

St. James-Assiniboia School Division

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2024–2025



Message from the Chair

Dear caregivers, students, staff,
and the wider community,

Every four years, your democratically elected Board of Trustees is tasked with setting the strategic direction for St. James-Assiniboia School Division. The strategic plan that results is used by members of the Division's Senior Administration Team to set system goals over the life of the plan.

One way we share progress toward these goals is through the Report to the Community. In this report, you'll see examples of the outstanding work happening across our schools. We are proud of the dedication and commitment of our staff, whose efforts make these achievements possible.

I would like to highlight three accomplishments over the past year that would not have been possible without their careful attention to teaching and learning in SJASD. Thanks to their work:



1. We Are Strengthening Literacy and Numeracy

Our classrooms focus on building strong foundational skills. Common assessment tasks ensure consistent grade-level expectations across the Division. School teams analyze this data alongside other sources to monitor student progress and guide instruction effectively.

2. We Are Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our schools offer targeted programs and diverse learning experiences that encourage students to explore their interests and develop confidence. Staff play a vital role in fostering resilience and helping students feel capable and supported.

3. We Are Celebrating Diversity Through Programming

We provide opportunities that meet the needs of our diverse student population—from e-gaming to high-altitude ballooning, Adapted Swim to Peaceful Village, *Concours d'Art Oratoire* to Divisional musicals and choirs. The range of experiences is truly remarkable.

These efforts reflect our vision—to provide a meaningful, inclusive, and caring educational environment that prepares students to be responsible citizens in a democratic society. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to create exceptional learning experiences for every student.

Sincerely,
Tara Smith
Chair of the SJASD Board of Trustees

SJASD Board of Trustees | 2025–26



Tara Smith, Chair
East Ward
tara.smith@sjasd.ca
204-996-3516



Angela Dunn, V.C.
East Ward
angela.dunn@sjasd.ca
204-979-7887

The School Board plays a **vital role** in guiding educational practices and learning experiences in SJASD. Nine elected Trustees **collaborate** with four members of Senior Administration to make informed decisions on programming, resources, staffing, budgets, and more to **best meet the needs of all students**. *The public is welcome to attend regular Board Meetings in-person or online.*



Fiona Shiells
West Ward
fiona.shiells@sjasd.ca
204-590-8352



Cheryl Smukowich
West Ward
cheryl.smukowich@sjasd.ca
204-885-0054



Sandy Lethbridge
West Ward
sandra.lethbridge@sjasd.ca
204-951-9686



Holly Hunter
East Ward
holly.hunter@sjasd.ca
204-232-8202



Michael Cabral
Centre Ward
michael.cabral@sjasd.ca
204-997-5021



Craig Glennie
Centre Ward
craig.glennie@sjasd.ca
431-293-3889



Rachelle Wood
Centre Ward
rachelle.wood@sjasd.ca
204-880-9692

Senior Administration



Jenness Moffatt
Superintendent/Chief
Executive Officer



Kim Kummen
Secretary-Treasurer/Chief
Financial Officer



Jordana Buckwold
Assistant Superintendent
Educational Programming



Jaime Siska
Assistant Superintendent
Education Planning and Policy

Senior Administration is composed of professional staff that oversee the **operational requirements** of the School Division. The **Superintendent/CEO, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO, and Assistant Superintendents** sit on the School Board as non-voting members of the School Board.

BRUCE BROWN
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
POTOULA LOCKEN
Director, Inclusion Support
Services and Accessibility

SANDRA MELO
Director, Curriculum, Assessment
and Professional Learning
CARROL HARVEY
Director, Human Resources

AL STECHISHIN
Director, Information Technology
BRENT MEHYDEN
Director, Facilities and Operations

MYLES POSELUZNEY
Manager, Maintenance
and Safety

By the Numbers

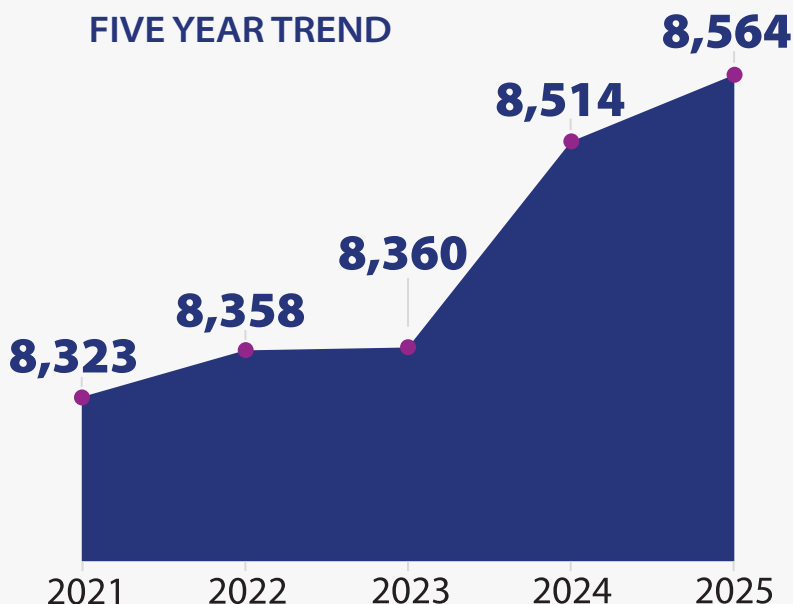
St. James-Assiniboia School Division is a progressive school division in west Winnipeg. Our **26** schools, including one in Headingley and one in Brooklands, represent the interests of over **8,500** children from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

We are committed to educational programs in which children can develop their natural capabilities to their fullest extent, building upon personal strengths and the richness of our area's culturally diverse population.

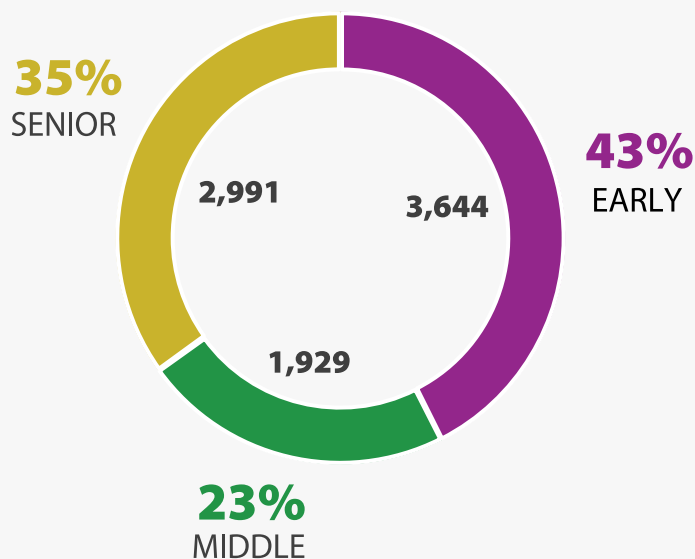
Our schools and educators work with community partners collaboratively to meet the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social needs of all children in our programs.

Student Enrollment

In 2025–26, **8,564** students enrolled in SJASD, an increase of 50 students from the previous year.

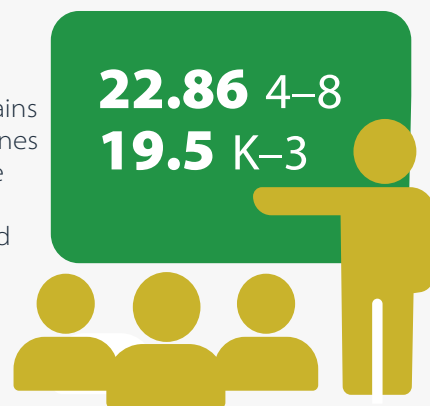


BY LEVEL 2025–26



Class Sizes

In 2025–26, SJASD remains within class size guidelines for 4–8, with an average of **22.86** students-per-homeroom teacher, and is within guidelines for K–3, with an average of **19.5** students-per-homeroom teacher.



Nutrition at a Glance

In January 2024, the Provincial Government announced the creation of a universally accessible Nutrition Program to help address student hunger and ensure equitable access to nutritious food in schools across Manitoba.

Since that time, SJASD has been working to strengthen its commitment to student wellbeing through the launch and expansion of Manitoba's Universal Nutrition Program in partnership with other levels of government.

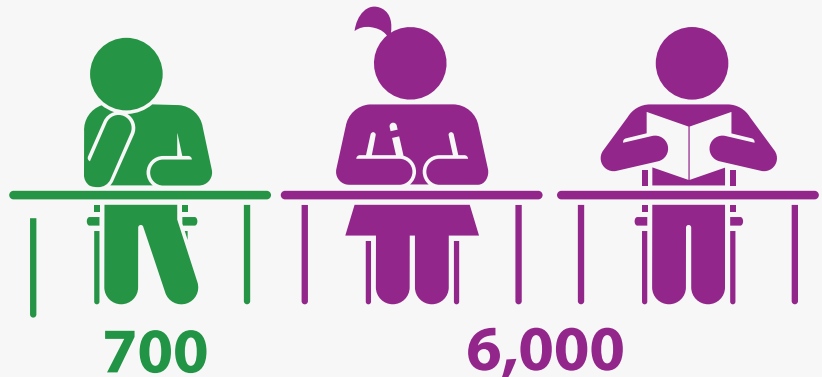
Every school in the Division now has a **dedicated food preparation space** and **refrigerators** to properly store perishable items. More than **80** SJASD staff members have completed their food safety handler's certification so far, ensuring the safe preparation and supervision of meals and snacks.

Whole fresh fruit is offered daily in all schools. In addition, many schools have **breakfast offerings** for students who choose to partake, **lunches** that can be readily made, as well as additional **snacks** (vegetables, muffins, yogurt, cheese, and more) that are made available throughout the day.

The Universal Nutrition Program continues to be **inclusive**, ensuring no student feels excluded or stigmatized for participating. Students in our schools can access nutritious food and beverages at **no cost**, regardless of their perceived need.

SJASD remains committed to aligning its food offerings with **Manitoba's nutrition guidelines**. Future priorities include sustainable packaging, environmentally-conscious serving practices, and reducing food waste.

HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE ACCESSING FOOD?



The average number of students that take part in a breakfast program each day.

The average number of students that access snacks every day.

HOW MUCH FOOD IS SERVED?

4,300

The average number of fresh, whole oranges, apples, and bannanas served in SJASD each day.



WHAT RESOURCES ARE REQUIRED?



\$400 to \$900

The average weekly cost of purchasing food for a small or large school respectively in 2025–26.



37

Number of extra staff hired to support Nutrition Programs in all schools.

10 to 20 hrs

The average number of hours per week dedicated to Nutrition Programs:

Early: 20 hrs
Middle: 15 hrs
Senior: 10 hrs



St. James-Assiniboia School Division




The following **Strategic Plan** was developed over a year-long process that included extensive community consultations with approximately 157 members of the public in the spring of 2023. These areas of focus formalize key priorities for teaching and learning in the Division and will guide decisions and resources for school improvement over the next four years. *Thank you to community members who took part in this important project.*

Mission

We are a leading and innovative learning community that will enable students to succeed as life-long learners in our ever-changing world.

Vision

We aim to provide a meaningful, inclusive, and caring educational environment so that students are prepared to be responsible citizens in a democratic society.

FOCUS AREAS		
<div><h3>SUCCESS FOR EACH LEARNER</h3><p>We recognize the importance of each child and their own unique learning needs. Programming and opportunities need to be engaging and relevant to the student. Success is a broad term, and it means different things to different students. At the end of their education journey, we want students to have a sense of dignity, courage, and capability in addition to feeling that they have the skills and abilities to lead them to a future of possibilities. We believe that a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy is critical for future success.</p><p>PRIORITIES</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant and meaningful literacy and numeracy instruction across the curriculum.• Equitable and inclusive academic, social, and emotional programming for learners.• The development of lifelong skills: Citizenship, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Connection to Self, Collaboration, and Communication.</div>	<div><h3>MA MAWI ANOKIITAW MIINAWAA WE WILL WORK TOGETHER AGAIN</h3><p>We believe in creating safe and inclusive environments that are not only representative of Indigenous cultures, languages, and histories, but also demonstrate the commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. It is a priority to build partnerships that recognize the importance of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other Indigenous peoples playing a prominent role in the teachings that we bring to schools.</p><p>PRIORITIES</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culturally safe environments where Indigenous students, families, and community feel welcomed and connected.• Authentic learning opportunities with students and staff to learn and value Indigenous cultures, languages, knowledges, and true history.• Holistic growth for living in a Good Way.*</div>	<div><h3>MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING</h3><p>There is a growing need to support the mental health and well-being of all students and staff. The first step in this journey is reaffirming the necessity that our schools are inclusive, represent the diversity of our community, and continuously model a culture of care. Our programming includes intentional strategies to promote strong personal mental and physical health to build resilience. Throughout these priorities, there is a constant thread of connections, partnerships, and a focus on relationships which will strengthen our sense of well-being as a healthy community.</p><p>PRIORITIES</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive mental health for students through defined learning and proactive programming.• Strong connections that nourish the well-being of students, staff, and families.• Culture and climate of inclusivity in all schools.</div>

*A Good Way is a way to live your life day to day. It is respecting others, being mindful of the guidance we are given, taking care of yourself, others, the land and water. It means walking with respect and humility, learning and listening so we are doing good for ourselves, our families and our community. (Source: Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Schools Initiative Advisory Council, Manitoba Education, https://www.edugov.mb.ca/iid/docs/elders_knowledge_keepers_guidelines.pdf).

Strategic Plan 2023–2027

THIS DOCUMENT has been developed through a year-long process of analysis, dialogue, and collaboration, led by our Board of Trustees. Our Division's data, Manitoba Education priorities, and consultation with the Indigenous Advisory Council, school administrators, staff, students, parents/caregivers, and community members shaped the creation of a set of **five Focus Areas**, each with **three Priorities**.

These will:

- Focus direction and action in areas that will make a difference for students, parents, staff, and communities,
- Support Continuous Improvement planning to shape system goals and metrics for success,
- Frame the reporting of results to students, parents, communities, and other partners,
- Support the Division with the allocation of resources in a fiscally responsible manner, and
- Promote and support community partnerships.

SUPPORTING AND CELEBRATING OUR STUDENTS



Our schools are welcoming, caring, and safe for all children, staff, and families. Students are supported and their **successes are continuously celebrated**.

Opportunities allow for students to explore their own individual areas of passion and interest to promote engagement and learning. Our Division is comprised of **staff and students from diverse communities** and we are committed to honouring and **celebrating all of our diversity**, visible or invisible.

PRIORITIES

- **Diverse programming** and learning experiences which enable students to grow and explore their interests.
- School environments that **represent the diversity of our community**.
- **Celebration of student success** in reaching their personal learning goals.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Effective communication is essential in supporting and connecting students and families to schools. Communication references a series of ongoing and connected interactions throughout a student's school year and their educational journey.

Parents and caregivers actively participate and feel involved in school experiences with their children. **Community partners** create a network of support that enriches the learning for all children.

PRIORITIES

- **Ongoing communication** and collaboration with families and caregivers.
- **Family and caregiver participation** in the school lives of their children.
- Relationships with **community partners**.

The Strategic Plan is a living document and must be responsive to factors that may change in our educational, political, and financial environment. We are committed to renewing our focus each year to ensure our direction and planning are serving our school communities.

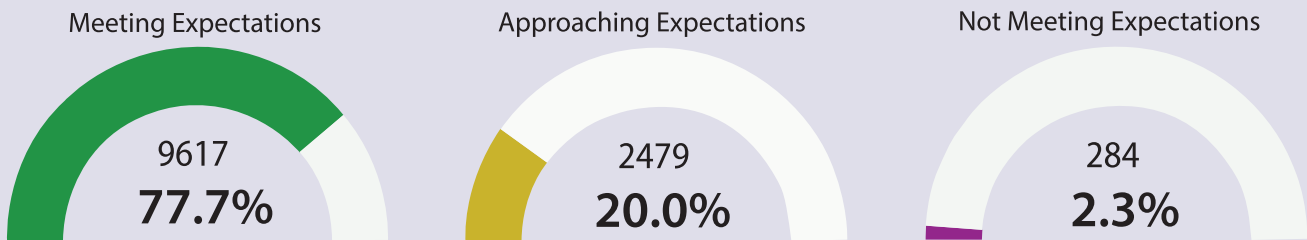
Success for Each Learner



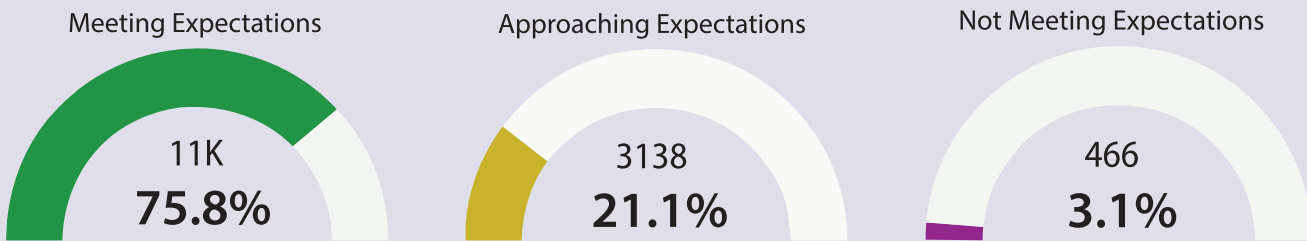
Engaging Learners & Building Skills

SJASD believes in providing engaging and relevant instruction to students that enhances their skills and abilities, hones their foundational literacy and numeracy skills, builds their confidence, and prepares them for success in an ever-changing world.

Literacy



Numeracy



An Evening of Math

On March 19, 2025, caregivers were invited to **Athlone School** to see some of the ways that educators teach math to students. Math Night wasn't just about teachers and students showing their work. It was also a chance to share some fun ways for families to do math together at home, and celebrate that "Math is Everywhere."





A Snowy Display

Last year, Librarian Jocelyn Oliver from **Heritage School** reproduced an image from classic 1962 children's book *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats outside the school's library. The image was instantly recognizable, and a reminder that certain stories can stay with us long after we first encounter them. While picture books are often associated with early childhood, their impact goes far beyond the primary years. As literacy tools that are accessible, engaging, and thought provoking, they are a powerful way to communicate ideas at any age.

RESULTS FOR 2024–25

Average Success Of Students In Each Level Of Proficiency In Grades 1–8.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of student results in year-end achievement, the overall success rate of all students in SJASD in numeracy and literacy categories meets the aspirational and commonly used minimum of 75 per cent of students meeting year-end expectations. Overall, we aspire to increase the number of students in the "meeting expectations" proficiency level (Green: 70–100 per cent).

GOALS FOR 2025–26

The Board of Trustees has received and reviewed the Strategic Plan Report to learn about the achievement of students in the priority areas of Literacy, Numeracy. Our Board and Division commitment to continuous improvement for the 2025–2026 school year focuses on:

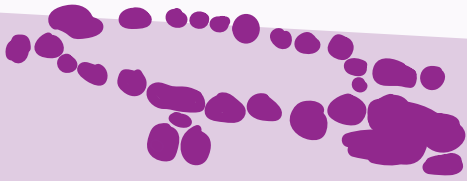
- **Early Literacy Learning for Students in Grades 1–3.** Ensuring a strong foundation for reading and writing development for students, with universal reading screening, early intervention, strong classroom structured literacy instruction, and high levels of literacy achievement for all students.
- **Strengthened Numeracy Learning for Students in Grades 6–8.** Supporting students in the learning of mathematics across all levels, with a specific focus on supporting students in the Middle Years with a deep understanding of numeracy concepts, skills for problem solving, and mental math to support their success in learning more complex mathematics and applying math learning in various subject areas and real-life contexts.



Cuddle Up & Read

Students at **Buchanan School** had a blast reading their favourite stories to their family members at the school's Cuddle Up & Read Night on February 27, 2025. The evening helped share the love of reading with the whole community, while fostering and reinforcing positive relationships with books. The evening also featured prizes, milk and cookies, and the option for students to curl up in their pjs.

Ma Mawi Anokiitaw Miinawaa/ We Will Work Together Again



Embedding Indigenous Knowledges

SJASD is committed to providing authentic, rich learning experiences for all students. To ensure that schools are inclusive and culturally responsive, First Nations, Red River Métis, and Inuit perspectives are integrated into the curriculum and the school community.

Introducing *Pimachiowin Aki*

Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate was proud to offer a new course to their Grade 10 students in 2024–25! *Pimachiowin Aki – The Land That Gives Life*, is a new, school-initiated course designed to strengthen student connections to the land and foster respect within our community. Developed in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 62 and 63 and guided by the *Mamāhtawisiwin* provincial policy framework, this course emphasizes Reconciliation, sustainability, and active citizenship.

Course participants engaged in theoretical, practical, and land-based learning experiences that highlight Indigenous worldviews, traditions, and knowledge systems. Through collaboration with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, field trips, storytelling, art, and critical discussions, students explored topics such as treaties, language and culture, health and wellness, and traditional practices.

Students gained an insight into Indigenous languages, cultural ceremonies, and land-based practices, fostering an appreciation for the interconnectedness of all life and the responsibility to protect the environment for future generations. Land-based activities included traditional medicine harvesting in Birds Hill Provincial Park, learning how to set snares and harvest rabbits, identifying the different types of animals we can find in the wilds of Manitoba, and how to construct a Red River cart.

By connecting students to the land and Indigenous knowledges, *Pimachiowin Aki* aims to prepare informed, responsible citizens committed to building a reconciliatory and sustainable future. This course is more than education—it is a step towards understanding, respect, and shared responsibility.



Animal Harvesting

SJASD students learn how to harvest rabbits and process them with Indigenous land-based educator Jason Parenteau.

Learning Indigenous Ways of Knowing

On June 10, **Bruce Middle School** students took part in the school's first ever Indigenous Peoples Day Summit.

The event kicked off with a TEAMS call with Indigenous Elder and veteran Bill Shead, followed by 11 learning stations ranging from Red River cart construction to Inuit soap carvings. Principal Stacy Kent says the Summit allowed students to "engage in activities of their choosing" while providing them with a "wealth of experiences" to reflect on in the lead up to National Indigenous Peoples Day.

In Scott Templeton's homeroom, the Grade 6 teacher instructs students to make wampum belts that tell a story. The decorative belts were often used by Indigenous groups to mark agreements between peoples and tell unique stories. Traditionally, they were made of beads and used minimal colours and imagery. "While it may look like something really simple, there is a whole series of embedded messages in it," explains Scott, who is discovering

his own Métis heritage and helped organize the Summit.

Grade 8 Ukrainian Newcomers Nadiia S. and Fedir S.'s blue and white wampum belt symbolizes their journey to Canada. The bottom of the belt contains jagged lines—their time in the Ukraine. The middle—a straight blue path to Canada. The top—smooth lines reflecting a more peaceful life in Canada.

In the library, Gursheerat A. uses a brick beading technique to build an Indigenous-themed key chain. The Grade 6 student admits that brick beading is "kinda difficult."

Lorena Woodard, owner of CREE-active Treasures, demonstrates ladder and brick stitching using a rope and pool noodles cut into giant beads. Beading has helped her heal from intergenerational trauma and reclaim her Métis and Peguis First Nation heritage. "I know

"It was a day filled with learning & laughter; an experience that speaks to the heart of Middle Years education: building strong, healthy relationships between staff & students."

Stacy Kent,
Principal, Bruce Middle School

what it was like growing up, not having my Indigenous culture in my life," she explains.

In an instructional kitchen, students enjoy Indigenous-themed tacos made of fried bannock and ground bison, sprinkled with tomatoes, lettuce, and cheese. "Cooking was the first to fill up because the kids usually like the chance to cook," explains Home Economics teacher Colleen Ingram, adding that extra staff were brought in to support the station.

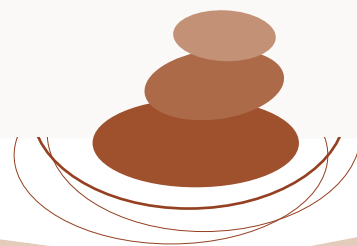
But how does it taste? "Amazing. I love it," says Grade 6 student Nulie C.-U., who makes pancakes at home but found frying bannock difficult. She had some help, but it was still her favourite part to eat.

Students wrap up the Summit by writing commitments to Reconciliation on paper feathers. "It was inspiring to see our students fully engaged in learning about new cultural traditions and stepping outside their comfort zones at the Summit. It was a day filled with learning and laughter; an experience that speaks to the heart of Middle Years education: building strong, healthy relationships between staff and students," explains Principal Kent.

(Pictured): Gursheerat A. learns to bead with Indigenous Education Team member Desirae Plesier-Burke.



Mental Health & Wellbeing



Supporting Student Wellness

Students with strong mental health and wellness are more resilient, and better able to recover from life's challenges. They're also better able to learn and explore with openness, compassion, and curiosity. Through varied programming, SJASD provides a culture of care for all students with a focus on supports, relationships, and wellbeing.

Project Improving Resilience

Last year, University of Manitoba research assistants released data analysis on the impact of SJASD's Teachers' Idea Fund project **Circle of Courage and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy**. The five-year, \$125,000 project is working to enhance the mental health and wellness skills of student participants through instruction in the resilience science of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) combined with the holistic, strengths-based perspectives of Indigenous teachings. Teachers and students are trained in these strategies, which are then reinforced in classroom activities throughout the year, promoting a growth mindset among students to help them reach their full potential.

Data analysis indicates that this approach results in a statistically significant improvement in resiliency assets. **Students are showing improvements in their ability to:**

- Resist peer pressure;
- Complete schoolwork; and

- Adapt to unexpected changes at school.

Participating schools also report that the wellness teachings embedded in the project are well-aligned with school goals and relevant to the lives of their students, leading to high levels of student engagement at every step, and with every lesson contained in the project.

Select classrooms have participated from **Strathmillan School, John Taylor Collegiate, École Ness, École Voyageur, Crestview School, and Jameswood Alternative School**. University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg Research Assistants continue to analyze the impact of the project. 2025–26 marks the final year of the project, which began in 2021. Other members of the TIF Project Team include staff from Educational Support Services and Indigenous Education, and community-based Knowledge Keepers.

Staying Well Workshops



About **162** SJASD caregivers and community members took in **Staying Well Workshops** last year. The virtual

sessions support student wellness by informing attendees about specific concerns that might be impacting student success. Last year's sessions focused on technology and the developing brain, power struggles and meltdowns, and supporting children with autism. Led by Educational Support Services staff, caregivers left with coping strategies to assist their struggling student. View past sessions on YouTube.

From Programs to Programming

"Talker Club" is creating a joyful environment at **Heritage School** for students who face difficulties with expression.

SJASD has a growing number of students using Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC). AAC devices are tools designed to enhance communication for people who face difficulties speaking or expressing themselves through traditional means.

"At Heritage School, we've worked hard to create an inclusive environment where students who use AACs see themselves represented and feel supported by their peers and all staff," says Jennifer Tsouras, SJASD Speech-Language Pathologist.

To support AAC users, Jennifer created "Talker Club" in collaboration with Occupational Therapist Alexa Kovacs, Resource Teachers Jessica Spearing and Erin Curtis, and strong support from Educational Assistants assigned to participating students.

Students that use AAC devices, or "talkers," to communicate come together each week to develop their skills and work on their individual goals through fun and engaging activities.

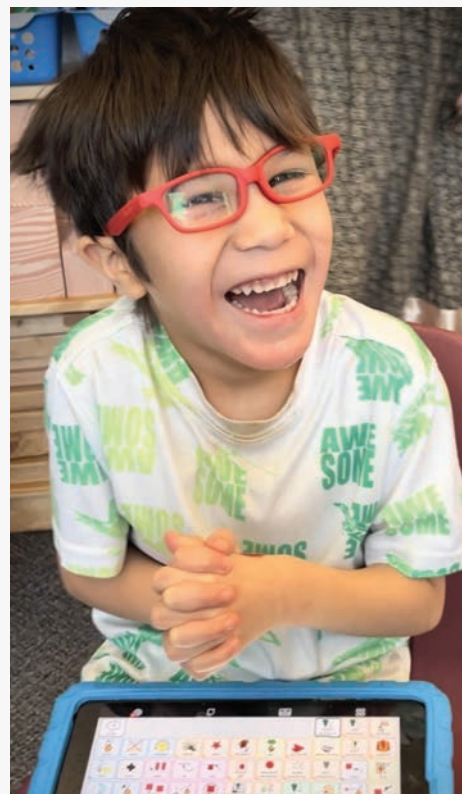
"It provides them with a sense of community and an authentic way to develop and practice their AAC skills," explains Jennifer.

Whether reading, singing, creating art, having a new sensory experience, or playing games, Jennifer says Talker Club is the highlight of the week for the students and adults supporting them. "Not only do our AAC users

have a lot of fun, but they're also becoming more active and confident communicators," she says.

Coordinator of Student Services Rute Mendes says Talker Club is a great example of how the Division is working to move away from strict programs, towards programming that can work towards meeting student needs and abilities.

"What makes Talker Club particularly effective is its collaborative, strength-based approach, where communication goals are embedded naturally within experiences that are motivating, relational, and meaningful for students. Rather



At Heritage School, we've worked hard to create an inclusive environment where students who use AACs see themselves represented and feel supported by their peers and all staff."

*Jennifer Tsouras,
Speech-Language Pathologist*

than removing students from learning environments or isolating skill development, programming is designed to support participation and connection," she says.

Rute explains that "programming" in SJASD refers to the intentional design of learning experiences, supports, and environments that respond to students as individuals, rather than placing students into fixed programs with predetermined expectations.

Across SJASD, schools are increasingly using similar programming approaches to support students with diverse learning, communication, behavioural, and social-emotional needs. These approaches include flexible groupings, targeted skill-building opportunities, and collaborative support designed around student strengths and goals, across grade levels and school contexts.

"When we focus on programming instead of programs, we create learning environments that are more responsive, inclusive, adaptable, and collaborative," says Rute. "This shift supports success not only for students who use AAC, but for all learners."

(Pictured): Heritage School student with AAC device or "talker."

Celebrating & Supporting Our Students



Creating a Welcoming Environment

SJASD strives to provide a welcoming, safe, caring, and inclusive environment for all students and staff. Individuals that see themselves reflected broadly in the school environment have a greater sense of belonging and are more likely to succeed academically, in their careers, and grow into responsible citizens.

Supporting Student Voice

In October of 2022, SJASD announced a new Administrator position to support Diversity and Equity work throughout the Division. Three years later, work continues to ensure that students from all identities, genders, backgrounds, traumas, abilities, as well as students from food-insecure families, are able to thrive in a fair, productive, and innovative educational system.

As part of this work, the Division conducts focus groups every two years with students and parents from traditionally oppressed groups. This valuable anecdotal perception data helps administrators identify specific areas of specific concern and inform targeted interventions, such as enhancing the availability of diverse literature so students can learn from and see themselves reflected in resources, and supporting the formation of relevant student groups.

SJASD continues to support Safe School Committees

in all 26 schools. Composed of students and staff, these committees help to create safe, inclusive, and caring school environments. While they have been in place since the early 2000s, they continue to provide teachers with anecdotal data from students to further enhance educator understanding and responsiveness.

Rounding out this work, are professional development sessions primarily with educators focusing on anti-racism and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). These sessions plus ongoing networking between staff members over DEI-related strategies and tactics have been an important part of integrating DEI into SJASD practices and equipping staff with the knowledge and skills needed to address inequities effectively.

While more work is needed, SJASD has the systems in place to continue listening, learning, and responding to our most vulnerable students and their families.

Day of Pink

This past April, staff and students at **École Assiniboine** learned about International Day of Pink—an annual observance dedicated to combatting bullying and discrimination. Administrator of Diversity & Equity Manuel Gomes spoke to one class about the importance of acceptance, and working to support an inclusive environment for staff and students at schools and in the wider community.



■ Staff Become “Open Books” at Human Library

On May 1, Grade 7 students from **Golden Gate Middle School** discovered the power of storytelling.

They participated in the first-ever Human Rights Human Library hosted within SJASD and featuring staff and community members.

The Human Library is a unique initiative where individuals—who are referred to as “human books”—share their lived experiences, perspectives, and personal journeys in a safe and inclusive space. Students—acting as “readers”—engage in open, respectful conversations with storytellers, gaining insights into the human condition that go beyond textbooks and traditional lessons.

“The format is designed to challenge stereotypes, foster empathy, and promote understanding through meaningful dialogue,” explains Manuel Gomes, Administrator of Diversity & Equity.

The idea to bring the Human Library to Golden Gate originated with Vice Principal Tammy Wilson,

who was inspired by a similar event in another school division. Together with teacher Stefania Vendramelli, along with support from Diversity & Equity, the event was brought to life with thoughtful adaptation to local needs and resources. The planning group also used the Human Library Toolkit from the Ontario Library Association to support their work.

“SJASD is home to a diverse and knowledgeable staff and community contacts, 20 of whom volunteered to serve as ‘human books.’ They spoke passionately on topics ranging from culture and human rights, to abilities, the arts, and literacy,” says Manuel.

Some shared their lived experiences as first-generation immigrants to Canada, while others discussed unique employment experiences, or what it’s like to be a minority in Canada.

“Golden Gate’s Human Library was a powerful reminder that every person has a story worth hearing, and that through listening, we can build a more compassionate and connected community.”

Manuel Gomes,
Administrator of Diversity & Equity

Throughout the morning, each human book met with small groups of students for approximately 20 minutes, telling their stories and allowing for focused and meaningful conversations.

This event was a natural extension of the students’ ongoing exploration of human rights this year, which also included a visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) in April. In preparation for the Human Library, students signed up for three sessions that resonated with them and came ready with thoughtful questions. After sessions wrapped up, students reflected on what they had learned and discussed the impact of these powerful stories with their peers.

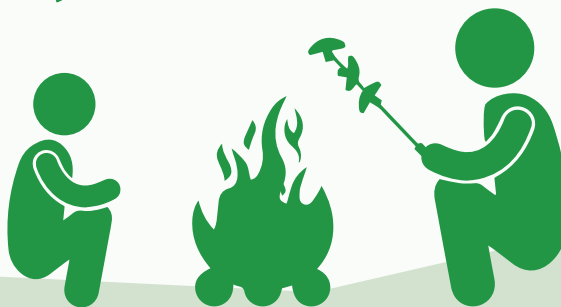
“Golden Gate’s Human Library was a powerful reminder that every person has a story worth hearing, and that through listening, we can build a more compassionate and connected community,” explains Manuel.

The Human Library began in Denmark in 2000, initiated by youth organization Stop the Violence.

(Pictured): Students listen to Golden Gate educator Lori Bell discuss how changes in women’s rights have impacted her family.



Family & Community Connections



Connecting with Community

SJASD believes that effective communication between school and home, the active participation of caregivers, and strong community partnerships strengthen the Division and the community, and enrich the learning for all children.

Demo Team Drops into Westwood

On a sunny day in September 2024, members of Transport and Rescue Squadron 435 parachuted into the centre of **Westwood Collegiate's** track field as hundreds of students looked on. The event was a great opportunity for students to learn about the skills and practices within their own back yard.

Squadron 435 operates out of Canadian Forces Base Winnipeg, just a few kilometres away. Every year, the Squadron undertakes parachute training drops to maintain skills. While some exercises take place in wilderness settings, others are linked to community events and bring exposure to the trade.

A CC130 Hercules aircraft dropped six Search and Rescue Technicians from the skies above Westwood that day at approximately 2,000 feet. About 700 spectators watched the demo drop, including Westwood Collegiate's entire student body, a number of classes from neighbouring **Sansome School**, and invited community members and caregivers.



Supporting Child Development

SJASD's Early Childhood Committee hosted a free webinar for caregivers last April, entitled **Let Them: Childhood IRL (in real life)**. The session looked at trends in childhood development and led caregivers through a discussion on a timeless approach to nurturing child development. Attendees heard from Sarah Juchnowski (School Psychologist), Charlene Mitchell (Speech-Language Pathologist) and Deidre Sagert (Early Years Support Teacher) and was geared to parents of children between one to 10. Caregivers left with information to help their children develop communication skills, emotional maturity, and coping/resilience in a modern context.

Spreading the Love of Cycling

At an assembly at **Stevenson-Britannia School** last December, Larkyn B. thanked Liz Lylyk for her new bike.

"Thank you for my new bike. I love it," said the non-verbal student through her communication button, with her mom Danica B. beaming in the background.

The Grade 4 student recently grew out of her old bike. The new one will help Larkyn enjoy some of her favourite activities—music, being around her peers, and cycling.

After a student performance, Liz Lylyk stepped forward to talk about her late son Nathan, who was born with a rare genetic condition. He received his first bike when he was three or four and loved it. He passed away in 2016.

Every year, Liz and her family and friends donate adaptive equipment to a deserving student through the Children's Rehabilitation Foundation (CRF) on his birthday. In 2024, "Nathan's Minions" raised \$5,410 via CRF's Cruising to Change Lives, an annual 1 or 3 km pledge-

driven event to help children and youth with disabilities live as independently as possible. The family's charitable work began when Nathan was still with them, and has continued ever since. December 16, 2024, would have marked Nathan's 19th birthday.

"It's a day we always want to celebrate. So this is a way to celebrate him. So instead of a gift for him, it's a gift for another kid," she explains. "Sometimes it's hard to talk about people who have passed, so this is a way to let us talk about him and keep his memory alive. It gives purpose and value to his life and his passing."

Most adaptive bikes cost approximately \$5,000 and are not covered by Manitoba Health. This creates barriers for families.

SJASD Physiotherapist Jackie Ogloza submitted Larkyn's equipment application to CRF,

"This is a way to let us talk about him and keep his memory alive."

*Liz Lylyk,
Community Fundraiser*

along with many others. She describes adaptive bikes as "her favourite" because they allow students like Larkyn to "access the community. It's not possible for so many families."

Jane Kidd-Hantscher, Executive Director of the Children's Rehabilitation Foundation, was touched by the assembly and works with Liz every year to determine a suitable candidate for the family's annual gift. The Manitoba-based charity receives hundreds of applications every year for bikes, ipads, chill-out chairs, and eye-gaze technology. She says bikes can be a "life-changing gift" for a child, with many strength and coordination benefits for the rider.

She adds that the Foundation typically donates \$350,000 to \$450,000 worth of adaptive equipment to children and communities each year, including 50 to 70 bikes. Manitoba has one of the highest diagnosis rates for childhood disability in the country.

CRF also presented adaptive bikes to three students at **Lakewood School, Strathmillan School, and Golden Gate Middle School**. Thanks to fundraising efforts from Winnipeg Averro's Female U18 AAA women's hockey team, CFR donated a fourth bike to **Lakewood School** for school-wide use. CRF-fundraised adaptive playground equipment was also installed at **Athlone School** in May 2025.

(Pictured): Larkyn B. takes her new bike for a spin as others look on.



Dollars and Sense

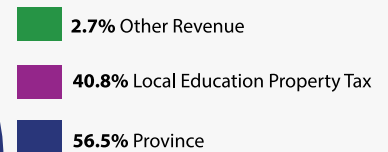
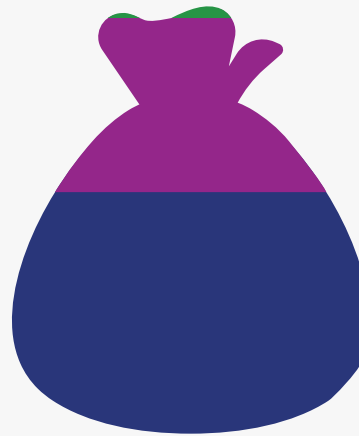
SJASD aims to provide the best learning experiences and opportunities for students, while maintaining the lowest possible cost to taxpayers. This balance is achieved by focusing on the Division's budget goals and considering any significant factors for a select budget year.

For the **2025-2026** school year, SJASD planned in consideration of the following circumstances: The Provincial Government provided SJASD with a **1.7 per cent** increase in provincial operating support, in addition to \$735,000 earmarked for a universal Nutrition Program, bringing total provincial funding to 2 per cent. The Province also advised school divisions they could once again increase the Special Requirement.

After consulting with the community, and factoring in the impact of a decrease in portioned assessment values on March 1, the Board of Trustees approved a balanced budget with an operating expenditure increase of **9 per cent** on March 4, 2025. This includes a education property tax increase of **6.2 per cent**. The 2025/26 budget invests in direct classroom instruction, small class sizes, and resourcing student needs.

Budget Goals

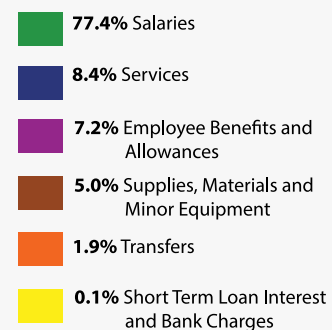
1. To maintain programs and quality.
2. To focus resources on the classroom.
3. To address the increasing maintenance/repair requirements of aging buildings.
4. To comply with new government requirements for education.
5. To comply with new government accessibility legislation.
6. To align the budget with the Strategic Plan of the Division.
7. To apply sustainable development principles.



Source of Revenue **\$143,577,061**

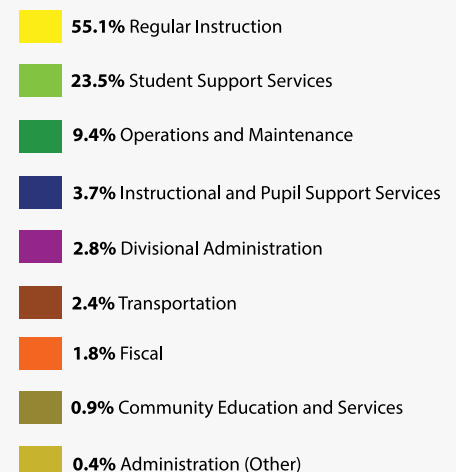
Expenditures **\$141,909,111**
(How each \$ is spent)

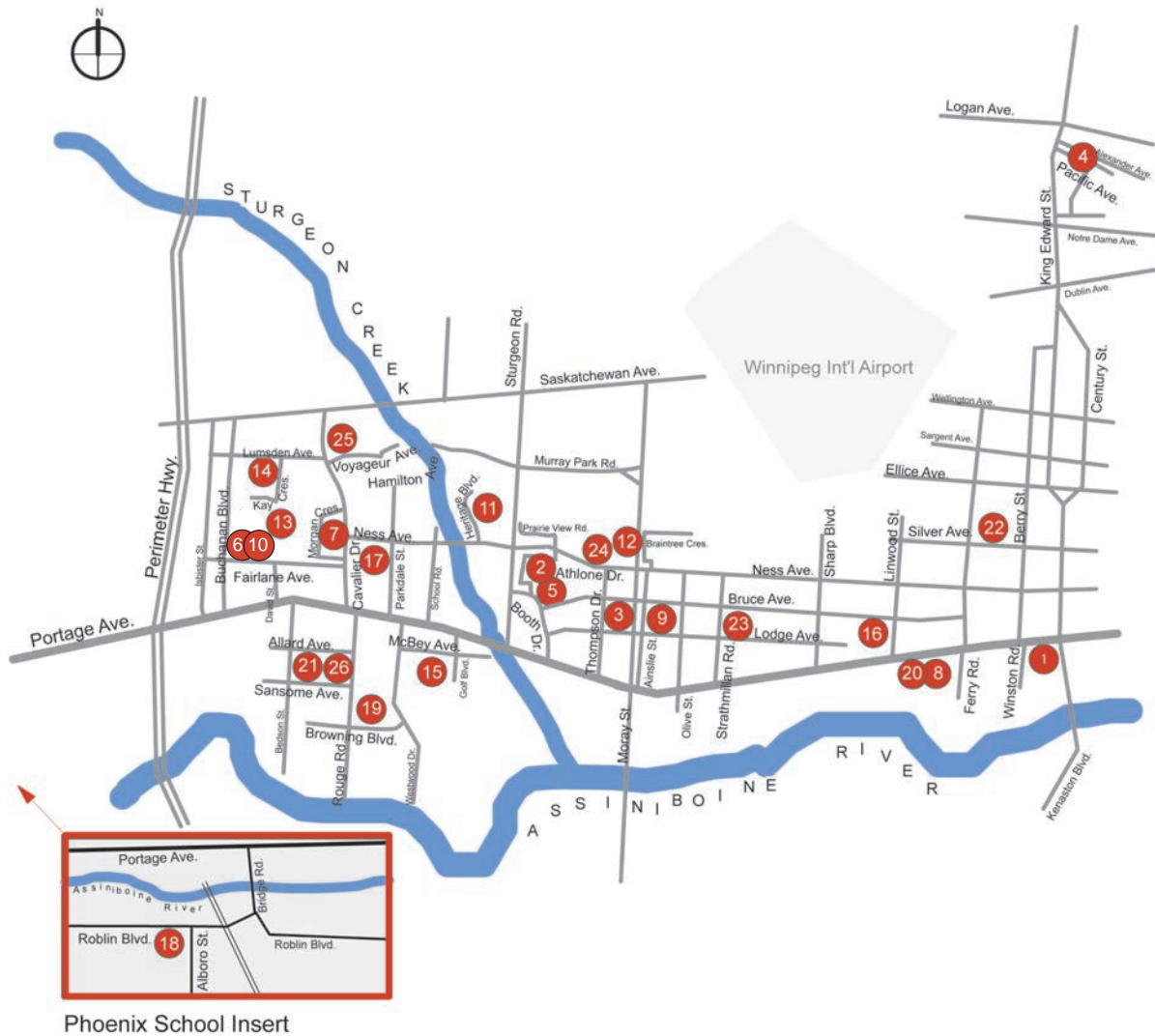
by Object



+ **\$1,667,950** in **CAPITAL SPENDING** for renovations, vehicles, large equipment, etc.

by Function

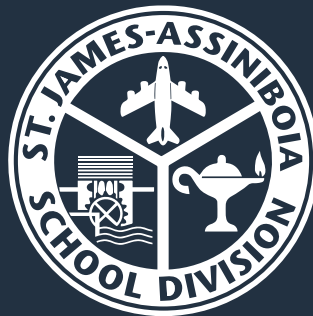




Great Schools for Growing and Learning

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. ÉCOLE ASSINIBOINE,* 175 Winston Rd. R3J 1N1
K-5, Principal: Jean Burnett.....204-885-2216 | 14. LAKEWOOD SCHOOL, 55 Kay Cr. R2Y 1L1
K-5, Principal: Sarah James.....204-889-9360 |
| 2. ATHLONE SCHOOL, 110 Athlone Dr. R3J 3L4
K-5, Principal: Jane Couch.....204-832-1373 | 15. LINCOLN MIDDLE SCHOOL, 3180 McBey Ave. R3K 0T7
6-8, Principal: Dan MacNeil.....204-837-8397 |
| 3. ÉCOLE BANNATYNE,* 363 Thompson Dr. R3J 3E5
K-5, Principal: Alexandra Eyjolfson.....204-888-1101 | 16. LINWOOD SCHOOL, 266 Linwood St. R3J 2C6
K-5, Principal: Leslie Howard.....204-889-9356 |
| 4. BROOKLANDS SCHOOL, 1950 Pacific Ave. R2R 0G4
K-5, Principal: Samantha Amaral.....204-633-9630 | 17. ÉCOLE NESS,* 3300 Ness Ave. R2Y 0G6
6-8, Principal: Stephanie Champagne.....204-837-1361 |
| 5. BRUCE MIDDLE SCHOOL, 333 Booth Dr. R3J 3M8
6-8, Principal: Stacy Kent.....204-888-1990 | 18. PHOENIX SCHOOL, 111 Alboro St., Headingley R4J 1A3
K-5, Principal: Patrick Betz.....204-889-5053 |
| 6. BUCHANAN SCHOOL, 815 Buchanan Blvd. R2Y 1N1
K-5, Principal: Neil Moffatt.....204-888-0680 | 19. ÉCOLE ROBERT BROWNING,* 130 Browning Blvd. R3K 0L8
K-5, Principal: Bonnie Neil.....204-837-8381 |
| 7. CRESTVIEW SCHOOL, 333 Morgan Cr. R2Y 0C9
K-5, Principal: Connie Lowe.....204-885-7710 | 20. ST. JAMES COLLEGIATE, 1900 Portage Ave. R3J 0J1
9-12, Principal: Roné Boyko.....204-888-4867 |
| 8. GEORGE WATERS MIDDLE SCHOOL, 190 Ferry Rd. R3J 1V7
6-8, Principal: Ryan Miller.....204-888-4898 | 21. SANSOME SCHOOL, 181 Sansome Ave. R3K 0N8
K-5, Principal: Henrietta Hoch.....204-889-6000 |
| 9. GOLDEN GATE MIDDLE SCHOOL, 330 Bruce Ave. R3J 0V8
6-8, Principal: Jody O'Brien.....204-837-5808 | 22. STEVENSON-BRITANNIA SCHOOL, 1777 Silver Ave. R3J 1B1
K-5, Principal: Regine Nuytten.....204-832-1359 |
| 10. HEDGES MIDDLE SCHOOL, 369 Fairlane Ave. R2Y 0B6
6-8, Principal: Rob Bell.....204-837-5843 | 23. STRATHMILLAN SCHOOL, 339 Strathmillan Rd. R3J 2V6
K-5, Principal: Warren Nickerson.....204-888-0148 |
| 11. HERITAGE SCHOOL, 47 Heritage Blvd. R2Y 0N9
K-5, Principal: Terri Rodriguez-Warner.....204-837-1394 | 24. COLLÈGE STURGEON HEIGHTS COLLEGIATE,* 2665 Ness Ave. R3J 1A5
9-12, Principal: George Valentim.....204-888-0684 |
| 12. JAMESWOOD ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL, 1 Braintree Cres. R3J 1C7
9-12, Principal: Cheri Banks.....204-885-9555 | 25. ÉCOLE VOYAGEUR,* 37 Voyageur Ave. R2Y 0H7
K-5, Principal: Pam McLachlan.....204-888-3390 |
| 13. JOHN TAYLOR COLLEGIATE, 470 Hamilton Ave. R2Y 0H4
9-12, Principal: Adam Lister.....204-888-8930 | 26. WESTWOOD COLLEGIATE, 360 Rouge Rd. R3K 1K3
9-12, Principal: Tammy Baydock.....204-888-7650 |

* French Immersion Schools



St. James-Assiniboia School Division

Great Schools for Growing and Learning

The community of St. James-Assiniboia has deep Indigenous roots. These lands and waters are the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, the Ininewak, and the Dakota Oyate peoples. It is the birthplace and national homeland of the Red River Métis. It is also home to members of the Denesuline, the Anisininewuk, and Inuit nations. Our community is bound by Treaty One.

Our water flows from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation in Treaty Three, and our buildings are powered by Northern Manitoba in Treaty Five. We are all tied together through the treaties that were signed across these lands. These treaties come with a responsibility—to the land, the waters, the animals, and each other. We are committed to honour and learn about the true history of this place, and to do our parts to move our community forward in a true spirit of justice and reconciliation.