation and launch of the LRSD Learning from Home School (LFHS)/L'École Apprendre-chez-soi for students in kindergarten to Grade 12 (English Program) and Grades 1 to 12 (French Immersion Program) in September 2020.

"With the lessons learned from the spring, we knew we had to make the learning from home experience as similar to in-school learning as possible," said Darcy Cormack, Divisional Principal. "Our goal was to build relationships and community with students while offering robust programming that follows the Manitoba curriculum."

What was once a meeting space at the division's board office was quickly transformed into a bustling hub of collaboration for teachers and staff supporting more than 900 students learning from home due to a medical condition or whose parents/guardians elected the option. A glimpse into the LFHS did not look much different than what you would see in a typical classroom, with whiteboards, bookshelves, and school supplies filling the room. The obvious difference was a lack of students in physical attendance, but their voices and laughs could be heard as you stepped closer to each teacher's workstation.

Students joined their teachers and classmates from across the division using Microsoft Teams and other programs to participate in live-streamed (synchronous) and pre-recorded (asynchronous) learning. The small but mighty teaching team was comprised of passionate and innovative individuals, many of whom were reassigned from their previous roles as coordinators, teacher-librarians, members of The Learning Team or teachers in brick-and-mortar schools. Students were also supported by Instructional Interns.

"Students worked incredibly hard this year and consistently demonstrated resilience, flexibility, and adaptability as we navigated the challenges together," said Thaddeus Bourassa, Grade 6 teacher at the LFHS. "I am incredibly proud of the LRSD's thoughtful response to establish the Learning from Home School. What has been accomplished as a team this year is truly remarkable."

The LFHS community embraced the unique circumstances the pandemic presented and worked together to create a sense of belonging within their classrooms, providing authentic and engaging learning experiences that inspired students with voice and choice.

"Both of my children had a very rewarding year; learning independence, using new formats and being able to get supports when needed," said Alexis Sexton, mother of two students who attended the LFHS. "One of my children follows an Individual Education Plan and she has seen remarkable improvements. We attribute this to her not having the normal classroom distractions, the freedom to take movement breaks as required and the fantastic support she has had from all of her teachers."

Following the successful development of the LFHS, the division was called on by Manitoba Education to join other leaders in distance learning and inform the planning of the Manitoba Remote Learning Support Centre. The division will continue its journey with learning from home by offering online French Immersion programming to students in grades 9 to 12 from across the province in the 2021-2022 school year.

“

Our goal was to build relationships and community with students while offering robust programming that follows the Manitoba curriculum.”

– DARCY CORMACK
Divisional Principal



"The inborn thirst for learning is cultivated by learning to cope with the world, the child can say, "I can succeed."*

WASTERY



*Principles of the Circle of Courage: From Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH INNOVATIVE IDEAS

In June 2021, students in Angela Kuhnle's Grade 3/4 class at Highbury School won more than \$6,000 for accessibility upgrades for the school as part of Manitoba Possible's MPower: Manitoba's Accessibility Challenge. The project encourages youth to learn about accessibility and develop innovative ideas to create solutions.

After reading the book *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper, Kuhnle found that her students were engaged in learning about the many types of barriers discussed in the book. She took students on a community walk to look for barriers in their community. Students were then put into five groups to brainstorm projects for improvement.

The projects submitted included two play structure redesigns, a washroom and water fountain renovation, and ways to break down attitudinal barriers and improve inclusion at Highbury School. Students searched playground catalogues, read accessibility requirement documents, measured water fountains, and even found videos of guest speakers they would want to invite to speak to their peers.

"We looked at the heights of things and if they were able to be used by somebody who was in a wheelchair or blind or deaf, and if it wasn't, we would want to change that," said Ava Smart, a grade 4 student at Highbury School.

Their projects, collectively, were selected to receive one of two \$5,000 awards to be used toward accessibility improvements or products for the school. Each project was also awarded a \$250 participation prize, bringing the grand total to \$6,250 for Highbury School.

"I am so proud of my students, they went above and beyond in their research, and I feel they truly understood the purpose of this project," said Kuhnle. "This kind of project is so important

because children engage in perspective taking, in activism and in planning for the future of their community."

On June 3, representatives from Manitoba Possible surprised the students by joining their morning meeting on Microsoft Teams and sharing the exciting news.

"When I found out I was on the edge of my chair and I wanted to jump up and cheer," said Kaitlyn Bray, a grade 4 student at Highbury School. "It meant a lot and I think the school could use a little bit more improvements. It is huge that we were able to accomplish this."

“

This kind of project is so important because children engage in perspective taking, in activism and in planning for the future of their community.”

– ANGELA KUHNLE
Teacher at Highbury School



MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING IN ACTION

In a typical year in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), school communities engage in mental health promotion and support well-being in a multitude of ways as we develop an increasing understanding of the following:

1. I know what well-being is.
2. I know what impacts (positively and negatively) my well-being and the well-being of those in my community.
3. I have strategies to improve my well-being and the well-being of others.

As staff and students returned to school in the midst of a pandemic in September 2020, an even larger focus on the well-being of school communities was critical.

The LRSD Clinical Services team created comprehensive resources for school teams and provided in-school supports for staff and families. Clinical staff offered full-day training for school staff on the topic of trauma informed practice. The training walked staff through the process of how to advocate for and create trauma-sensitive schools that can be safe and engaging learning communities for all students.

Clinicians contributed to a new Well-Being Channel in Microsoft Teams which provides over one hundred resources for students of all ages, families, and staff. A Well-Being and Resilience document was also developed using the Circle of Courage framework. School Social Workers supported the well-being of staff by sending out a Wellness Wednesday email twice a month. The emails encouraged staff to engage in activities to support self-care, health and wellness. Schools also engaged in mental health promotion at a local level to improve well-being within their communities.

HELPING STUDENTS THRIVE AT MARION SCHOOL

Educators at Marion School strive to ensure that every student learns the strategies and resources they need to cope with life's many challenges during their school career and beyond. Participating in the Thrival Kits™ pilot was an opportunity for clinicians and educators to implement a curriculum-based mental health promotion program for children that introduces students to a variety of mental health promotion activities. The Thrival Kit™ is a shoebox sized package that students fill with small, meaningful items as they complete brief classroom mental health activities throughout the school year. "Thrival Kits™ provide students with daily reminders and opportunities to self-regulate and practice mindfulness techniques," said Mike Engstrom, Grade 6/7 Teacher at Marion School. "Providing our students with self-reflective journal times gave them a safe opportunity to be honest with themselves about how they were feeling. This is a necessary practice for all students and educators alike."

Daily Thrival Kit™ activities, such as mindfulness, promote mental well-being and teach students specific strategies that protect their mental health. Students can access their individual boxes and use the tools at any point of the school day. Wealth Oyowe, a grade 4 student commented that his favourite tool in his kit is a grandfather rock; a rock that he specifically selected after hearing a teaching about the meaning of grandfather rocks to Indigenous Peoples. "I learned how to calm myself down and take control of my emotions," said Wealth.

Teachers can incorporate their own favourite mental health practices into a Thrival Kit™ session or invite another trusted adult with a specific skill set to introduce a topic or activity. At the end of the school year, students get to take their kits home encouraging the daily use of mental health promotion strategies throughout the summer. Next school year, the team looks forward to building on this year's momentum; further embedding Thrival Kits™ into classroom practices.

“
We created a sense of community with each other and with our classrooms. We understood the importance of bringing joy where and when possible, especially for our students.”

– DENISE DE ROCQUIGNY-KING
Teacher at ÉJR

PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AT ÉCOLE JULIE-RIEL

As LRSD continued its journey in implementing a comprehensive mental health promotion strategy divisionally, an eight-member mental health promotion team at École Julie-Riel (ÉJR) was hard at work supporting the well-being of students and staff. With participation from administrators, classroom teachers, student services teachers and clinicians, the team supported dozens of wellness strategies for staff, students and families based on their assessment and planning processes throughout the year. They also included strategies that supported the wellbeing of staff while building their capacity to give generously to their students.

"We created a sense of community with each other and with our classrooms," said Denise de Rocquigny-King, teacher at ÉJR. "We understood the importance of bringing joy where and when possible, especially for our students."

Extra ways to connect with colleagues through treats, games, learning, and sharing helped staff feel closer and better prepared to foster belonging and positive mental health for their students. Staff meetings, though virtual, included kindness icebreakers, sharing of mental health resources, and ongoing support for mental health promotion activities. In between meetings, the team worked on trauma-sensitive learning, built Thrival Kits™ with students, held spirit weeks and holiday celebrations, and supported school-wide regulation activities such as movement breaks and mindfulness practices.

With mental health promotion as a core component of their school plan, the leadership team at ÉJR was able to lay the foundation for a difficult but rewarding school year. This enabled staff to feel valued and capable of supporting their students in well-becoming. "It was essential to have administrators that were completely on board with promoting mental health and wellbeing for all staff members," said Elissa Hart, speech-language pathologist. "I believe the staff at the school have really benefited from the many supports that were provided to boost staff morale and overall mental health and wellbeing."

India Friesen, a grade 5 student, listed some of the most impactful activities for her this year, including Kidney Awareness Week, Orange Shirt Day, journal writing and the Beyond the Horizon Youth Summit. "My teachers gave each kid a voice and would always listen to us," said Friesen.

Among the many impacts of the mental health promotion work at ÉJR, staff reported a sense of family, collaboration and connection, as well as low staff absenteeism. The team ended the 2020-2021 school year having fostered positive mental health and wellbeing during an unpredictable and challenging year.

CO-AUTHORED BY

Steven Lawrie, *Director of Inclusion and Clinical Services*, and the Clinical Services Team



HITTING ALL THE RIGHT NOTES

A pilot project with Soundtrap, an online music creation program under the parent company Spotify, took flight in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) during the 2020-2021 school year. Warren Hart, teacher at the Learning from Home School (LFHS), Melissa Burns, music specialist at Archwood School, and Ingrid Pedersen, Coordinator of Arts Education, championed the project.

Hart and Pedersen approached Soundtrap in December 2020 to see what the platform could offer students and educators in LRSD. After an initial trial with Hart's students, the pilot was expanded to all schools in the division, with Soundtrap providing professional learning opportunities, training sessions, licensing, online resources, certification courses and lesson plans.

"It's not so much about the rules of music, but celebrating what sounds good to you, and creating musical expressions without any limitations," said Hart. "By discovering what 'sounds good,' students learn many music-theory concepts." A musical group

known as the Cairo Bros, two brothers from different classes at the LFHS, created original songs and working collaboratively on musical compositions. "I like that you can create anything," said Kristopher, a grade 6 student and one half of the Cairo Bros. "It is very easy to use, you get to work with other people, and it's fun!" Burns used the program with her students in grades 3 to 8. In one assignment, grade 7 and 8 students were given the audio file from Amanda Gorman's performance of *The Hill We Climb* and were asked to create a music setting to accentuate the performance and highlight their personal interpretation of the poem.

“When I had assigned this project, I had simply hoped to introduce the topic of poetry and the power of music to accentuate and influence the interpretation of spoken word,” said Burns.

“The result was profound work that led to a number of very deep and meaningful class conversations that still come up from time to time.” By measuring the level of impact through data collection, educators across the division will be able to make informed decisions as the project continues to thrive. At the beginning of January, there were no student or staff users of Soundtrap in LRSD. The pilot project officially launched in January and LRSD staff and students were quickly onboarded to the learning platform. As of May 13, 2021, that number has grown to 1,968 users across the division with 329,974 minutes of recording in the sound studio. In a typical week, 776 projects are created, and students have participated in a total of 17,290 projects.

Moving forward, the pilot project shows no signs of slowing its tempo. Most recently, Pedersen joined educators from Berlin, Brazil, Los Angeles, and New York to share ideas and collaborate. “Soundtrap has been especially helpful as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on singing and wind instruments,” said Pedersen. “It’s been a great tool to teach musical theory and experiment with sound and creativity.”

“

The result was profound work that led to a number of very deep and meaningful class conversations that still come up from time to time.”

– MELISSA BURNS

Music Specialist at Archwood School

This is just one example of how educators across LRSD found innovative solutions and explore ways to ensure school communities maintained rich learning opportunities despite the unprecedented challenges presented by the pandemic.

CO-AUTHORED BY

Warren Hart, Ingrid Pedersen, Melissa Burns and Thaddeus Bourassa





ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

On Wednesday, May 5, hundreds of learners across the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) participated in Beyond the Horizon, a virtual summit created by students, for students. Throughout the day, students in grades 5 to 12 shared and reflected on their experiences over the 2020-2021 year to help create a vision for learning in a post-pandemic world. Students were organized into breakout rooms for guided conversations about:



Indigenous education and land-based learning



Equality and inclusion



Mental health and well-being



Choice and voice for learners

“The Youth Summit was a conversation that I know will ignite change. You could hear it in the discussions that were happening throughout the day,” said Ridhwanlai Badmos, a grade 10 student at Windsor Park Collegiate and one of the leaders who helped plan and host the event. “It made me realize there are so many things that students can do; we just have to take the initiative.”

More than 130 classrooms of students in grades 5 to 8 tuned in during the morning session. Students heard from Big Daddy Tazz, a comedian and motivational speaker, before moving into breakout rooms with other classes from across LRSD.

“The summit was an engaging, thought-provoking, and empowering experience for students,” said Kristin Zaparniuk, teacher at St. George School. “Students liked being able to connect with their peers from around the division, and it made them feel good to have their voices heard and appreciated.”

In the afternoon, more than 160 high school students participated in the summit. The session kicked off with a keynote speech from Michael Redhead Champagne, a local community activist and public speaker, that inspired students to take action for positive change within their community. After sharing their thoughts and ideas within breakout rooms, students heard from Sofia Costantini, an educator, author, and choreographer, about mental health and strategies to build back community.

“Although we’re still navigating a pandemic, it is so important that we capture students’ stories and insight about their lived experience to learn how we can do better as an education system,” said Christian Michalik, Superintendent, LRSD. “Beyond the Horizon showed that we can find hope and opportunity, even in crisis.”

The summit was planned and executed by a group of 21 students from LRSD’s seven high schools. The group was responsible for graphic design, content creation, script writing, coordinating logistics, hosting the breakout sessions and more. Student ambassadors throughout the division’s elementary schools and the Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre helped promote the event at the school-level.

After the summit, the group of student leaders quickly began summarizing the lessons learned to share with staff at a professional learning day on May 31. More than 1,400 staff tuned in to a series of four keynote speeches, each touching on one of the main topics from Beyond the Horizon.

“A positive of the pandemic is that it presented the opportunity to connect with so many students from across the division,” said Heaven Nandwal, grade 11 student at Glenlawn Collegiate and keynote speaker. “It was my honour to hear the voices of youth and have the chance to share those voices with our amazing educators.”

“

The Youth Summit was a conversation that I know will ignite change. You could hear it in the discussions that were happening throughout the day. It made me realize there are so many things that students can do; we just have to take the initiative.”

– RIDHWANLAI BADMOS

Student at Windsor Park Collegiate

Following each keynote speech, staff were given the opportunity to discuss what they heard and how it resonated for them in their schools. “These student speakers have done such an amazing job that they have completely reenergized and motivated me as a teacher to tackle the last month of school,” wrote Avril French Varga, teacher at Samuel Burland School, during the Mental Health and Well-Being keynote. “They are the reason we choose this profession and are the best motivators.”

The content in each keynote was action-oriented and based on a multitude of student experiences from across the division. Students encouraged teachers to incorporate traditional land-based learning into daily classes, include in-depth conversations about race and diversity into the curriculum, allow for mental health breaks during the day, provide additional student leadership opportunities, and more.

“I was amazed with the student leadership group that presented for our professional learning day,” said Alyssa Olynyk, teacher at Windsor Park Collegiate. “Hearing them communicate the many other voices of students across the division was truly inspiring.”

In an exit survey sent to staff, 97 per cent of the 935 respondents provided a positive rating of the day and many requested more student-led professional learning in the future.

“I am incredibly proud of all of the students, both on and off screen, for their significant contributions and dedication,” said Christian Michalik, Superintendent. “Beyond the Horizon and the subsequent keynotes will help us continue improving the learning journey and I look forward to continuing this important dialogue in the 2021-2022 school year and beyond.”

INDEPENDENCE

Free will is cultivated by responsibility so that the child can say, "I have the power to make decisions."*



*Principles of the Circle of Courage: From Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern



YOUTH STANDING UP AGAINST RACISM

In the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), better education is about a better world for everyone. We acknowledge the essential role education plays in creating long-term transformation and systemic change.

In 2021, the City of Winnipeg kicked off its first-ever Anti-Racism Week on March 21 to coincide with the International Day of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Schools throughout the division commemorated the week through activities, conversations and learning; however, this important work spanned the entire year for many school communities. The following are just a few of many examples of youth standing up against racism in LRSD.



DAKOTA COLLEGIATE

In the 2020-2021 school year, Voices for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) formed at Dakota Collegiate (DCI) to advocate for inclusivity and anti-racism. The committee of approximately 15 students created Black History Month programming, including an informational website, a poster project amplifying student voices, and a video featuring DCI students and notable Manitobans such as Jamie Moses and Andrew Harris. The committee also initiated anti-racist discussions with the school's football team, collaborated with Mino Giizhiigaad, DCI's Indigenous Education Committee, to promote an Orange Shirt Day design contest, and recognized Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirited People in May. "Voices for BIPOC has been really important to me for many reasons," said Astric Saraswat, a grade 10 student who championed the committee. "Having a place where I can talk to other people about my experiences with racism and getting support from other people who have faced the same struggles has really helped me. Voices for BIPOC has also been a way to enact change and further education in our community. I think groups like ours can make a big difference in our communities."

“

Having a place where I can talk to other people about my experiences with racism and getting support from people who have faced the same struggles has really helped me.”

– ASTRIC SARASWAT
Student at Dakota Collegiate

GLENWOOD SCHOOL

Staff and students at Glenwood School strive to confront and eliminate racism throughout the year by weaving anti-racism themes and activities into who they are as a community. Staff and students worked with an Indigenous teacher to create a school-specific land acknowledgement that highlights the need for education and understanding to learn about and from the mistakes of our past. The land acknowledgment is read with the morning announcements. During the 2020-2021 school year, Glenwood's younger students engaged in important discussions by studying Canadian BIPOC inventors, learning about civil rights leaders, and recognizing Black History Month and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Students in junior high read *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes. This sparked discussions about the racial injustice still taking place around the world, in our country, in our city, and in our community.



Bringing in different perspectives, broadening and deepening our students' understanding of the world is our way of fighting racism.”

– SHARAD SRIVASTAVA
Principal at École Henri-Bergeron

ÉCOLE HENRI-BERGERON

Staff and students at École Henri-Bergeron worked on combatting racism throughout the 2020-2021 school year. They integrated the principles of the Circle of Courage in Celebration of Learning reflections in which students contemplated their role in their classroom, the school and their individual work. These reflections also informed the goals many students developed for third term.

Additionally, students learned about Viola Desmond and other civil rights leaders. The grade 7/8 classes spoke with a Winnipegger who was born in Africa about her experiences with war and healing, and what life in Canada has been like for her. A number of classrooms worked with Cameroon “artoonist” Issa Nyphaga for murals on cartoon art and African drumming. “Bringing in different perspectives, broadening and deepening our students’ understanding of the world is our way of fighting racism,” said Sharad Srivastava, principal at École Henri-Bergeron.

COLLÈGE JEANNE-SAUVÉ

Equity, self-awareness and belonging inform the teaching and learning that is embedded in the inclusive fabric of Collège Jeanne-Sauvé (CJS). Recognizing and participating in activities during Black History Month, daily practices such as the sharing of the school’s land acknowledgement, as well as building a diverse collection of resources to support classroom learning and discussions that represent the many learners in the school, help the collective growth and understanding of students and staff in the CJS community.

On March 19, six CJS students had the opportunity to participate in the State of the City High School Program with a focus on anti-racism. These grade 9 to 11 students engaged in facilitated sessions to understand what a world without racism looks like, how we can get there, and how anti-racism can exist in their everyday lives. In the afternoon, groups then shared their ideas with Mayor Brian Bowman including not being a bystander,

early programming for youth, and the process of reporting racism and hate crimes.

Becoming anti-racist results from a conscious decision to make consistent and equitable choices daily. The goals of equity and inclusion outlined in our Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) continue to guide us as we work toward reducing inequalities and discrimination within our community and strive for long-term transformation.



To consolidate learning and celebrate diversity, classrooms at Dr. D.W. Penner School co-created a bulletin board with a hand print belonging to each student.



USING DATA AS A FLASHLIGHT

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is committed to using data for progress monitoring and decision making.

Data involves a growth mindset and a solid grounding in data ethics as much as it involves proper tools and processes.

In line with goal 3.2 of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), LRSD's Data Literacy Initiative was originally launched in the 2019-2020 school year. After a pause due to the pandemic, this important initiative was officially restarted in January 2021.

When we talk about data literacy in LRSD, we are referring to our MYSP's focus on creating a culture of inquiry and responsibility that has all learners demonstrate the aptitudes, skills and knowledge to be autonomous and confident in their innate ability to achieve goals and become life-long learners. It is a culture where all parents/guardians demonstrate support for the MYSP and contribute to a culture of inquiry and responsibility in their schools. Staff create and nurture this culture by demonstrating they are members of on-going cycles of collaborative evidence-informed inquiry to improve practices and systems.

This important initiative involves four commitments. On behalf of the students and communities we serve, we strive to be:

1. Data informed
2. Data ready
3. Data literate
4. Ethical data stewards



Being data informed starts by asking ourselves, what are we tracking? What do we need to know and do? We use data to monitor who we are and how we are doing. Decisions are made based on evidence rather than hunches. This evidence-based, data-informed approach increases confidence in our decisions about what to keep doing and what to try next.

Being data ready involves identifying the tools and resources needed. It means working toward having the right data in the right hands at the right time, and in the right (optimized) format. Making data available starts with digitizing data collection, but it also involves a continuous dedication to data reliability and creating data flow efficiencies. Importantly, we are also continuously striving toward optimizing data reports, so they are accurate, immediate, visually engaging, intuitive to use, and easy to understand. As we build those tools, we are simultaneously working toward building data literacy across our system. We will know we are successful when we understand a report's purpose and content, have the skills to access and navigate data and reports, and commit to a growth mindset while valuing research and evidence-based action.

As ethical data stewards, we consistently strive toward using data to help rather than harm. We are mindful of the need for openness and transparency, but considerate of data privacy, and forthright about data limitations. Using data ethically results in improved trust and striving for the most positive impact possible.

One valuable tool in LRSD's data literacy journey is Power BI, an analytics application by Microsoft. Power BI allows users to create a visual display of data and helps staff easily interact with data while quickly gaining insights. School leaders can access Power BI reports on student achievement and engagement, recovery learning, attendance, technology deployment and more.

"We are trying to always use the data as a flashlight, rather than a hammer," said Marnie Wilson, Data Literacy Coordinator in LRSD. "It's not about competition or comparison, but rather what can it tell us so that we know how to improve."

The Data Literacy Leadership Team, a group of administrators, teachers and divisional staff, championed the initiative and its four commitments. Through collaborative learning cycles and training sessions, they gained confidence in navigating Power BI reports. On May 7, team members launched the Data Literacy Initiative with teachers in all 40 schools throughout LRSD, highlighting the many uses of Power BI. "I find Power BI user friendly and easy to navigate," said Brittany Bailey, teacher at Hastings School. "I can see how using this data will be helpful in collaborating with colleagues and guiding future planning and decisions."

Following the launch, classroom teachers, student services teachers, and school administrators agreed that Power BI reports would be helpful in supporting tasks such as planning for instruction, identifying students in need of extra supports, making recommendations for class placements and supporting report card writing. The hope is that Power BI reports become commonplace in classrooms throughout LRSD. "This tool will help continue to develop the collective data literacy among school teams and across the division," said Patrice Chartrand, Learning Team Teacher. "The idea of empowering teachers with this data literacy initiative is relevant now more than ever."

The Data Literacy Initiative is also directly tied to the actions LRSD is taking to achieve the goals outlined in the MYSP. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, the division began measuring the impact of those actions on student outcomes.

The Senior Leadership Team, school administrators and staff collaborated to refine and finalize the measures and data points used in MYSP analysis and school improvement planning. Ultimately, the goal was to understand the greatest areas of need divisionally and at a school-level to determine where improvements are necessary to ensure all students can thrive and flourish. "We believe that using data to identify our greatest areas of need, set our goals, and monitor our progress is at the heart of achieving our strategic plan in a data-informed way," said Christian Michalik, Superintendent. "All data is analyzed with an eye toward growth for all students, equitable access to supports and reducing significant gaps in outcomes."

Moving into the 2021-2022 school year, LRSD will continue its focus on data literacy to effectively identify improvement, successes, and needs. Further developing and implementing research-informed teaching practice and learning theory will also be important to remaining responsive to students' specific needs. This journey to improvement must be co-created alongside students to ensure they are empowered to self-monitor and adjust their pace and path. The hope is that if this work is connected to the development of greater intercultural understanding, compassion, and mutual respect, then our most vulnerable students will experience positive changes in achievement, engagement, and well-becoming.

CO-AUTHORED BY
Marnie Wilson, *Data Literacy Coordinator*



THE GROWTH OF FRENCH IMMERSION IN LRSD

Since 2011, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) has seen a 22 per cent increase in French Immersion enrollment, with over one-third of all students currently in French Immersion programming:

Planning for this steady growth has been a focus in LRSD for the past decade. Since 2013, several elementary schools have been reconfigured to ensure adequate space for students enrolled in French Immersion. In 2014, a new French Immersion school, École George-McDowell, opened its doors. In 2015, the division embarked on a planning study to expand Collège Béliveau and Collège Jeanne-Sauvé. In 2017, a newly built French Immersion school opened its doors in Sage Creek. École Sage Creek School (ÉSCS) is temporarily a dual-track school while we eagerly anticipate a second school being built in the very near future.

In 2019, LRSD announced a second site for the Middle French Immersion Program at École Henri-Bergeron, with the initial site opening at École Julie-Riel in 2006.

With a strong commitment to providing a French Immersion single-track system for learners, accommodating this growth has been an important and rewarding challenge. In the 2020-2021 school year, LRSD was able to make further strides in addressing concerns about overcrowding in French Immersion.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

When École Sage Creek School (ÉSCS) opened its doors in September 2017, the school that was intended to house kindergarten to Grade 8 (K-8) students was already over its capacity of 600. In 2019, LRSD implemented a temporary solution to address the overcrowding by moving the grades 7 and 8 students to their respective high schools. By 2024, the K-8 enrolment in Sage Creek is projected to balloon to more than 1,200 students.

The division has been advocating for a second school in the community for the past eight years. In 2020, the Manitoba Government reaffirmed its commitment to bring LRSD's vision to fruition. During the last week of April 2021, LRSD invited students, staff and families to a community meeting to address current enrolment pressures in ÉSCS as the community awaits a second school. As a result of the meetings and feedback from the community, LRSD presented temporary solutions including:



Temporarily relocating English program students in grades 5 and 6 from ÉSCS to Shamrock School



Temporarily operating the ÉSCS English program for kindergarten to Grade 4 and the French Immersion program for kindergarten to Grade 6



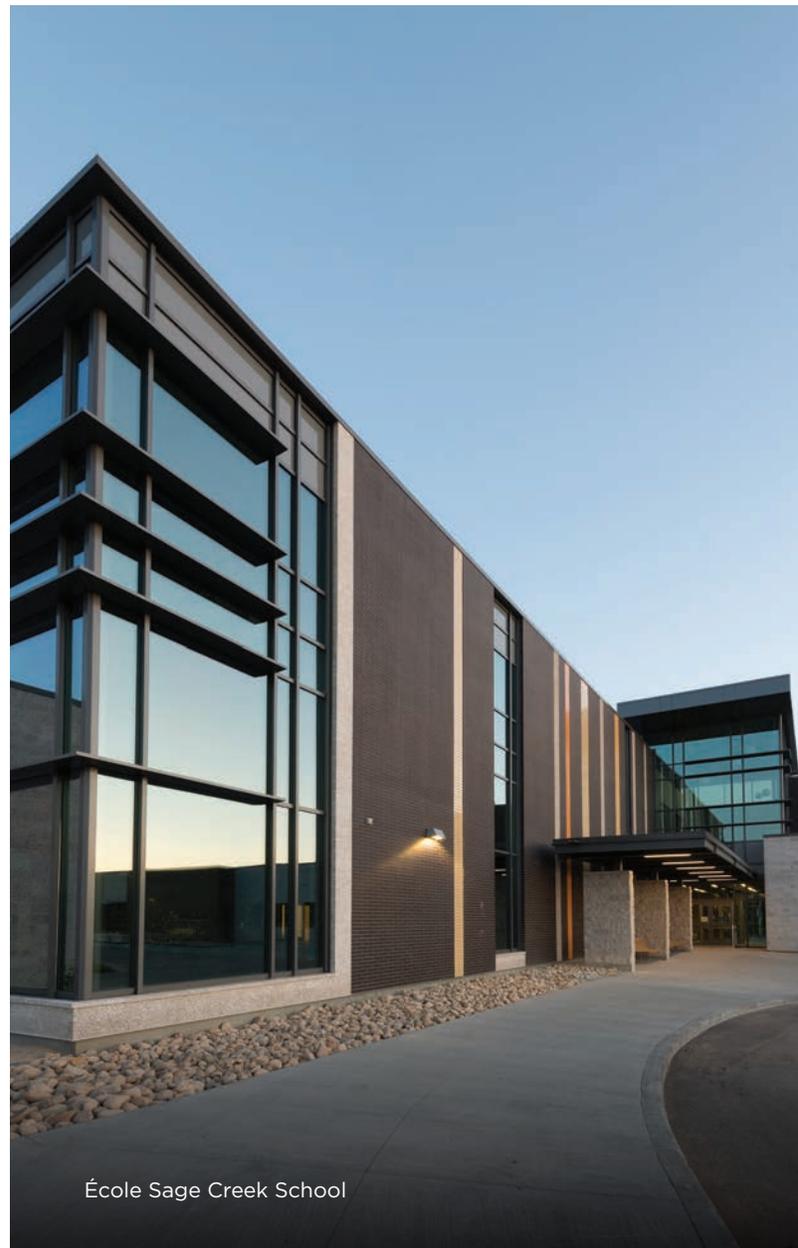
Expanding the catchment for Island Lakes Community School to include students living in North Island Lakes and Bonavista

Following the presentation of these temporary solutions, divisional and school leadership met with the families and staff directly impacted by the changes throughout May and June. Conversations will continue into the 2021-2022 school year to ensure the timing and complexity of these important decisions are managed alongside affected school communities.

A MUCH-ANTICIPATED ADDITION

In the latter half of the school year, the division announced the next steps toward a necessary major addition to Collège Jeanne-Sauvé. The grade 9 to 12 school with a current capacity of 650 students is conservatively projected to serve 963 students by 2026.

The project includes a two-storey, 16-room expansion with an elevator, a new science lab, and a fitness facility and storage room addition to the gymnasium. It also includes a new teacher collaboration space, an updated and expansive music space and student breakout spaces. This \$10.1 million expansion is set to begin in the 2021-2022 school year. This eagerly awaited project follows the \$4.1 million local investment in the school in 2019 that created a new commons area, indoor and outdoor theatre, and front entrance.



École Sage Creek School

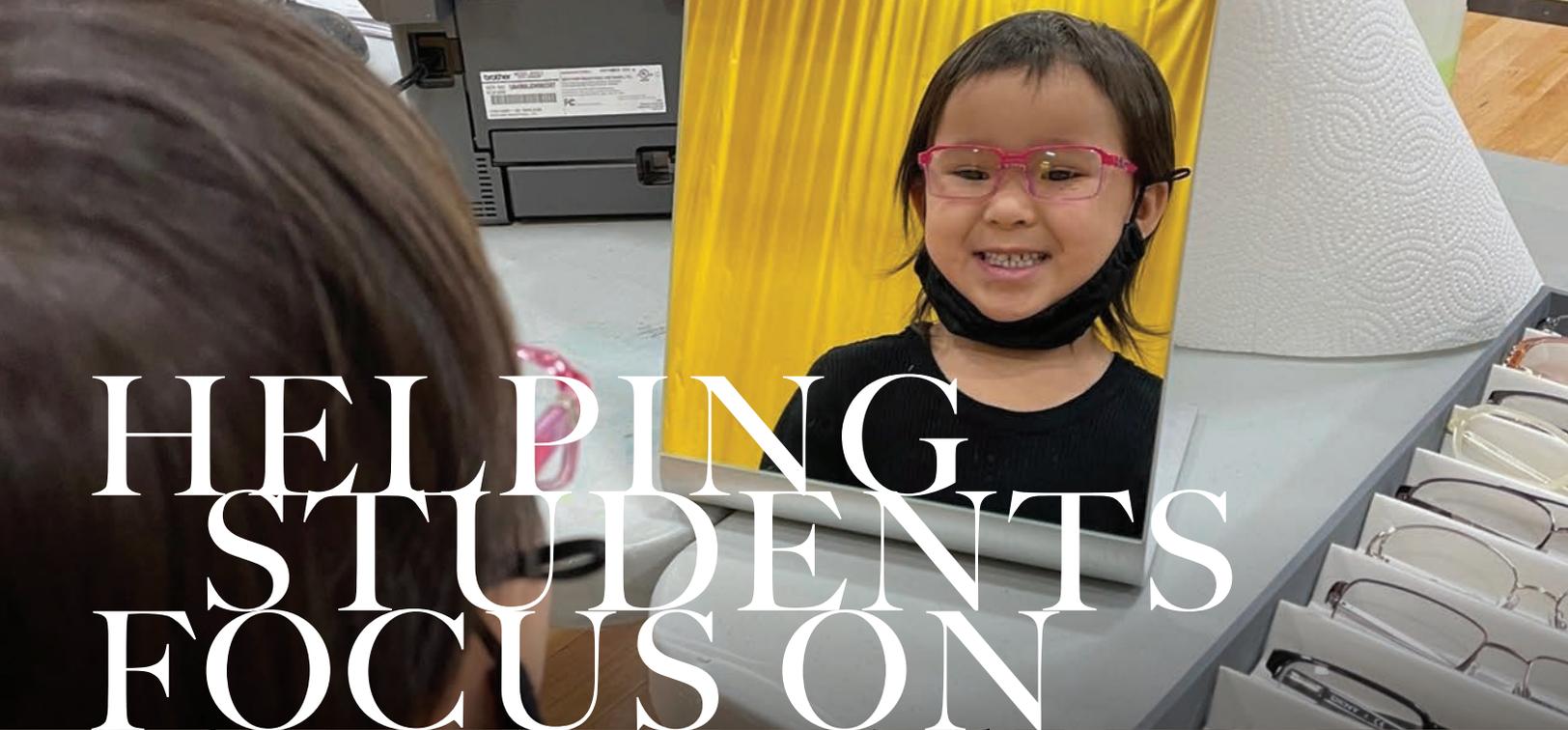


Rendering of the Collège Jeanne-Sauvé addition by Number TEN Architectural Group

GENEROSITY

Character is cultivated by concern for others so that the child can say, "I have a purpose for my life."*

*Principles of the Circle of Courage: From *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future* by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern



HELPING STUDENTS FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

In 2018, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) and the Mobile Vision Care Clinic (MVCC) formed a partnership to help ensure students who need eyeglasses can get them.

Under the direction of Sean Sylvestre, MVCC founder and CEO, the clinic works alongside schools and community groups to provide on-site vision care services, including comprehensive eye exams by a licensed Doctor of Optometry, and the dispensing of prescription eyeglasses. LRSD works with federal and provincial programs, third party insurance companies, and community partners to ensure costs are not a barrier for students.

One of the best parts about the clinic is that students can access the services without ever leaving their school. Prescription glasses are provided to those in need and come with an anti-reflective and scratch-resistant coating as well as a case and a cleaning cloth.

“Providing the opportunity for students to connect with quality eye care services directly at school makes a world of difference in ensuring all students have what they need to be successful,” said Melissa Brown, School and Family Community Connector in LRSD. “Witnessing the smiles and happy expressions of students who put on eyeglasses for the first time demonstrates the value of the partnership between LRSD and the MVCC.”

During the 2020-2021 school year, the MVCC visited 10 elementary schools throughout LRSD, and more than 1,100 students received complimentary eye exams! A pop-up clinic was also held at the René Deleurme Centre over spring break to increase access to eye care for families in the LRSD. The spring break clinic provided vision care to 50 individuals from

18 families, and, in the end, 34 people received a brand-new pair of prescription glasses. To ensure the safety of staff and students, COVID-19 public health protocols were followed at every site.

“The program has been a success for students in LRSD, and we felt that including families was equally important,” said Brown. “The clinics were a way to remove barriers and make things a little easier for families.”

“

Providing the opportunity for students to connect with quality eye care services directly at school makes a world of difference in ensuring all students have what they need to be successful.”

– MELISSA BROWN
School and Family Community Connector



BRINGING CLASSTO SCHOOL

The ever-changing circumstances caused by the pandemic encouraged dynamic solutions during the 2020-2021 school year. One of those solutions was an increased focus on teaching and learning outdoors. In schools across the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), teachers found innovative ways to bring their classrooms outside.

At Dakota Collegiate, students hit the trails and learned about active transportation with the addition of fat bikes to the school's repertoire. In the Lifeworks class at Glenlawn Collegiate, students ventured into their community to rake leaves for those in need. At Collège Béliveau, the introduction of more outdoor physical education classes increased participation and engagement among students. "It seemed that once you took away the four walls of the gym, students were less intimidated which increased the level of participation," said Chantal Freynet-Hawthorn, physical education teacher at Collège Béliveau. "We will definitely be utilizing our outdoor spaces more often. We were hesitant at the beginning and had to be really creative, but we also learned a lot as teachers from this experience."

As the cold Winnipeg winter began to settle in, some schools did not have access to their gym or other suitable spaces for physical education classes due to physical distancing requirements. To remedy this, the division rented outdoor tents from Weatherwise Tent Rentals to provide shelter from the cold and wind. École Sage Creek School, École St. Germain and École Van Belleghem all partook in the tent classroom pilot throughout the winter months.

At École Marie-Anne-Gaboury, hundreds of students embraced the sub-zero temperatures to construct an outdoor classroom made entirely of snow. The group spent four days of physical education classes hauling the snow with toboggans, carving it into the right shapes and sizes, and piling it high, all according to their detailed plan. All grades were able to participate, with the younger students piling snow to the older students pulling sleds and piling the blocks.

Once the world began to thaw in the spring, the physical education department at École George-McDowell teamed up with École Varennes and École Marie-Anne-Gaboury to develop a scavenger hunt for students and their families. An orientation map in St. Vital Park uncovered hidden posters, each of which had a secret code to solve a riddle. Students at Dr. D.W. Penner School used their creativity to develop an eight-hole golf course out of yoga mats, pylons, buckets and more. At École Provencher, students explored their neighbourhood while participating in a community cleanup. Although much of outdoor teaching and learning focused on physical education classes, teachers in other specializations also took every opportunity to move their classrooms into nature.

Students at Niakwa Place School planted a butterfly garden as part of an inquiry project. At Frontenac School, students took a scientific approach to the environment around them by examining flower blossoms. Jennifer Engbrecht, music specialist at École St. Germain, held music classes outside for the entirety of the school year, no matter the weather. “Having music class outside this year was transformative for the students and myself,” said Engbrecht. “We learned to spontaneously connect and interact with our environment and be curious about how we could make or respond to music in ways we have never done before, like percussion pieces with our snowsuits, or ‘playing’ the sounds of the school yard. I was endlessly impressed by the students’ ability to explore new ideas and share their creativity.”

When kindergarten to Grade 12 schools in Winnipeg were moved to learning from home in early May, outdoor movement continued to be encouraged by schools and the division. LRSD partnered with Winnipeg Trails to develop #LRSDMoves Week, an opportunity for students, staff and families across the division to get active through a number of physical and wellness activities outlined on a BINGO card.

Finding ways to incorporate land-based learning, which emphasizes the opportunity for students to gain a spiritual connection with the land on which they live on, was also a priority for many schools throughout LRSD. Land-based learning uses an Indigenized and environmentally focused approach to education by first recognizing the deep, physical, mental, and spiritual connection to the land that is a part of Indigenous cultures. The 2020-2021 school year marked the first year of the Manitou Akiing Land Based Education Program. The initiative offers Indigenous teachings into Family Studies, Clothing and Design, and Foods and Nutrition classrooms as well as provides a venue to pass along teachings about Indigenous agriculture and ways of being on the land.

“

It seemed that once you took away the four walls of the gym, students were less intimidated which increased the level of participation.”

– CHANTAL FREYNET-HAWTHORN
Teacher at Collège Béliveau

“Indigenous ways of being includes teaching our children how to build, hunt, plant, and harvest on the land,” said Shirley Ewanchuk, LRSD Itinerant Land Based Educator. “Land-based learning is an important step toward reconciliation and decolonization. The land is our teacher, storyteller, healer, and life giver.”

Students at Windsor Park Collegiate received lessons and teachings from Ewanchuk and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers. Students learned the ways of the Buffalo, virtually visited Anpo Bison Ranch, prepared Indigenous foods over the fire, constructed a tipi and learned about Indigenous environmental justice and sustainability issues surrounding the food that we eat. Grade 10 students also received Indigenous teachings through their geography class including a unit on Indigenous Agriculture and Food from the Land.

While bringing the classroom outdoors is certainly not a new concept to teachers in LRSD, the pandemic presented the opportunity to do so more than ever. With countless benefits and possibilities, an increased focus on land-based learning and outdoor education will surely be a foundational piece of our new normal in a post-pandemic world.

CO-AUTHORED BY

Shirley Ewanchuk, *Itinerant Land Based Educator*



Photo taken during a sewing class before the pandemic.



SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS

The Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker (NISW) program has been in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) since 2012, and is supported through a funding agreement with Immigrants, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada.

The NISW program helps permanent resident newcomer and refugee families throughout LRSD with their transition to life in Canada.

One of the main functions of the NISW team is to meet with new permanent residents and, through a needs assessment process, collaborate to create a settlement plan to support their goals. The personal background and histories of clients are widely different and each one's experience on arrival is unique. The NISW team seeks to build trusting and respectful relationships with newcomer families and create programs based on their needs. The plan may include making referrals to appropriate agencies and community supports.

Newcomer permanent residents often seek support in:



Gaining information on healthcare services



Finding employment opportunities



Preparing for the workforce



Finding available and suitable housing



Accessing education and job training



Learning about community programs and services

Many of the NISW program's newcomer clients have limited or no access to social and professional networks. As a result, the program creates connections with community service providers and institutions that support newcomer families. The team works in close collaboration with local organizations, including EDGE Skills Centre, Accueil Francophone, Mount Carmel Clinic, and Frontier College, to better serve the needs of its clients. The NISW program offers its services in both English and French, as well as several other languages.

The team collaborates with LRSD school administrators and teachers to provide additional support with school registration, in-person school meetings and other resources that may be needed by newcomer families. It also offers youth programs that help children make new friends, improve their English language skills and learn about living in Canada.

COVID-19

Following all current public health guidelines, the NISW program maintained its commitment to the community through a mix of remote and in-person services throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Orientation, case management and support for permanent residents were completed primarily by phone. Despite the challenges of navigating the pandemic, the team was able to mobilize supports, make appropriate referrals to resources and liaise with service providers and government agencies. Due to COVID-19 and the limitations on providing in-person services for families, the team transitioned to an online service delivery model, providing virtual programs and support for clients. Working with clients in a virtual environment was a new endeavor for the team, but it provided an opportunity to reach clients who don't usually attend in-person programs.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the NISW team offered eight virtual programs and engaged clients from more than 15 nationalities. For many newcomers, the virtual programs offered are their primary form of socialization, communication and settlement in Canada.

CO-AUTHORED BY

Tim MacKay, *Director of International Student Program and Newcomer Services*, and the NISW Team



NISW team members Iftu Ibrahim, Marcel Lembissa and Yana Zheleva





BUILDING A LEGACY

As outlined through the pages of our 2020-2021 Annual Report to the Community, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) remains committed to the strategic priorities and goals outlined in our four-year Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP).

As we move into a future that is more unknown than ever, we will continue the work and dedication necessary to seeing our core values come to life in our schools and community. This includes having open and genuine dialogue with students, staff, families, and community members to ensure our goal of achieving better learning and well-becoming outcomes for all is reached in a compassionate, consultative, and evidence-informed manner. Equity and inclusion must continue to be key values that inspire us to do all we can to nurture a community that reflects

the diverse aptitudes, abilities, identities, and experiences of our communities. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, the LRSD community showed unparalleled resilience, kindness, and innovation. Living in such unprecedented times gave us the opportunity to pause and discover new ways of looking at ourselves and the world, and how we can change for the better. As we reflect and recover from the shadow of the pandemic, the lessons learned can help us build a legacy for years to come.

“

Without reflection,
we go blindly on
our way, creating
more unintended
consequences,
and failing to achieve
anything useful.”

– MARGARET J. WHEATLEY





DIVISION SCOLAIRE
LOUIS RIEL
SCHOOL DIVISION

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Find and follow us on the following channels to stay up to date with LRSD news, important dates and more!

