report
to the community

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The Middle Years (Gr. 6 -8) provides a stimulating and supportive learning environment where high expectations, collaboration and continual learning are promoted. Early adolescents have unique emotional, social and developmental characteristics. Staffing, curricula and programming in middle schools are focused on meeting these needs. The programs in the Middle Years build on the programming in the Early Years.

Last Year's School Accomplishments (2015-2016)

By June 2016, a minimum of 80% of students will be meeting expectations for reading comprehension.
- ✓ Upon analyzing report card data, we found that year-end results show:
- ✓ 74% of grade 6, 74% of grade 7, 81% of grade 8 students are meeting expectations in reading comprehension.
- ✓ Pre-assessment results were analyzed throughout the year (in October and May) and responsive instruction addressed student strengths and needs.
- ✓ Teachers worked collaboratively in small grade level partnerships to develop common criteria for 'meeting' expectations.
- ✓ Collaborative work between the resource teacher, classroom teachers, the Reading Clinician and Curriculum Coordinator throughout the year addressed instructional interventions for students who were well below grade level expectations.
- ✓ Student personal choice reading was increased with daily independent reading in most classrooms.
- ✓ Future work will involve teachers in further developing criteria for student reading comprehension expectations in a whole school collaborative process.
- ✓ Teacher professional development related to comprehension instruction included professional reading and workshops. Implementation of current instructional strategies was evident in teaching and learning. All staff took part in professional development to develop a common language, assessments and comprehension processes, strategies and expectations. ELA teachers were trained in how to use running record assessments (Fountas & Pinnell) to collect data that will inform teaching & learning.

Our Mission Statement

To provide a positive and safe learning environment that encourages continuous growth.

School Profile

Number of teachers: 21
Number of students: 283
Grade levels: 6-8

School Highlights

Professional staff is committed to providing a variety of meaningful and engaging instructional experiences for all learners. School highlights include:
- Multi-aged BLAST groupings for homerooms.
- BLAST events that promote school spirit and philanthropic work in the community.
- Quality Arts programming: Band, Jazz band, Vocal Jazz, Concert Choir, Bearcat Boys
- Practical Arts and Technology
- Infusion of Technology in the classroom using iPads
- Skills for Independent Living Program

Extra-curricular Activities

A variety of activities and opportunities for all students:
- Sports: Volleyball, Basketball Cross Country, Track, Ultimate, Badminton, Rugby, Team Handball, Curling and more
- Drama Production
- Cycling Club
- Eco- Club
- Student-led Leadership

By June 2016, a minimum of 80% of students will demonstrate a good-excellent range of understanding of mental math and estimation strategies appropriate to each grade level's curriculum expectations.

- ✓ Upon analyzing report card data, we found that year-end results show:
- ✓ 78% of grade 6, 72% of grade 7, 67% of grade 8 students are meeting expectations in mental math.
- ✓ Common, co-created rubrics and criteria were developed at the school and divisional level and referred to for evaluating student work in the area of problem solving.
- ✓ Ongoing common teaching plans addressed varied problem-solving strategies throughout the school year.
- ✓ Grade 6 team worked with coordinator support to develop common teaching strategies and assessments.
- ✓ All math teachers participated in middle year's math PD organized and led by our middle year's math leaders.
- ✓ Differentiated problem solving tasks were developed and used with students.
- ✓ Students are provided with personalized mathematical 'tools' to support problem solving (i.e. Kahn Academy, IXL, iPad Math Apps)

By June 2016, a minimum of 95% of students will participate in social justice or sustainability themed experience.

- ✓ 98% of students participated in school and divisional initiatives related to sustainability, safe schools, bully prevention, and the experiences related to the themes of social justice during the 2015- 2016 school year.
- ✓ Our "Green Team" planned and led many activities and awareness campaigns about ESD including earth day activities, a clean air challenge, supporting our recycling program (recycle everywhere) and school wide assemblies about the importance of living in a sustainable way.
- ✓ We Day initiatives involved student-led groups tasked with selecting and leading one local and one global action and planning for involving whole-school participation. Initiatives were supported in classroom learning environments, involved technology and were connected to meaningful reading and writing tasks. Topics were included in school assemblies and involved parents/families and the community. (CMHR, Cancer Care, MS Research, Winnipeg Harvest, Ronald McDonald House Charities, United Way, JDRF, 24 Hour Famine)

Programs and initiatives were implemented to further teacher-student connectedness in the school and to enhance safety of the school climate.

- ✓ Student leadership teams were developed to include a higher percentage of our school population with equal grade level representation (overall 20% of school population). Students were supported by staff to plan all school events throughout the year (spirit week, dances, school assemblies, special events etc.)
- ✓ Safe schools' data (Tell Them From Me Survey) was collated and analyzed; data indicated that majority of students feel safe in the classroom and hallways.
- ✓ The "Safe Schools" student committee identified ways that the school was already safe and isolated actions for increased school safety.
- ✓ "We Day" student leadership group spearheaded local and global initiatives to address poverty, famine, thirst and disease with actions that involved students and staff.
- ✓ Teachers and students worked on meaningful classroom and school level projects that supported social action in our community and beyond (e.g. Koats for Kids, local food donation drives, pledges for famine relief in Africa, support for no-kill animal shelters).

A Quick Snapshot of the Classroom

Mathematics: Students are learning mathematics concepts through the use of hands-on manipulatives, games, guided instructional practice groups and real-life problem solving contexts.

English language Arts: Students are engaged in literacy using a broad range of reading materials and meaningful writing experiences. With a focus on developing strength as readers in fiction and non-fiction texts, students gain reading comprehension skills through opportunities to discuss thinking and ideas while reading and responding critically to text. To develop as writers, the language of the "6 Traits of Writing" is implemented to provide students with quality instruction and effective feedback to enhance written communication.

Science and Social Studies: Students are engaged in projects, experiments, field trips, the local community, and hands-on experiences to enhance their learning of the curricular concepts. Discussing current events, invited guest speakers in the classroom and frequent trips to the nearby Sturgeon Creek help students understand the real-life connections to the content studied. Students are encouraged to participate in the Science and Heritage Fair to enrich and facilitate further inquiry and research learning in these subject areas.

Arts: A range of musical, visual and dramatic arts engages a variety of students in Arts programming throughout the school day. Band and choir concerts, festivals and other community performances, themed concerts, spring drama production and visual arts events and displays celebrate and spotlight the hard work of these dedicated students. Including the Arts in school assemblies and Remembrance Day services provides students additional opportunities to contribute their talent and passion for the arts to enhance school experiences.

Planning & Goal Setting

School goals are created using the Divisional Strategic Plan as the guideline (www.sjsd.net/planning). The goal setting process begins in early spring and includes input from students, teachers, parents and the community. Goals are developed around the needs and direction of the various departments with student progress and achievement and our mission and vision statement as our focus.

This Year's School Goals and Priorities (2016-2017)

1. By June 2017, students will use the skills of good writing and reading comprehension strategies across multiple content areas to critically articulate thinking, deepen understanding and communicate ideas.
- Students will select and interact with a variety of texts for variety of purposes (personal enjoyment, curiosity, information)
- Students will participate in setting reading goals (personal and whole group) and identify purpose and focus for reading.
- Students will decode texts appropriately to understand key ideas and messages in familiar and unfamiliar texts. While reading, students self- monitor, self-correct, re-read and figure out unknown words using appropriate strategies.
- Students will use a broad variety of strategies before, during and after reading to enhance understanding of text.
- Students will interpret, evaluate read material, extend and integrate ideas to support critical thinking.
- Assessment data, including pre-assessments, will be used, ongoing, to guide appropriate programming and interventions for students.

2. By June 2017, students will improve performance and develop confidence in their ability as mathematical thinkers through problem solving, engaging mathematics tasks, and cross curricular connections through multiple content areas.
- Teachers and students across all grade levels will continue to develop a clear understanding of level 4 performance expectations, matching with provincial achievement scales.
- Common assessments will be used, within same grade levels, to support consistent pictures of student achievement.
- Students will work towards using an increased number of grade appropriate mental math and estimation strategies by the end of the year.
- Teachers will work with our Numeracy Coach to implement new resources and strategies that will strengthen numeracy instruction and support.
- Students will develop positive dispositions towards the study of mathematics, including curiosity, self-confidence, flexibility, perseverance and the connections to multiple content areas.
- Students will be encouraged to give priority to mathematical practices, including problem solving, and reasoning.
- Students that require more supports with basic fact knowledge and fluency will be given opportunities to practice and refine their fact knowledge and conceptual understanding.
- Assessment data will be used, ongoing, to guide appropriate programming and interventions for students.

3. By June 2017, students will participate in social justice or sustainability themed experience.
- All students will be encouraged to become actively involved in school and divisional initiatives related to sustainability, safe schools, bully prevention, and the experiences related to the themes of social justice.
- Increased family/ community involvement in school activities and committees will be an ongoing focus.
- Students will be meaningfully engaged in authentic learning experiences through school clubs, committees and classroom experiences.

- Students will be able to make real-life connections with content area learning that are tied to the themes of social justice and school safety.
- Student voice will be included in school event planning and activities.
- Students will indicate they feel safe during school and they indicate positive connection to the school experience.