

report

to the community



Westwood Collegiate

2023-2024



WESTWOOD COLLEGIATE
POWER & RESPONSIBILITY

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The Senior Years in the St. James- Assiniboia School Division provide a varied curriculum to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students. The programs provide a sound basis for further education or immediate employment setting. Hands-on, active participation is encouraged in all subject areas and especially in courses such as: Performing and Fine Arts, Physical Education, career exploration and independent studies.

Last Year's Broad Areas of Focus (2022-2023)

Our common goal for all curricular areas was to improve student critical thinking and focus through confident speech. This goal was developed and measured in the contexts of: Literacy, Numeracy, Mental Health, Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Indigenous Education content, experiences, and tasks. Coming out of two years of the pandemic, students require practice and confidence-building activities for speaking.

What Did the Evidence of Student Learning Tell Us?

-All students were able to present in a small or large group environment. They were able to answer questions pertaining to their research or presentations provided by other students. Weekly practice showed improvement. Connecting and reflecting on science material to daily life interactions was evident in discussions amongst students.

-We have seen a decrease in the number of students that are requesting adaptation for presenting privately.

-Seeing students using cue cards to help with presentation – some are even able to only use bullet points and speak more confidently with their ideas.

-Students were given weekly activities that consisted of logic problems and rich tasks. These activities were intended to provide various levels of entry so that all students would have an opportunity to engage and contribute to the solutions.

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Our Vision Statement

At Westwood Collegiate, we aim to develop responsible citizens who will demonstrate confidence, curiosity, and creativity.

Our Mission Statement

Students will value the concept of social justice and recognize its importance for the betterment of an ever-changing world.

Students are active learners able to demonstrate a high level of academic, intellectual, and social engagement.

Schools will nurture and promote a positive relationship with families and the local community.

School Profile

Number of teachers: 35

Number of students: 600

Grade levels: 9-12

School Highlights

These include:

- Advanced Placement
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Advanced Fitness Training
- Practical Arts & Human Ecology
- Aquatic Sciences
- Graphic Technology
- Youth in Philanthropy
- Full year Math & English in Grade 9

Extra-curricular Activities Offered

- Intramural sports, Cross Country, Track and Field, Volleyball, Basketball, Curling, Indoor & Outdoor Soccer, Fastball, Badminton, Hockey, Golf, Ultimate, Lacrosse
- Drama, Improv, Dance, Musicals, Choir
- Yearbook, Grad Committee
- Student Council, Westwood Historical Society, Sources of Strength, Hand in Hand Initiative, Smudging, Rainbow Lounge
- Envirothon

This encouraged all of the students to be involved in the discussions and therefore improve their critical thinking skills while also improving their speaking skills. Students were often given group activities centered on problem solving. Within these groups, students were able to discuss and explain their findings to their group members. Students were also often required to present their group results to the class. During this process students were required to use appropriate mathematical terminology and language to express their answers. Slang or abbreviated non-math terms were corrected by peers or the teacher so that students are able to understand this terminology in future math classes and it becomes part of their vocabulary. Students were tasked with making fair teams, coming up with ability appropriate rules and adaptations and resolving conflict independently more often as the year went on. It was observed that there became less awkward silence and more engaged voices as we continued with this strategy.

Anticipated Next Steps

Westwood Collegiate will continue with our school-wide goal. In addition to this, Westwood Collegiate will conduct a review of Student Services support and classroom use of differentiated instruction and adaptations.

2023-2024 Planning & Goal Setting Process

The Westwood Collegiate administration and department head team frequently review and revise goals considering input from any of the following: parents, teachers, students, Division, Province, recent educational research, and relevant, local Professional Learning Community data.

2023-2024 Identified Areas of Focus

Science

Deeper learning continues to be a central part of the philosophy of the science department at Westwood Collegiate. With a mix of traditional and modern teaching methods, students were provided with opportunities to increase their confidence in their ability to communicate their scientific literacy. Utilizing tasks such as analyzing articles, presentations, field trips, research projects, and lab activities, students were able to use proper terminology when communicating in small and large group settings. Weekly practice showed continuous improvement in the depth of discussions, questions posed and their ability to make real world connections between the curriculum and current events.

Mathematics

Teachers continue to include rich collaborative discussion tasks in class to encourage students to communicate effectively, critically, and consistently to each other and to whole groups. Students are more comfortable discussing mathematics problems in peer groups using appropriate and sophisticated mathematical language. Students can demonstrate their understanding daily in class discussions as well as presentations and group activities. Most importantly, students are becoming more confident in their abilities to discuss and present their knowledge and understanding.

Overall, students have developed confidence, resiliency, and a growth mindset for learning. They understand the concepts and ideas they are trying to communicate to others in both written and verbal forms. Students are open to receiving productive feedback from peers and teachers. All these improved communication skills have improved the students' abilities to problem solve and explain their reasoning on assessment tasks as well.

Finally, the rich tasks (math problems that allow all ability levels to interact with it) allow all learners to participate in the classroom discussions. Students can contribute from entry level concepts up to enriched understandings. Students benefit

from a variety of instruction techniques as it relates to their learning. This variety has translated to students becoming more self-directed learners who are willing to take risks.

Physical Education

The Phys. Ed department continued their trend of attracting more students to enroll in one of the “In School” grade 11 and 12 options as opposed to the “Out of School” model. The social interaction, conflict resolution skills and verbal and non-verbal communication practice from in person learning is a huge benefit from this type of delivery. Short periods of scheduled time for students to have one-on-one or small group discussions on guided topics will be planned. These conversations were observed by staff and reflected on and discussed as a class on an ongoing basis. Students were given the opportunity in fitness based and leadership classes to present mini and full lessons to peers on topics including technique, safety, and fitness theory. Assessments were created and modified in all PE classes that encouraged a presentation component to them. The intramural program was advertised, scheduled, and officiated by student leaders. Students attended Lincoln Middle school to teach full participation games to grade 6, 7 and 8 classes and continue to foster the relationship between community of school students. Students from grades 9-12 were integral in the delivery of our very popular Mini Warriors Volleyball and Basketball Programs.

Humanities / ELA

The English department is in constant discussion on how to improve teaching practices for our changing world. Our department has always placed an emphasis on student engagement and using texts that allow for more choice and daily reading opportunities for the grade 9 and 10 students, most specifically. Teachers are encouraged to have a classroom library to allow students choice of reading materials and encourage literacy. This year the grade 10 students will be writing a provincial exam to collect data that may drive our teaching moving forward. All four levels of students are being challenged and regardless of grade or course, teachers are continuing to work on the speaking and presentation skills of all their students. This can come in a variety of forms, whether they be formal or informal presentations, but the intent is to increase the confidence of all students and increase resiliency. Students also engage in the collaborative group process which encourages a more diverse mindset from all students. English teachers are using content collecting strategies such as charts, templates, research material etc. to better prepare students prior to collecting written responses in class. Utilizing fact gathering strategies and organizational tools will give students the necessary tools for success. Literacy is our main objective with all students and continuing to challenge them with tasks, skills, and opportunities to explore their literal side as well as their creative side. The English department’s focus this year will be on inclusion in the classroom and assessments that engage students in a variety of ways. Theme-based topics are used in the classroom that bring light and focus to many areas of students’ self-awareness and wellness in a high school setting. Students are encouraged to be more of a participant in class discussions and practice their speaking skills in a less intimidating forum so they will feel more comfortable when formally sharing in class.

Arts

As a department, we focus on creating confident communicators, in both written and verbal forms. We have been focusing on oral communication skills in both presentations, as well as in class discussions. These can be reflective conversations, research presentations, small group discussion, or daily classroom conversations. By focusing on critical thinking through speaking, we hope to establish our learners as confident communicators who can articulate their passion for The Arts and work cooperatively with their peers and instructors. When examining the students verbal communication skills, we shifted from numerical grade-based feedback to summative feedback to help them increase their toolbox of skills. We find that even the more reluctant communicators begin to engage more, as they feel more comfortable and safe sharing their knowledge. By scaffolding this through a series of games and exercises, many students find success in dialoging about their work and Arts studies.

Advanced Placement

Please see AP course information under Programs & Services on our website.