



# The Constellation

The Monthly Newsletter of Strathmillan School

MARCH  
2026

## MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

### *Caring for Our Staff, Supporting Our Students*

The end of February brought deep sadness to our Strathmillan community, as both Ms. Orloff and Ms. Richardson experienced heartbreaking losses in their families. Our thoughts and care are with them during this incredibly difficult time. Both will be taking time away from work to grieve and begin healing, and we ask for your kindness and understanding.

To support our students and maintain stability in classrooms, the following plans are now in place:

- **English as an Additional Language**

The school division will be hiring a term teacher to replace Ms. Orloff to continue supporting our EAL Learners.

- **Room 41:**

Beginning Monday, March 2, Room 41 will be taught by Ms. Mitchell in the mornings and Ms. Thompson in the afternoons. Both educators currently teach half-time at Strathmillan, Ms. Mitchell in room 23 and Ms. Thompson in room 19. These teachers will be in place until the end of June or until Ms. Richardson is able to return, whichever comes first.

- **Room 23**

To accommodate these changes, Room 23 will shift to having Ms. Kirkland in the morning (instead of the afternoon) and Ms. Mitchell in the afternoon (instead of the morning).

We are grateful for the flexibility of our staff and the strength of our school community during this challenging time. Thank you for your compassion, patience, and support as we ensure students continue to receive the high-quality instruction and care they deserve.

Strathmillan is also grateful to welcome back **Mr. Gary Borger** as a half-time resource teacher. Mr. Borger worked at Strathmillan last year, and with our growing enrollment of students with additional needs, the division has graciously added more staffing to meet the challenges. The division has also added two crossing guard positions. Education assistants **Ms. Chaudry** and **Ms. Kaur** will be helping our school patrols keep the streets safe.

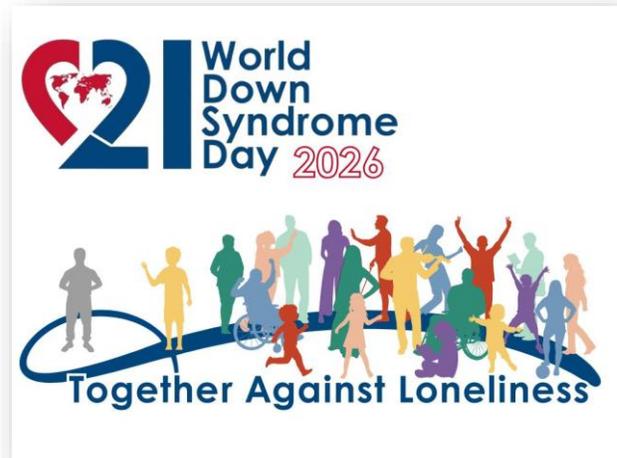
- Warren Nickerson and Kellie Straub



## ROCK YOUR SOCKS

Strathmillan School will mark World Down Syndrome Day by participating in Rock your Socks Day on Thursday, March 19. Students and staff are encouraged to wear colourful and/or mismatched socks which symbolize the DS chromosomes that look like mismatched socks under the microscope.

The theme this year is to stand *Together Against Loneliness*.



## PROJECT FAIR

Strathmillan Project Fair is just around the corner, and we're excited to celebrate our students' creativity and curiosity! The fair will take place on **Wednesday, April 8th** in the big gym, with judging happening between 9:00 AM and 12:00 PM. Students can begin setting up their projects the day before, **Tuesday, April 7th**, starting at **8:30 AM**. Families and community members are warmly invited to view the projects during student-led conferences on **April 9th**.

Participation in the Project Fair is *optional*. Students who chose to join have received a project handbook to help guide them through the process at home. The handbook includes expectations, timelines, judging criteria, design suggestions, and a variety of project ideas to spark inspiration.



Families play an important role in supporting their child's Project Fair journey. Support may include keep on track with timelines, visiting the library together to gather information, guiding research, and encouraging them to use their own words. As the fair approaches, students benefit from practicing how to confidently share what they've learned.

**Are you interested in volunteering as a Project Fair judge?** We are looking for 10 – 12 volunteers to give feedback to student projects on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in this volunteer opportunity, please contact Principal Warren Nickerson at 204-888-0148.

## STRATHMILLAN PARENT COUNCIL

At Strathmillan, we are so grateful for our parent council. They provided Tim Horton's coffee and Tall Grass Prairie cinnamon buns, along with a fruit tray and Valentines candies, for school staff appreciation week. A nice touch was a thank you card in the form of small box labelled "box breathing", containing a reminder to take time to stop, breathe deeply, and be mindful. We all felt appreciated.



The parent council also successfully organized two fundraisers to support their initiatives, including a large order from Archie's Pizza and a Fun Lunch on the final day of February. The Glenlea Greenhouses fundraiser has begun (pickup scheduled for Thursday, May 28). You can order online (just click on "Fundraising" then "Participating Groups" and choose Strathmillan School.

Get involved! The next Strathmillan PAC meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 3 at 6 PM** in the library.

## MILK PROGRAM PILOT COMING IN MAY

Strathmillan School has been offering fee-based milk and chocolate milk program. Since establishing our grab-and-go, universally-accessible snack program, we have been reflecting on whether the cost of milk can be included in our program in order to lower fees for families.

From a nutrition perspective, both chocolate and white milk offer nutrients, but chocolate milk has 25 grams of sugar per serving. Nutritionists recommend reducing the frequency of high-sugar drinks.

We have decided to try a pilot program starting in May. We will continue the paid milk program until the end of April. Please use up any paid milk tickets that you have purchased by the end of April.

In May and June, we will offer free milk for lunch every Tuesday and Thursday for parents who order in advance. Parents will be able to order milk through an online form each month, so that we can get a clear count for ordering milk (and we don't waste food by ordering too much and having it spoil). Students will continue to have a choice of white milk or chocolate milk.



# RESOURCE CORNER with Mr. Gary Borger

## *Adaptations for Students who Experience Attention Challenges*

At Strathmillan, our classroom teachers work hard to ensure that every child has what they need to be successful at school. One important way we do this is by providing adaptations—practical changes that help students access learning in ways that work best for them. These adaptations are especially valuable for students who experience challenges with attention or focus. When we make thoughtful adjustments, we create a more level playing field where all students can learn and thrive.

### *Environmental Adaptations*

Environmental adaptations involve simple changes to the classroom setup or routine that help students stay engaged.

These may include:

- **Flexible seating options** such as wobble stools, rocker chairs, or floor seating, which allow students to move while staying focused.
- **Movement or brain breaks** that help “wake up the brain” and increase attention.
- **Seating placement** near the teacher or away from distractions like doors, windows, or pencil sharpeners.
- **Sensory tools** such as squishy balls, fidgets, weighted items, or noise-cancelling headphones to support focus during lessons or independent work.

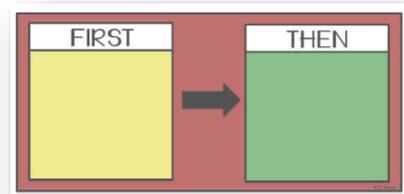


These tools and strategies can make long periods of listening or writing more manageable for students who need to move or reduce distractions.

### *Instructional Adaptations*

Adaptations to teaching practices are also key. These may include:

- **Visual schedules**, similar to an agenda with pictures, that help students anticipate what’s happening next.
- **Visual timers** that show time passing and support time-management skills.
- **Chunking tasks**, which means breaking a larger assignment into smaller steps (“First do this part, then move to the next”).
- **Providing extra time** to complete work, helping students experience success without feeling rushed.



These strategies help students who have challenges with attention or focus feel more organized, confident, and capable throughout the school day.

### *Supporting Success for All Learners*

Adapting the environment or instruction, teachers support children with attentional needs. For many students, these small adjustments make a noticeable difference in comfort, confidence, and overall school success. At Strathmillan, we are committed to providing the support our Stars’ needs to learn, grow, and shine.

# LIBRARY - Ms. Branco

## *I Love to Read Month*

We were thrilled at Strathmillan to have so many guests appear as guest readers, promoting the joy of reading. We had politicians (Hon. Dr. Doug Eyolfson, M.P., and Hon. Logan Oxenham, MLA), a youth advocate (Jon Skyrpnyk), athletes (Nic Demski and Pat Neufeld, Winnipeg Blue Bombers), a school resource officer (Cst. Lisa Allison), and a tradesperson (Amy Frank from IKO Commercial Industries). All shared their love of reading and highlighted the importance of reading for learning.



## *Scholastic Book Fair*

Stay tuned for the Scholastic Book Fair coming right after Spring Break! For students, it's one of the most anticipated events of the school year. We hope that you can offer your time and talents to help students experience Bookjoy firsthand! Every purchase at the Fair directly benefits our library.

Opportunities to assist include:

- Wednesday, April 8** – Hanging up posters, decorating, unboxing and setting up Fair tables
- Thursday, April 9 evening** – Helping shoppers at the Fair, keeping table displays tidy
- Friday, April 10** – Packing up the Fair



If you're available to lend a hand at this upcoming event, please contact Mrs. Branco [strathmillan.library@sjasd.ca](mailto:strathmillan.library@sjasd.ca) and share which Fair activities interest you most.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION – Mr. McKenzie and Ms. Orsulak

February was a very busy month in Phys Ed!

Our youngest students are enjoying the newly renovated mini-gym, with its slick new floor. It's definitely an improved space to play and learn.

Our students celebrated the '26 Winter Olympics from Italy by participating in in the STRATHMILLAN SCHOOL OLYMPICS.

We kicked off our Olympics with an Opening Ceremony for the whole school where students learned some of the history of the Olympics as well as some of its traditions,



such as the Parade of Nations, Medals, Athletes' Oath, and Torch Run. From here, we participated in modified versions of a few of the sports that the athletes competed in Italy, such as Biathlon, Speedskating, Bobsled, Ski Jumping, Curling and Moguls. Students had a great time!

February was also busy in terms of co-curricular sports as well. The **Red Wings** were our Intramural Ball Hockey champions defeating the Ducks 5-3 in the Championship game.



Our basketball season also wrapped up at the end of February as well. We had 68 students in grade 4 and 5 participate this year, the most we have ever had! All players showed substantial improvement during both morning practices and after school games.

Well done, Strathmillan!

# MUSIC EDUCATION – Ms. Dawson

## *Winnipeg Music Festival*

Both the primary and intermediate Strathmillan School choirs will perform at the Winnipeg Music Festival on March 3 and 4! We will share our voices and learn from adjudicators. Students will be bused to and from the festival on their assigned day. They will wear green choir shirts from school, but should wear BLACK BOTTOMS and black shoes, where possible.

Primary choir (students in grades 1 & 2) - **Wednesday, March 4th at 10:00am.**

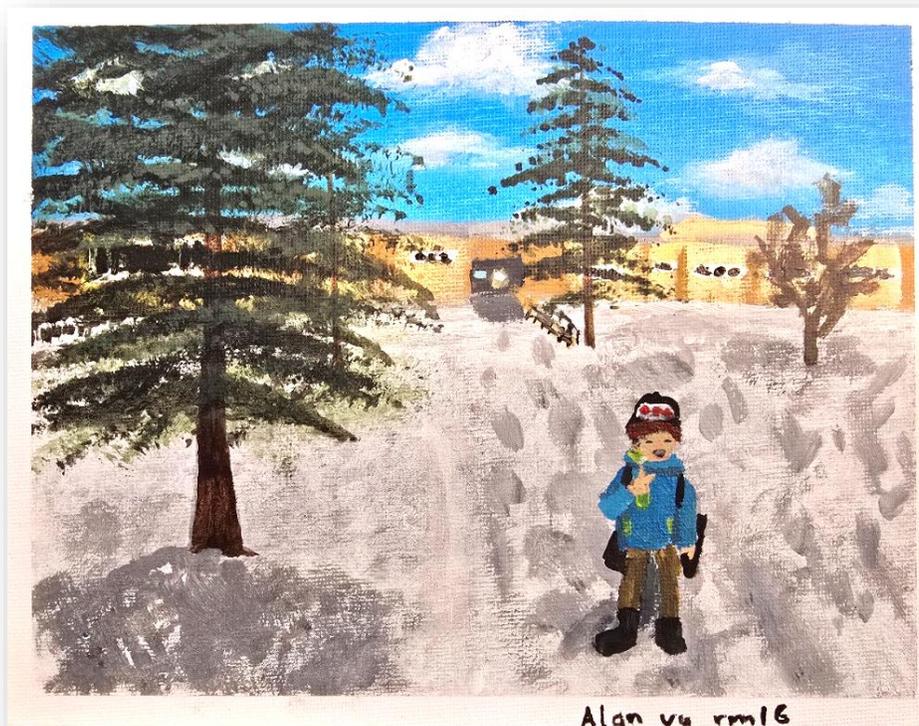
Intermediate choir (students in grades 3, 4 & 5) - **Tuesday, March 3rd at 12:30pm.**

The Winnipeg Music Festival takes place at **Portage Avenue Church** (1420 Portage Ave). The festival is open to the public, but requires a ticket purchase (cash only, \$6 per session, free admission for children 12 and under).

## *Manitoba Moose Game*

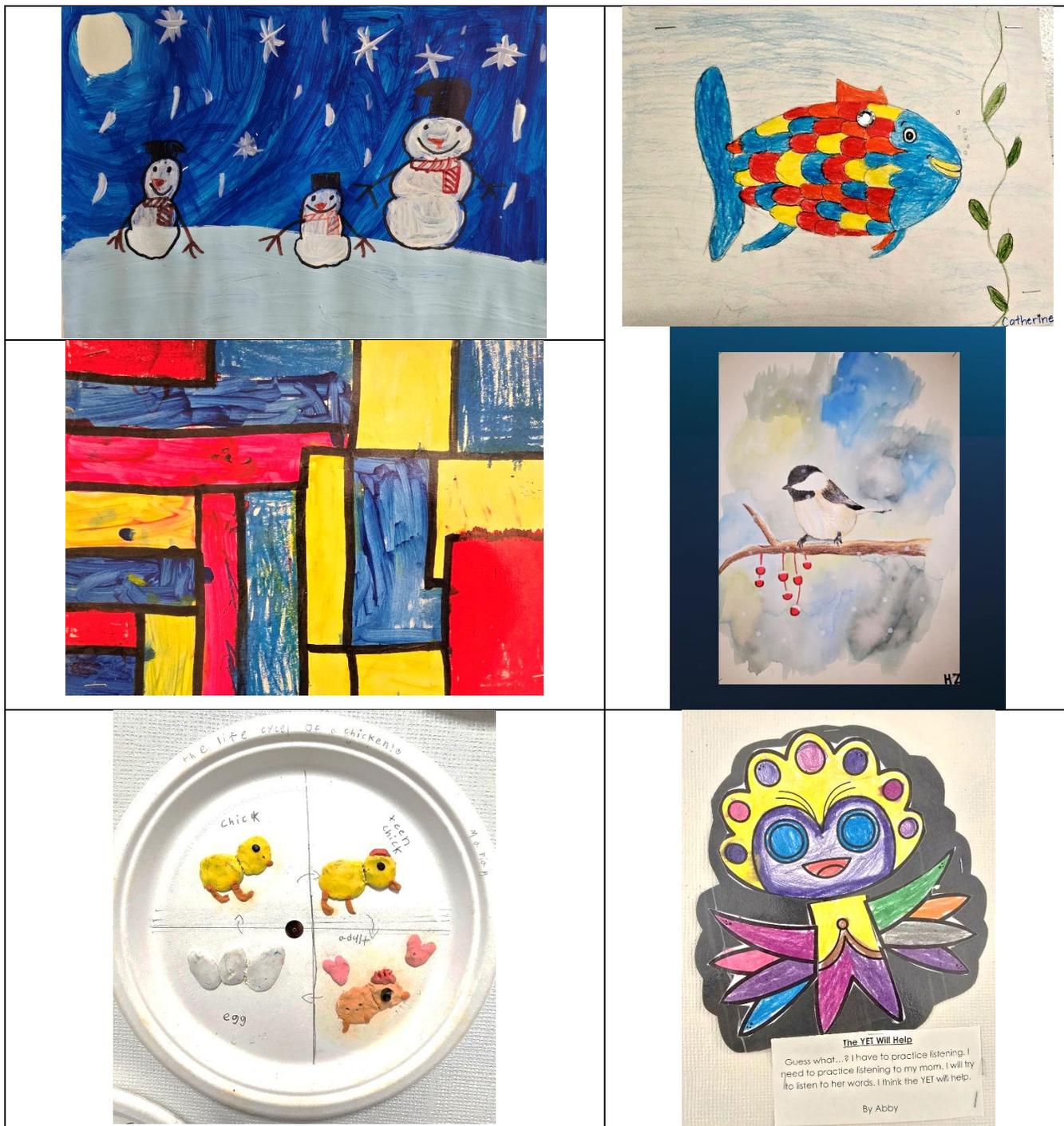
The Intermediate Choir will sing the Canadian anthem at the Manitoba Moose Game on Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available

If you have any questions about either of these events, contact Ms Dawson ([alanna.dawson@sjasd.ca](mailto:alanna.dawson@sjasd.ca)).



# VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Students represent ideas visually to learn about colours, seasons, life cycles, tenacity, and about art styles, elements, and techniques. Here are a few visual representations currently on display at Strathmillan.



# MARCH 2026

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <b>PATROL SQUAD 3</b>	2   Day 2 • Intermediate choir – special practice for festival	3   Day 3 • Winnipeg Music Festival (Intermediate Choir) • Early Dismissal • Strathmillan PAC Meeting – 6 PM	4   Day 4 • Grade 4 Girls Benchball, 12:25 – 12:55	5   Day 5 • Intermediate choir (practice for Moose game)	6   Day 6 • Grade 4 Soccer 12:25 – 12:55 • Intermediate Choir to sing at Manitoba Moose Game	7
8 <b>PATROL SQUAD 4</b>	9   Day 1 • Grade 4 Girls Benchball, 12:25 – 12:55	10   Day 2 • Beading Club	11   Day 3 • Grade 5 Girls Benchball, 12:25 – 12:55	12   Day 4	13   Day 5 • Grade 3 Boys Basketball, 12:25 – 12:55	14
15 <b>PATROL SQUAD 1</b>	16   Day 6 • Grade 5 Boys Benchball, 12:25 – 12:55	17   Day 1 • Lego Club Rm 38 • Beading Club • Primary Choir • Early Dismissal	18   Day 2 • Lego Club Rm 38	19   Day 3 • Rock Your Socks - World Down Syndrome Day • Intermediate Choir	20   Day 4 Inservice – No School	21
22 <b>PATROL SQUAD 2</b>	23   Day 5 • Lego Club Rm 41 • Grade 3 Girls Obstacle Course, 12:25 – 12:55	24   Day 6 • Lego Club Rm 41 • Beading Club	25   Day 1 • Report Cards sent home • Lego Club Rm 41 • Grade 3 Boys Obstacle Course, 12:25 – 12:55	26   Day 2 • Lego Club Rm 41	27   Day 3 • Adapted swimming	28
29	30	31	Apr 1	Apr 2	Apr 3	4
						

## UPCOMING DATES in APRIL

- Apr. 7 – Early dismissal
- Apr. 7 – Project Fair Set up begins
- Apr. 8 – Early years reports cards sent home
- Apr. 8 – Project Fair Judging
- Apr. 9 – Student-led Conferences
- Apr. 9 – Project Fair Viewing
- Apr. 9 – Scholastic Book Fair
- Apr. 10 – Admin / Inservice – no school
- Apr. 15 – Grade 6 Info Evening (Golden Gate)
- Apr. 21 – Early Dismissal