



Great Schools for  
Growing and Learning

St. James-Assiniboia School Division

Fall Issue 2017

# CONTACT

## SJASD Introduces Policies and Guidelines for Schools on Transgender Youth

**"All schools should be places where all our children feel welcomed and safe. When students are included rather than excluded, welcomed and affirmed rather than marginalized, bullied, harassed, or made to feel invisible because of their gender identity or gender expression or any other aspect of who they are, they tend to flourish."**

— *Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students in Manitoba Schools, Manitoba Education and Training, 2017*

Today more transgender and gender diverse youth are sharing their identities with their families, friends, and schools. St. James-Assiniboia School Division recently developed and implemented guidelines on transgender and gender diverse youth in schools that support equity and inclusion. Enshrined in both provincial human rights legislation and the Public Schools Act, all schools including teachers, administrators, and support staff have both a legal and ethical duty to provide safe environments free from bullying and to uphold human diversity policy. For transgender and gender diverse students, this includes respecting chosen names and pronouns, providing access to washroom and change room facilities aligned with their gender identity, and ensuring dress codes support the full expression of a student's gender.

Supportive and affirming school and learning environments see more transgender and gender diverse youth take on leadership roles, initiate school-based programming, attain higher levels of academic achievement and develop meaningful relationships with peers. School divisions and schools are responding to the growing evidence that in order for students to thrive, a whole-school affirming approach is essential.

Transgender, or trans, is a term describing a wide range of individuals whose gender identity or gender expressions differ than what is typically associated with their biological sex. The term "gender diverse" describes those who do not follow strict expectations of gender identity or expression.

Researchers and historians have captured a variety of gender identities. For example, North American Indigenous communities may use the term Two-Spirit to reflect gender diversity. With the prevalence of trans and gender diverse individuals throughout different cultures and histories, the actual number of trans and gender diverse youth is difficult to determine. Depending on a number of factors, some may share their identities while others may not.

A 2016 study conducted by the University of British Columbia entitled *Being Safe, Being Me in the Prairie Provinces: Results of the Canadian Trans Youth Health Survey in Saskatchewan and Manitoba* indicates that transgender students in the prairies experience high rates of unwanted sexual comments,



*Dr. Reece Malone, CEO and Lead Trainer for Diversity Essentials, continues to assist with the Professional Development of all staff in St. James-Assiniboia School Division in the area of Transgender Youth.*

jokes or gestures towards them, nearly two in five have been subject to sexual assault, three-quarters have been treated unfairly due to their gender identity, 50% had attempted suicide in the last year, and 60% engaged in self-harm behaviour.

Divisional policies and guidelines will provide schools with much needed tools on how to better support trans and gender diverse youth while promoting the dignity of all students. The foundation of safety and inclusion fosters students to be their authentic selves and to fully participate in their learning environments. This in turn will allow each of them to reach their full potential as adults.

*Submitted by Dr. Reece Malone, CEO and Lead Trainer for Diversity Essentials*  
[www.diversityessentials.com](http://www.diversityessentials.com)

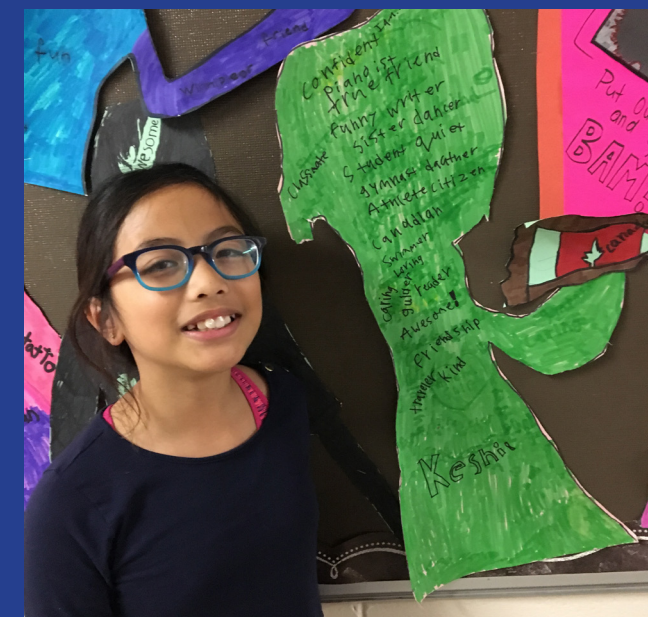
## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL PRINCIPALS' MONTH!

The Learning Partnership announced the month of October as National Principals' Month! Our principals in SJASD make a tremendous difference within our schools and now is the time to celebrate all that they do. The hashtag capturing this initiative across the country is #OutstandingPrincipals. Let's share our stories. To nominate a SJASD principal to be honoured as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals, check out [www.thelearningpartnership.ca](http://www.thelearningpartnership.ca). A big thank you to all of our principals for their excellent leadership in our Division.



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[www.sjasd.ca](http://www.sjasd.ca)



**Brett Lough, Chief Superintendent**

## A Message from the Chief Superintendent

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all staff, students and their families to St. James-Assiniboia School Division for 2017-18. We hope that you had the opportunity to enjoy our wonderful summer with your friends and family over the past two months.

The 2017-18 school year will once again be a very busy time in our Division. This school year will see some significant changes with a new Student Services delivery model in place across the Province, in addition to being the final year of transition for our Middle Years Reorganization. As we move forward with these exciting changes, we are confident our staff members will continue to work closely and diligently with our families to best meet the needs of our students. The Board and school division staff will also continue to provide opportunities for input from our educational partners to ensure our staff and the community continue to have a high level of confidence as we move forward with the implementation of these changes. To this end, the Division will host a couple of parent/trustee forums in the upcoming year, as well as continue with the student/trustee forum, after the success of the inaugural forum which took place in May this past year.

In addition to the changes mentioned above, we will continue to challenge ourselves to be more inclusive for all those involved in public education. Public education is one of the cornerstones of the democratic society we live in and therefore it is incumbent on us to ensure we are always striving to provide an inclusive environment for all who enter our schools. With a new Gender Diversity policy in place, our involvement in the Indigenous Accord in support of our ongoing commitment to reconciliation with our Indigenous community, as well as our continued efforts to make our facilities more accessible and accommodating for all, the Division remains committed to providing leadership that respects the diversity of our community and organization.

As a Division, our focus will also be to continue to provide more meaningful learning experiences for all of our students. In support of this focus, we will continue to look for ways to enhance the collaborative processes within our schools and their communities. Our staff will be focused on analyzing student data – including but not limited to our local report card information, the provincial assessment results and the Tell Them From Me student survey feedback – to help improve student learning. All partners in the learning process – including students, employees, parents/guardians, and community members – have a valuable role in the development of our children into caring and productive members of society. The research is clear, as referenced in the book *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn (Hattie, 2014)*, teachers and parents working together as a team in support of the learning of ALL students will have a positive impact on their learning. Heading into the new school year, we remain confident our staff will continue to embrace this culture of collaboration to support St. James-Assiniboia School Division’s ongoing pursuit of providing a quality education for all.

*Brett Lough, Chief Superintendent*

## SJASD launches new School and Division websites for 2017-18 school year

As online communication continues to evolve and more users reach for handheld devices, SJASD saw a need to redesign our website to provide a stronger, more efficient platform to meet the needs of our students, staff and the community.

In May of 2017, St. James-Assiniboia School Division launched its new online home. The Division website moved from what was previously known as [www.sjsd.net](http://www.sjsd.net) to what is now [www.sjasd.ca](http://www.sjasd.ca). The new website aims to be as user-friendly as possible, preventing users from clicking too many times or scrolling too far to find the information they need. During the restructuring process, we evaluated which areas of our website users visit most frequently, and also which areas have been reported as being difficult to find or navigate in the past. We are proud to share that our new home page is now a landing space that offers many jumping-off points geared towards both our users, as well as our Divisional values. Some of our new website features include: the latest news in a slide-show format, a rotating calendar displaying current events, six categorized drop down menus, a pullout of popular links, our budget report, School Locator, the school day notification, our strategic plan, a newsletter signup option, a statement of acknowledgement of Traditional Land, a map and our contact information. There is also a select language tab to accommodate all learners, their families and members of the community, as well as links to our Division social media accounts and a helpful search option too.

While our Division website was the first site to go live at the end of the previous school year, all of our individual school websites launched over the summer in August 2017. We are happy to announce that all of our websites are now mobile friendly to be compatible with personal devices such as laptops, tablets and smartphones. As a Division, we are looking forward to further developing our websites and discovering all that these platforms have to offer to help promote communication and the sharing of information in St. James-Assiniboia School Division.



Three grade 12 students at Westwood Collegiate taking some time to check out the new school website for the first time. (From the left: Kayla C., Emma H. and Matt K.) Our focus group students explored the website on both a computer desktop, as well as their mobile devices and provided their feedback on several of the new features. The students indicated that they liked the new design and layout of the site, in particular, the use of the school colours throughout. They found the site easy to navigate and find information quickly and particularly appreciated the upcoming events calendar on the home page. Although their school website also included a link to the school’s Instagram feed, they felt the website itself provided all the latest news and events for those who aren’t on social media. Thank you to these three students for sharing their thoughts with us shortly after the school sites went live.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Be sure to mark your calendars for the following Division events and activities:

- October 20**  
Inservice: No School  
MTS PD DAY
- October 24**  
School Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m., Public Welcome  
Parenting Today Workshop
- October 25**  
Manitoba WE Day, MTS Centre
- November 1**  
Take Our Kids to Work Day

- November 2**  
Divisional Choirs Fall Concert  
7:00 p.m., Westwood Community Church
- November 7**  
Early Dismissal
- November 10**  
Admin Inservice: No School
- November 11**  
Remembrance Day
- November 13-17**  
ChoralFest Man. at Sturgeon Creek United Church

- November 14**  
School Board Meeting  
7:30 p.m., Public Welcome
- November 17**  
Senior Years Reports
- November 21**  
Early Dismissal  
Parenting Today Workshop
- November 22**  
Early Years Reports

Visit our Divisional Calendar at [www.sjasd.ca](http://www.sjasd.ca) for additional details on other Division/school events.

## Students encouraged to speak out on World Teachers' Day at St. James Collegiate

World Teachers' Day has been celebrated annually on October 5 since 1994 all across the world to honour the many ways teachers positively impact the lives of their students.

In an effort to make World Teachers' Day 2017 extra special, St. James Collegiate teacher Ms. Frolek reached out to a group of social justice students and asked them to participate in a lively student discussion.

On the morning of World Teachers' Day, Ms. Frolek and approximately 20 students came together alongside a few special guests, including St. James Collegiate Principal Ms. Steffler, Manitoba Teachers' Society Vice President Mr. Bedford and St. James-Assiniboia Teachers' Association President Mr. McPherson, to share their ideas, opinions and experiences in an inviting space. Not a single student remained quiet as the discussion began to grow with enthusiasm and emotion. The students took turns expressing their thoughts on what makes a great teacher, what actions taken on behalf of teachers resonate with them the most and lastly, they shared individual stories about a teacher who has greatly impacted their life. The students exchanged many laughs, head nods and smiles as they reflected on teachers within their school

and could all relate to the familiar teachers being celebrated and praised.

Grade 12 Student Council President Amalie H. said it was really interesting to hear how different teachers have an effect on different students. The two teachers she named were not the same ones as many of her peers but this reflected their different interests, passions and personality traits. From physics teachers to gym teachers to Grade 5 homeroom teachers, every student had a different teacher they were excited to speak highly about. Upon leaving the student discussion, guided by Ms. Frolek, a number of students followed up with the teacher they named to deliver their kind words of appreciation in person.

The student discussion gained momentum as each student shared their story, which simultaneously supported the Manitoba Teachers' Society theme for World Teachers' Day 2017, "My Teacher, My Story."

Great work to all of the students who participated in this event, and to Ms. Frolek for organizing the inspiring discussion. A huge congratulations to all of the teachers across our Division who work extremely hard to contribute as much as they do to the educational goals and lives of all their students.



From the left: St. James-Assiniboia Teachers' Association President Mr. McPherson, Manitoba Teachers' Society Vice President Mr. Bedford, St. James Collegiate Principal Ms. Steffler, and St. James Collegiate teacher Ms. Frolek.



### Student Quotes from World Teachers' Day Discussion

"All biases go out the door when it's just you and her talking, it's only about you and nothing else, she just wants to make sure that you are okay and that you feel good."

"He looks out for me and he is just that person that you can tell everything to and he gives his own perspective. He helps keep you in line and knows what is best for you when you really need it."

"They help the students find their place in the school and provide them with a lot of opportunities that let them blossom and help students develop."

"She's not only the smartest person I think I know, but she kind of knew that I didn't find physics interesting yet she showed me the beauty of physics and I really appreciate that."

## CONTACT READERSHIP SURVEY

In an effort to better connect with our audience, St. James-Assiniboia School Division would like to hear from you regarding our quarterly publication, CONTACT. As many readers in the 21st century are now reading their news online, we are eager to discover which mediums our audiences are using to discover the latest news about St. James-Assiniboia School Division. While many of our schools have gone paperless with their school newsletters in recent years, we will use your input to help us determine what is the best next step for our Divisional publication. We would like to ask our St. James-Assiniboia community to take the time to either complete the short survey below and mail in your responses, or visit [www.sjasd.ca](http://www.sjasd.ca) to complete the survey online.

**Please note: The CONTACT survey will remain open until December 1, 2017, at which time we will begin to review the responses.**

### 1) What is your connection to St. James-Assiniboia School Division? (Check all that apply)

- a) Parent
- b) Student
- c) Staff Member
- d) Community Member
- e) Alumni

### 2) Please indicate your age group?

- a) 17 and under
- b) 18 - 30 years old
- c) 31 - 55 years old
- d) Over 55 years old

### 3) Do you read our quarterly publication, CONTACT?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Occasionally

### 4) If so, how do you read CONTACT?

- a) Online at the School Division website
- b) Newspaper received in the mail
- c) Email subscription (Digital subscription sent directly to your email address)
- d) Not applicable, I do not read CONTACT

### 5) How would you prefer to receive CONTACT in the future?

- a) As an email subscription sent directly to my email inbox.
- b) As a traditional newspaper delivered to my mailbox
- c) I will read CONTACT online at the school division website at my own will
- d) Not applicable. I do not read CONTACT

### 6) If you selected "In my mailbox," would you continue to read CONTACT if the publication moved to a solely digital platform?

- a) Yes I would
- b) No I wouldn't

Thank you for helping us understand the preferences of our readers and guiding the future of this publication. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

### Contact Information

For mail submissions, please send your completed survey to:

Jen Cameron, Editor  
St. James-Assiniboia School Division  
2574 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0H8  
Tel: (204) 888-7951

For online submissions, please visit our Division website, [www.sjasd.ca](http://www.sjasd.ca). The survey can be found on our home page.



## Board Chair signs Winnipeg's first Indigenous Accord

On June 20, more than 80 organizations, businesses and individuals came together at the Oodena Celebration Circle at The Forks to provide the first signatures for Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord. To symbolize our commitment to reconciliation, School Board Chair Craig McGregor signed the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord on behalf of St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

From mending truth and reconciliation blankets to hosting our first annual Graduation Pow Wow in June 2017, our Division is committed to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94

calls to action. We will continue to prioritize Indigenous Education within our schools and work as a community alongside the City of Winnipeg to achieve the commitments highlighted on the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord. While we have already begun our journey towards reconciliation in our schools and in our community, we are proud to take a positive step alongside partners all across Winnipeg to build a stronger future for our students, city and Canada.



The EcoJimmies Sustainability group with St. James Collegiate teacher Ms. Tuchscherer celebrating their hard-earned designation presented by the Canadian Fair Trade Network.

## St. James Collegiate named Canada's 17th Fair Trade School

St. James Collegiate is so proud to be Winnipeg's first, Manitoba's third and Canada's 17th designated Fair Trade School.

The School's quest for designation began in 2015 when a group of students were inspired by classroom discussions surrounding sustainability and fair trade. The students came together outside of class and formed what is now known as the EcoJimmies, the St. James Collegiate sustainability group. Many of the EcoJimmies steering committee students were already actively involved in our school's Social Justice Group. We quickly set a goal to incorporate more fair trade products into school events and everything came together very quickly as we met the criteria to become designated on May 24, 2017 during Fair Trade Month.

Some of the highlights of the past school year included hot chocolate and coffee sales for fair trade Fridays, bake sales and fair trade roses being sold on Valentine's Day — an incredibly successful event! We are very fortunate to be surrounded by people in our building who support our endeavors including our administrators, teachers, support staff and caterers in our cafeteria.

"St. James Collegiate joins 21,247 other students as Canada's 17th Fair Trade School! To end Fair Trade Month with a bang, the UNESCO school celebrated their designation as staff, students and faculty enjoyed frozen fair trade hot chocolate. With four other schools receiving their designations this year, 2017 is engaging more and more youth in the

fair trade movement. "Congratulations St. James, keep up the great work!" said Canadian Fair Trade Network Executive Director Sean McHugh.

"We look forward to the coming years with more opportunities to spread awareness about fair trade throughout our community and beyond and bringing more fair trade products and events into our school." said St. James Collegiate teacher Ms. Tuchscherer.

"It's a delight to congratulate St. James Collegiate on becoming a Fair Trade School! By becoming fair trade, the school is raising awareness about the importance of trade justice and is demanding a fair deal for fair trade producers of the Global South. Our hats off to all involved!" expressed Mélissa Dubé, Outreach and Marketing Manager, Fairtrade Canada.

"While educating your students to become open-minded, caring and respectful citizens, connected with their local and global community, you support a large movement in favour of fairness and social justice on the global market," shared Loïc de Fabritus, Project Manager, Association québécoise du commerce équitable.

Submitted by the Canadian Fair Trade Network and St. James Collegiate



Each year hundreds of individuals and corporations in different areas and activities. We would like to thank you for working with us during the 2016-2017 school year.

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- Addictions Foundation of Manitoba
- AJG Insurance
- All Around Sign
- Alliance for Arts in Education in Manitoba
- Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada
- Artists Emporium
- Assiniboia Christian Centre
- Assiniboine Memorial Curling Club
- Assiniboine West Community Club
- Assiniboine Zoo
- Athletes in Action AIA Manitoba Camps
- Autopia
- Avenue 4 Communications
- Big Brothers/ Big Sisters
- Big Sand Volleyball Clothing Inc
- Birchwood Auto Group
- Bord-Aire Community Club
- Boston Pizza
- Boyd Autobody
- Boys and Girls Club of Manitoba
- Brandon University- Music Department
- Broadview Networks
- Buggy Bath
- Calm n' Sense Yoga for Kids
- Camp Arnes
- Camp Cedarwood
- Canad Inns Polo Park
- Canadian Blood Services
- Canadian Museum of Human Rights
- Canadian Parents for French
- Canadian Red Cross
- Canadian Tire
- Centennial Pool
- Child Nutrition Council of Manitoba
- Children Evangelism Fellowship
- Choral Fest Manitoba
- City Auto Paints
- College Electric Ltd
- Country Club Seniors Apartment Complex
- Crestview United Church
- Criti-Care - CPR training
- Cunningham Business Interiors
- Dance Manitoba
- D'Arcy Bain Physiotherapy
- Discovery Children's Centre
- Diver City Scuba Inc
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- Emergent Biosolutions
- Emmanuel Perez Compagnie
- Equal Opportunities West
- Exhale Dance Studio
- Fairlaine Children's Center
- Family Foods
- Festival du Voyageur Inc.
- Firmac Lumber
- Fish Futures
- Foodfare
- Fort Whyte Alive
- Free the Children
- Gateway
- GO! International
- Golden West Centennial Lodge
- Golf Manitoba
- Gordon J Lee Distributors
- Grace Hospital
- Green Action Centre
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hamilton House
- Healthy Start for Mom and Me
- Heritage Park Children's Centre
- Hilmar Ventures
- Historical Museum of St. James - Assiniboia
- Image Fitness
- Immanuel Pentecostal Church
- Infinyt Development Group
- Islamic Social Services Association
- Job Works Employment Education Programs
- Juggling
- Jump Rope For Heart - Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Kal-Tire - Westwood Branch
- Kirkfield Park United Church
- Kirkfield Westwood Community Centre
- Klinic Community Health Centre, Teen Talk
- Koats for Kids
- KPSS/Goldwell Co.
- Ladies of Philoptochos
- Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium Inc.
- Lakewood Community Member
- Landmark Cinemas 8 Grant Park
- Layers Salon
- Learning Partnership
- Lets Talk Science National Office
- Lifetouch
- Lifeworks
- Little Caesar's Pizza
- Long & McQuade
- Manitoba Association of Playwrights
- Manitoba Children's Museum
- Manitoba Choral Association
- Manitoba Hydro



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- Sport Chek
- St James Canucks
- St. James Art Club
- St. James Bowling Lanes
- St. James Collegiate
- St. James-Assiniboia Health & Social Services Centre
- St. John's Music
- Stevenson-Britannia Adult Literacy Program
- Stewart Trophies & Engraving
- Sturgeon Heights Collegiate
- Subway Sandwiches
- Take Pride Winnipeg!
- Tall Grass Prairie Bread Co
- TeenTalk - Clinic on Broadway
- Teens Against Drunk Driving
- Terry Fox Foundation
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- University of Manitoba / Faculty of Education
- University of Winnipeg
- Vertical Adventures
- Vital Transit
- Volleyball Manitoba
- Walmart Unicity
- WASAC -Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Center
- Westwood Collegiate
- Westwood Community Child Care Inc.
- Westwood Community Church
- Westwood Public Library
- Wilderness Supply
- Windsor Plywood
- Winnipeg Art Gallery
- Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers
- Winnipeg Foundation
- Winnipeg Harvest
- Winnipeg Humane Society
- Winnipeg Jets True North Foundation WJHA & Camp Manitou
- Winnipeg Music Festival
- Winnipeg Police Service
- Winnipeg Public Libraray
- Winnipeg Public Library - Westwood Branch
- Winnipeg Regional Health-Jeanine LeFloch
- Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
- World of Water
- Wpg Police Services, School Education Section
- WRENCH
- WRHA
- YM-YWCA
- Yoga
- Zoological Society of Manitoba

## Developing literacy identities at Ness Middle School

Books on display and a welcoming message greet visitors to Ness Middle School, where language learning and the development of students' literate identities drive instruction and encourage excellence.

In our classrooms, teachers put best practices for literacy instruction into action, thanks in part to the Regie Routman in Residence program. Last April, the Ness teaching staff were joined by other middle years teachers for a week of demonstration lessons and professional conversations, taught and facilitated by author Sandra Figueroa. Figueroa is a professional development leader who works closely with literacy guru Regie Routman and she shared how teachers can guide students toward mastery of both content-area and literacy-learning goals.

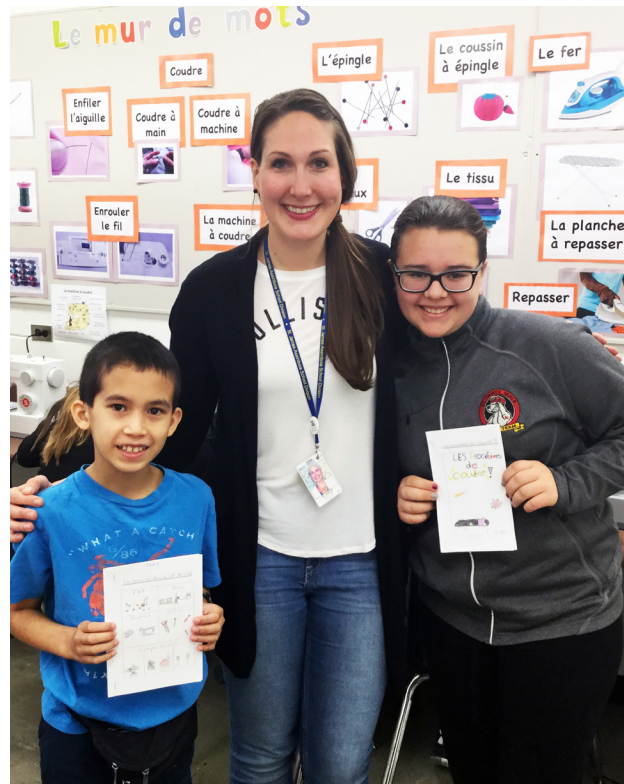
"Sandra confirmed that what we do in our classrooms does indeed work," said Grade 6 teacher Mme McKenzie.

Students are continually encouraged to see themselves as readers and writers. On the first day of classes, Mme Careen's students celebrated International Literacy Day as they were invited to bring their favourite books to school.

"I got to share my favourite picture book that my aunty gave me," said Grade 6 student Declan B., "and everyone thought it was really funny."



International Literacy Day took place on Friday, September 8, which was also the first day of classes at Ness Middle School. Mme Careen's class brought in a collection of diverse titles to share with their peers, as seen above.



Two Ness Middle School students showcasing the French safety procedures books they created in Home Economics. From the left: student Felix R., teacher Mme Schmidt, and student Pyper V.

But literacy extends far beyond the English and French language arts classrooms. For instance, Mme Schmidt's students in home economics have just published a French-language safety procedures book.

"I noticed we didn't have any sewing safety books written in French, so we wrote one together," explained Mme Schmidt.

Teachers and staff are also sharing their personal reading lives to help grow student connections and encourage reading identities within the school. For instance, at the triad conferences at the start of the school year, many families stopped to read the large bulletin board display, which was decorated with blurbs and titles of the staff's favourite summer reads.

"Having so many books in my class," explained Grade 7 student Lennon Y., "definitely helped me to be a better reader."

Submitted by Teacher Jon Sorokowski

## Discovering Multiple Intelligences at Crestview

During the 2016-17 school year, all students at Crestview School spent a lot of time practicing mindfulness and learning about the 6 Cs – Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Character and Citizenship. Entering the 2017-18 school year with their tool kits full of strategies and understandings about these concepts, it is very evident they are ready to tackle a very important concept – learning about their own identities as learners in order to achieve their highest potentials.

This year, students are beginning a journey towards understanding that there are many different ways to be a learner. When students understand that we are all different in our learning styles, we can appreciate one another and depend on one another to collaborate more effectively. This collaborative efficacy can be so powerful! Students are identifying their strengths by learning about Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences.

In each class, students are first identifying their strengths as learners and then working together to prepare their own multiple intelligences brain made out of plasticine. This 3D visual helps students identify who in their learning community they can go to for assistance in a specific situation. For example, if a student needs help creating a diagram, they can reach out to a classmate with visual-spatial learning strengths. Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences include the following areas: musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

Understanding we are all unique also leads to higher levels of empathy. In turn, higher levels of empathy lead to more compassionate learning communities. When we support our students to feel calm, happy and safe to take risks among their peers without failure, we support their learning across curriculum.

Submitted by Vice Principal Bev Stephenson and Principal Jenness Moffatt



Grade 4 Crestview student Jamie-Lynn W. and Grade 5 student Nathan E. exploring Howard Gardner's intelligence wheel.



## A Sustainable Garden sprouts up over summer at Collège Sturgeon Heights

Growing a sustainable school garden has many advantages for both staff and students. Not only does it allow for students to participate in hands-on learning connecting the curriculum with real life experience, it also takes students outdoors to enjoy the benefits of looking after a garden and seeing firsthand how a seed becomes an edible food.

Staff and students at Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate (CSHC) were fortunate to receive a grant from Nutrients for Life that covered the costs associated with building six garden beds. Teachers and students from the welding and wood technology programs helped to build the beds and a donation from Unique Soils saw the beds ready for planting in late May. Staff and students then spent time planting seeds, watering and caring for the garden in June, July and August. Gabrielle V., a Grade 12 CSHC student, is one of the students who volunteered to help look after the garden over the summer months alongside a few teachers.

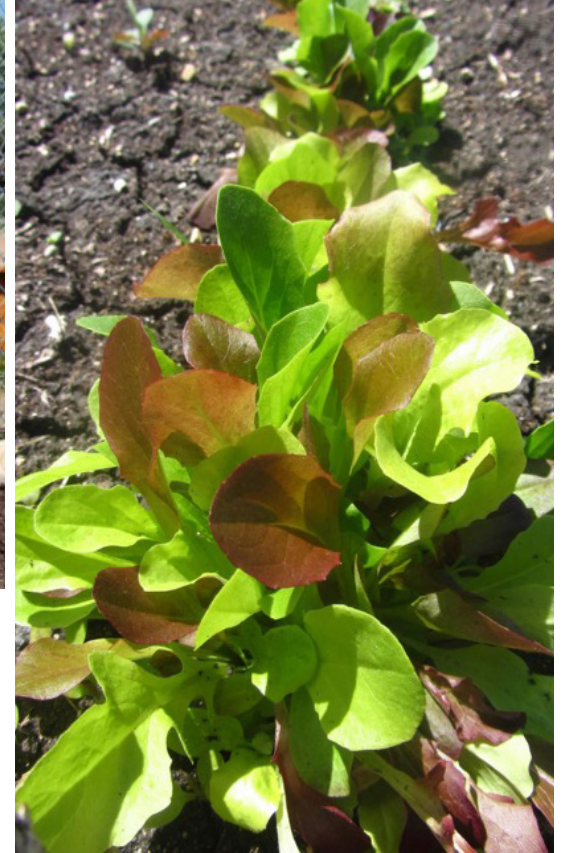
“As an IB student, school can be fast paced,” said Gabrielle. “Looking after the sustainable garden taught me patience, because things took time to grow. It also improved my diet and got me spending more time outside.”

The gardening team planted carrots, beets, corn, spinach, peas, beans, sunflowers, tomatoes, herbs and much more. The school is looking forward to using the



garden in the fall to remind students where their food comes from and to create opportunities for teachers to take their classes outside to learn in the garden. From geography to photography, there are many opportunities to connect the curriculum with a sustainable outdoor garden. In future, CSHC hopes to expand the garden to create an outdoor classroom to benefit students, staff and the surrounding community.

*Submitted by Teacher Jennifer Peters*



## New Outdoor Learning Area at Athlone

The idea for a new outdoor learning area at Athlone School started over three years ago when a committee of parents and teachers surveyed the school community. The survey revealed families wanted an outdoor space that would enrich the play and learning experience of Athlone students. With a goal in mind and the support of the principal, parent council began meeting with community groups who had developed outdoor learning areas and also gathering feedback from the Athlone community about what they wanted to see in the outdoor space. Parent council prepared a concept plan for the area, developed cost estimates, met with contractors, made presentations, and wrote grant applications; all while the Athlone community continued to fundraise to make the concept plan a reality.

When shovels started turning over the dirt, a very dedicated group of parents worked alongside the hired contractor to see the vision through to completion. After a lot of hard work and dedication, Athlone now has: a talking circle for outdoor lessons and discussions; stone pavers and logs for climbing, sitting, and balancing; 22 newly planted trees that will develop into a beautiful shady area for relief from the hot sun; and various other decorative stones and boulders for playing around and sitting on.

The playground provides children of all abilities with a wonderful opportunity to develop their physical and social skills. Children run, play, climb, slide, and swing on the playground, but they also share, cooperate, and communicate. It allows them to use their imagination, to be creative and to collaborate with one another.

“I think it is lovely to see that we now have spaces, like our talking circle, which provide areas for different kinds of activities,” said Grade 1 teacher Mrs. Whitely. “I have seen students bringing out books, or little notepads and sitting on the rocks at recess enjoying the new space.”

Grade 2 teacher Mr. Young says he grew up in the country and remembers after school play as being all about nature.

“I find it valuable to see our students getting the play opportunities that I had, whether it is hopping from rock to rock or



jumping on logs,” said Mr. Young.

The students are also big fans of the new space. While Grade 1 student Bailey B. says she enjoys sitting on the rocks and talking to her friends, Grade 2 student Kim N. says she likes trying to jump from log to log. Two Grade 3 and 4 students, Jacob C. and Darius W., also shared their thoughts saying “the rocks are great and the trees are nice and green.”

Athlone School would like to pay a special thanks to our granting organizations - Investors Group, The City of Winnipeg (Councillor Scott Gillingham), and St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

This project was possible due to the tremendous support of the community that contributed to Athlone’s fundraisers and made donations. It was also possible because of the support of Athlone’s principal, the St. James-Assiniboia School Division Senior Administration, the facilities and maintenance department, and the entire St. James-Assiniboia School Board. Most importantly, the project was made possible because of the hard work and commitment of our parent council who always believed it was in the best interest of Athlone’s students, their families and the surrounding community.

The new outdoor learning area at Athlone School will benefit the students by providing various learning opportunities in all kinds of subject areas and many chances to play and have fun together in a natural environment. It has the potential to be not only a benefit for Athlone students of today but for countless generations of students to come.

## Strathmillan gains greenery and space

The official opening ceremony for Strathmillan School occurred on March 3, 1954. By the fall of 1954, six more classrooms had been added to the structure and, in 1955, the central part was built with twelve more classrooms. An east wing containing twelve classrooms was also added in 1961. Although the building hasn’t changed too much recently, we are excited to share that our school courtyard received a fantastic makeover during the summer.

Transforming what was previously a stone-filled courtyard into a healthy greenspace, the area has become an extension of the learning environment. The benefits of outdoor learning spaces have already become apparent, including an increase in physical development, capability and activity.

Ms. Pattie’s Grade 5 class participated in a shared writing exercise with the courtyard as their focus. The class generated the following response:

“We want to thank the Division maintenance crew for the work they did in our courtyard this summer. It looks so inviting and relaxing because of the new grass. We cannot wait to use it! We will be able to read, work and relax outside. Thank you from Room 12.”

Most importantly, the courtyard outdoor learning space will also provide many opportunities for students and staff to interact outdoors, learn together and enhance everyone’s appreciation of nature.

*Submitted by Room 12 and Principal Heather Palmer*



# CONGRATULATIONS

## Mall in the Hall at Strathmillan raises \$4,500 for a local charity

At the end of the 2016-17 school year, Room 13 and Room 14 at Strathmillan School hosted an entrepreneurial event called Mall in the Hall. As part of the Entrepreneurial Adventure program, a branch of the Learning Partnership, students are encouraged to create their own businesses and learn to operate them from start to finish. According to the Learning Partnership website, the program is designed to “spark students natural curiosity, intelligence and passion to seize an opportunity to take their ideas to market and discover just what they can do!”

The Grades 3, 4 and 5 students at Strathmillan School collaborated and brainstormed ideas to decide which products/ items they would like to sell at the upcoming market at their school. The students expressed how they enjoyed being “put in charge” and liked being able to make decisions as to what was best for their own business. While students worked independently and in partners to create their business ventures, all 45 students joined forces to select a charity for the event. The students decided to raise funds for The Canadian Centre for Child Protection (formerly known as ChildFind Manitoba) and prepared a short statement explaining why they selected this organization:

“We couldn’t imagine being lost or taken from our families and wanted to help make sure it doesn’t happen to any other kids.”

At the event held on May 26, the hallways inside Strathmillan became a busy marketplace. With more than 20 booths, the students showcased their business and creativity skills in front of the local community. The booths ranged from hair wrapping/styling to knitted Pokemon and even personalized buttons. The Mall in the Hall event also featured plenty of food, family-friendly activities and a movie theatre. While this was a first time event for the school, these young entrepreneurs worked hard to ensure the event was a success. Mall in the Hall raised



an impressive \$4,500 for The Canadian Centre for Child Protection. In addition, local radio host Ace Burpee and storyteller Jamie Oliveria stopped by to visit the event.

Congratulations to all of the students who participated and laboured to create original entrepreneurial enterprises!

*Submitted by Strathmillan students and Principal Heather Palmer*

## SJASD choirs recognized by National Festival

This year, Choral Director Avonlea Armstrong-Green decided to enter the St. James-Assiniboia Senior Divisional Choir, as well as the Sturgeon Heights Vocal Jazz Group called “In the Heights,” into the National Class.

“This was our first time entering a National Class and I had no idea what to expect,” said director and teacher Armstrong-Green. “It’s a bit funny the way it works because after your initial performance, you don’t actually sing at the Provincial and National Level, just your recordings are used.”

For the National category, a recording of each choir’s performance is recorded at the Winnipeg Music Festival and if recommended, this recording can be submitted forward to the Provincial and National level. Both SJASD choirs were recommended to the Provincial Music and Arts Festival, and then further selected to move on to the National Festival. At the 2017 National Music Festival, the two choirs earned second place in their respective categories as seen below:

- **St. James-Assiniboia Senior Divisional Choir** - 2nd Place in Class 102, George S. Mathieson for a community choir 19 years of age and under
- **Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate Choir “In the Heights”** - 2nd Place in Class 103, Paul J. Bourret for a School Choir 19 years of age and under

Armstrong-Green says her students work exceptionally hard for every performance and that the recognition at the Provincial and National level is “a feather in their caps, but not the reason they work so hard.”

Choir member Emma L. says it was nice to hear they got second place but singing is what it’s about. She mentioned how the memories involved, the friends and building their skills matter more than the accolades.

“The community of our vocal jazz group last year really contributed to our successes,” said Caleb R., a member of both choirs. “We were all friends and it was a great environment to learn and grow in.”

Armstrong-Green expresses how her students are dedicated singers who allow her to push and challenge them all year long. Congratulations to both choirs on their successes in the National Class and we anticipate many more great performances in the year ahead. Pictured in the top right corner is a group of “In the Heights” members and pictured to the right is the St. James-Assiniboia Senior Divisional Choir. Amazing job by all!



## Warrior earns Top Provincial finish in the CAP Physics Contest

Westwood Collegiate graduate Mike A. scored Top 10 in the province in the high school CAP (Canadian Association of Physicists) Physics contest. The CAP high school exam is based upon an internationally recognized syllabus, the I.B. Physics Higher Core Curriculum and is intentionally a high level contest. Only the top students from each school are expected to take part in the exam and among them, only a handful of students in Canada are expected to finish the CAP Exam in the allotted time. Students from only four schools placed in the Top 10 in Manitoba out of more than 100 students writing. A huge congratulations to Westwood Collegiate graduate Mike A. on this outstanding achievement and an extended congratulations to his teacher, Mr. Johnson, both pictured to the right at the awards ceremony hosted by the University of Manitoba.



## A Teacher's Journey to Foster a Growth Mindset at Lincoln Middle School

"I can't write this article."

"There is no way I can write something people will want to read."

"I am not a gifted writer and it will show."

These are just a few of the self-defeating phrases that crossed Ms. Stewart's mind over the last few weeks as she began brainstorming ideas for this article. Without realizing it, she had sabotaged her efforts before she even began. With that recognition, the Lincoln Middle School teacher decided to focus the article on an educational theory that has gained momentum in recent years called Growth Mindset.

What is a 'growth mindset' and what does it mean for teachers and learners? Carol Dweck, one of the world's leading researchers in motivation defines growth mindset as the mental frame of mind in which a person recognizes that his or her abilities can be developed with hard-work and perseverance and that great achievements require years of passionate practice. On the other hand, a fixed mindset is one in which a person believes his or her intelligence and talent are fixed traits, regardless of how much effort they put in. The mindset we hold at any given time, or in different situations, can often be heard in our internal monologue and this self talk can be a determining factor in our successes. Dweck also believes in the value of mistakes and the opportunity they provide for growth.

"Parents and teachers can engender a growth mind-set in children by praising them for their persistence or strategies (rather than for their intelligence), by telling success stories that emphasize hard work and love of learning, and by teaching them about the brain as a learning machine." (Dweck, 2015)

When Ms. Stewart initially started writing this article, she exhibited a fixed mindset. If an educated adult and teacher can demonstrate a negative internal monologue when faced with a challenge, imagine what goes through the minds of young learners, especially the ones who are struggling. These learners are already starting to solidify their judgments about their own learning abilities and many of these judgments are negative ones. At this point, Ms. Stewart decided to make shifting her students' mindsets a major goal for this school year, in hopes of creating a love of learning and therefore improve the achievement of her students.

"After some research, it became clear to me that before you can change someone's mindset, you must first make them aware of it," explained Ms. Stewart.

In her classroom, she presented a few challenging but rewarding collaborative tasks, such as a paper folding challenge. Ms. Stewart and her student teacher walked around the room observing and recording words students expressed out loud as they grappled with the task in front of them. Here are some of the phrases they heard:

"What if I get it wrong?"

"This doesn't make sense."

"This is impossible."

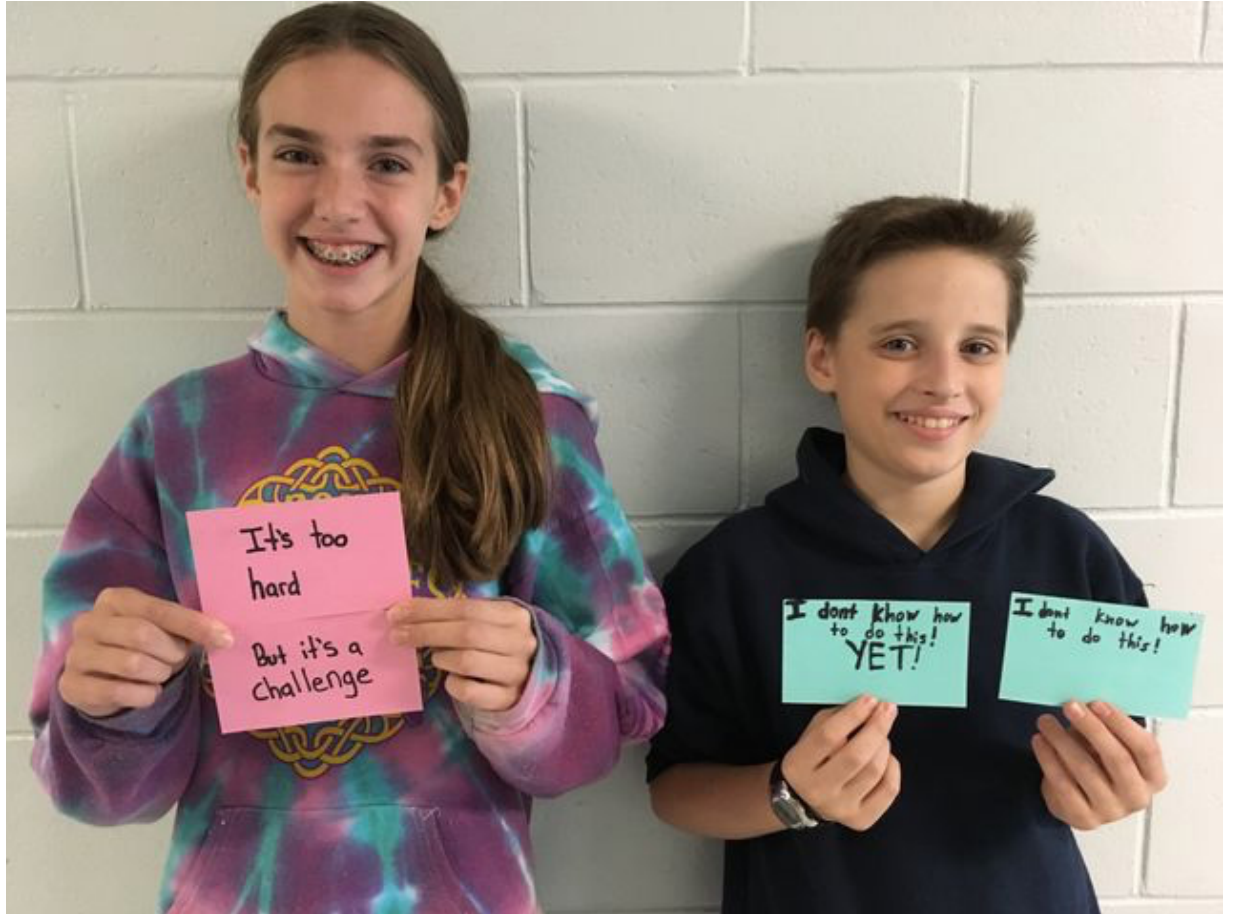
"Can you just tell me how?"

"I messed up!"

"It's too hard."

"I just know I'll wreck this one too."

This negative internal monologue had to change. After looking at this list of statements, the class dis-



cussed how to revise them to reflect a growth mindset when faced with a new challenge. For example, "I can't do this," becomes "I can't do this yet, but I'll keep trying." The students then posted these pairs of positive and negative statements on the front bulletin board to remind them of the many positive ways they can talk to themselves when faced with a difficult task or project.

After this initial challenge, Ms. Stewart spent some time exploring student mindsets in Math class as well.

"I felt this would be valuable as there are many students who have already decided they are "not a math person" and believe math is too hard for them," said Ms. Stewart.

For a week, her students watched videos and absorbed math lessons from Jo Boaler's "Week of Inspirational Math" on youcubed.org. The videos focus on the brain and its capacity for learning and growth. The tasks were open-ended, hands-on and collaborative. As a result, the students became a little more open minded about their own math abilities after learning about brain science and seeing that everyone is capable of being "a math person." Students even stayed behind after the bell rang to try just one more idea or check their thinking with others. When asked for feedback after these lessons, students enthusiastically volunteered that they loved these deep thinking tasks that required hands-on teamwork and "thinking outside the box."

"I saw attitudes change from reluctance in completing math worksheets to energized discussions explaining and proving their thinking in higher level tasks."

As the school year continues, Ms. Stewart is excited to further educate her students about how their brains learn to create the understanding that they can always get smarter, opt for positive self-talk and persevere through new challenges. The goal is to

see all students advance their learning and grow their perceptions of their individual abilities.

"If we foster a growth mindset in our homes and schools...we will give our children the tools to succeed in their pursuits and to become productive workers and citizens." (Dweck, 2015)

Submitted by Teacher Ms. Stewart



Ms. Stewart, Department Head and Art Teacher at Lincoln Middle School, is determined to help her students foster a growth mindset, allowing them to believe more strongly in their own capabilities and practice a positive internal monologue. The book above, *Ish* by Peter Reynolds, is a powerful story Ms. Stewart shares with her students at the start of each new year to aid in this endeavour. Each year, students say the message conveyed in *Ish* is that art is not about perfection or being right, but that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. However, her students still struggle to apply these ideas to their own artwork and creative processes. This book is only one of the many tools Ms. Stewart is using to help eliminate fixed mindsets and teach her students about their continually evolving brains and talents.

## Take Our Kids to Work Day

*"The program supports career development by helping students connect school, the world of work, and their own futures."*

**- The Learning Partnership**

Take our Kids to Work Day is an annual Canada-wide event where Grade 9 students enter the workforce for one day to gain experience, as well as insight, into future career possibilities.

A family member, friend, relative or local volunteer hosts a student at their place of work and introduces them to that specific job environment. Each year, this event is held on the first Wednesday in November. This year Take Our Kids to Work Day is on November 1st.

Thank you to all of our local employers. We appreciate your cooperation and support on this important day. We hope all of our Grade 9 students enjoy this experience and are able to take away something valuable.

For more information or if employers would like to register for Take Our Kids to Work Day, please visit: <http://www.thelearningpartnership.ca/>



## CONTACT

Contact is published four times per year for friends of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

Please send your letter to:

**Jen Cameron, Editor**  
**St. James-Assiniboia School Division**  
 2574 Portage Avenue  
 Winnipeg, MB R3J 0H8  
 Tel: (204) 888-7951