



École Varennes

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www.lrsd.net/schools/varennes

Administrators' Message

February 2018

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Vice-Principal
Michelle Bacon

Administrative Secretary
Clarisse Daudet

Secretary
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**Louis Riel School Division
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900 St. Mary's Road
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204-257-7827

Transportation
(Regular Inquiry)
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With the month of January come and gone, we enter into the second half of the school year. February is an exciting and busy month with a variety of activities. We have many upcoming fun-filled events this month. Our Mini-Olympics began this week with an outstanding Opening Ceremonies, complete with visiting athletes in previous Olympic Games, parade of countries, torch relay, songs and of course, sport demonstrations presented by each classroom. Next, students will tour the world by visiting each classroom and their country. The Festival du Voyageur, Manitoba's largest celebration of French and Métis culture will also be featured later this month. École Varennes will launch our celebrations with a pancake supper on Tuesday, February 13. On Tuesday, February 20, students will spend the day rotating through a full roster of activities including a toboggan relay race, arm wrestling, storytelling, Inuit games and many more. Bannock-making and spirit week dressing up in traditional voyageur round out the week's slate of activities.

As we continue into our school's Festival du Voyageur activities, take time this month to explain why you chose to enrol your child in French Immersion and encourage him or her to take advantage of this wonderful learning opportunity. As parents, you play a key role in your child's French Immersion education. The Festival runs from February 16 to 25. Many activities are available at no charge; others require the purchase of a pass. Information is available by calling 233-ALLÔ or by visiting <http://festivalvoyageur.mb.ca>. This rich, cultural experience takes place just a stone's throw away in St. Boniface. Be sure to take advantage of it! You may like to visit the [French for Life](http://FrenchforLife.com) website with your child to find out about the advantages of French Immersion. What a great opportunity to renew your child's commitment to the French Immersion program!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us or your child's teacher with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Joanne DeCruyenaere, Principal

Michelle Bacon, Vice-principal

Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 8 – Rocks and Rings Curling: 8h30 am to 3 pm during PE classes

Friday, February 9 – Family of Schools Grade 8 Band Day: 9 am to 2:30 pm at CJS

Monday, February 12 – Tour of the World (Mini-Olympics) 12:45-1:45 pm, all classes

Tuesday, February 13 – Tour of the World (Mini-Olympics) 8:45-9:45 pm, all classes

Tuesday, February 13 – Pancake Supper, 5-7 pm

Wednesday, February 14 – Presentation of CJS prospectus to Grade 8 students: 12:45 pm

Thursday, February 15 – Tour of the World (Mini-Olympics) 12:45-1:45 pm

Friday, February 16 – Mini-Olympics Closing Ceremonies: 2-3 pm

Monday, February 19 – Louis Riel Day: No school

Tuesday, February 20 – Festival du Voyageur Activity Day

Friday, February 23 – Hot Lunch

Friday, February 23 – Logan Picton Concert: 12:30-1:30 pm in school gym for all students

Monday, February 26 – Grade 8 visit to CJS: 1-2:30 pm

Tuesday, February 27 – Early Dismissal: 2 pm

Wednesday, February 28 – Grade 7 ELA exam. Grade 8 Français exam (am)

Thursday, March 1 - Grade 7 ELA exam. Grade 8 Français exam (am)

Thursday, March 1 - Kindergarten Information Night: 7 pm in the gym

Staffing News

The Louis Riel School Division has allotted our school a full-time Educational Assistant until the end of March as well as another half-time Educational Assistant until the end of June. The half-time position is currently posted on the divisional's web site and will close later this week. We hope to have the successful candidates in place for both positions by early next week.



Professional Development Days

2017-2018

Friday, March 16

Friday, April 20

Friday, May 11

Friday, June 15

Hot Lunch Dates

Friday, February 23

Friday, March 23

Friday, April 27

Friday, May 25

Friday, June 22

Please check your child's backpack for forms.

Early Dismissal Days (Classes dismissed at 2:00 pm)

Tuesday, February 27

Tuesday, March 20

Tuesday, April 24

Tuesday, May 22

Friday, June 29

News Around the School

Arrival and Dismissal

Daily school attendance is important for all of our students. Students who attend classes regularly are more engaged in their learning and have a better sense of belonging to their class and school. We ask that you please adhere to our school hours: students are expected to be in class by 8:27 am before the morning announcements and are dismissed at 3:00 pm. We thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Absences and Emergencies

The school contacts parents when a child becomes ill, is seriously hurt, or is absent without prior notification. To ensure we can reach you in these emergency situations, it is really important to advise us as soon as possible of any changes in your home, work or cell phone numbers.

If your child needs to be dismissed early, please send a note in advance stating the reason and/or call the office. As well, please report to the office and we will notify the teacher to send your child to the office. Remember to sign-out your child prior to leaving. If your child attends a daycare program, please notify them of your child's absence as well. Thank you!

Pink Shirt Day - February 28

The last Wednesday of February is known as Anti-Bullying Day in Canada, also referred to as Pink Shirt Day. The goal of this day is to promote awareness, understanding, and openness about the problem of bullying and to create a shared commitment to a solution. As a unified commitment to take care of all children and young people, participants are encouraged to wear pink on this day.

Staff at École Varennes will be having many discussions to promote an anti-bullying message to our students. We ask that students wear a Pink Shirt or simply something pink on Pink Shirt Day on February 28.



I Love to Read Week

February is traditionally known as I Love to Read Month in Manitoba. Here at École Varennes, we will be celebrating the love of literacy throughout the week of March 19 to March 23. The literacy committee is busy preparing activities as well as inviting special guests to read to our students. Stay tuned for more information in the next newsletter.



Parent Committee News

The next Parent Committee meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 7 at 6:30 pm in the school library. All parents are welcome. Come drop by and find out what the Parent Committee is all about. A free child care service will be offered. To keep up on Parent Committee happenings, click on the "Parent Committee" link on our main school web site at <http://www.lrsd.net/schools/varennnes>. Meeting agendas, minutes, and other related materials are all posted there for your information. You may also like to check out the bulletin board across from the main office.

School Happenings

Grade 9 Transition

The Collège Jeanne-Sauvé **2018-2019 Prospectus** (student handbook) and registration forms will be distributed to our Grade 8 students on February 14. A tour of Collège Jeanne-Sauvé will occur in the afternoon of February 26. The tour will provide the students with more detailed course information as well as a chance to see their future high school firsthand. Finally, there will be an information evening for the parents of prospective students on Tuesday, March 6 at 7:00 pm in the CJS gymnasium. We ask that all Grade 8 students complete the necessary registration forms and return them to their Grade 8 teacher by the end of this month. This will ensure that they have the best possible chance of being registered in their desired option courses.



Kindergarten Information Evening

An information meeting will be held for parents of children who will be entering Kindergarten next fall. The meeting will take place on **March 1 at 7:00 pm in the school gym.**

If you know of people who may be interested in attending the meeting in order to find out more about the immersion program, and, more specifically about École Varennes, please let them know about this information meeting.

Kindergarten registration will take place during the week of March 19 to March 23 from 8 am to 4 pm, with hours extended to 8 pm on March 22. Children born in 2013 are eligible to register. The child's birth certificate or Manitoba Health card is required. Please call 204-253-1375 for further information.



Operation Donation - Winnipeg Harvest

This year marks the 19th annual Operation Donation School Food Drive for Winnipeg Harvest. École Varennes will be collecting food items and monies during the week of February 26 - March 2. This food drive is in collaboration with Manitoba Public Insurance, Peak of the Market, The Manitoba Teachers' Society and Canada Safeway.

- Did you know that 62,000 people are supplied food each month?
- Did you also know that 43% are children?
- Over the past 18 years, students across the province have raised nearly 481,547 pounds of food?



Let's do our part in helping the needy by donating to this worthy cause. Who knows, we might one day need their help. More information will come as we get closer to this week!

YMCA-YWCA Daycare Program

The YMCA-YWCA offers a Kindergarten daycare program at École Varennes. A Before and After School Program is also offered for students in Grades 1 to 6. We understand parents need to have peace of mind, knowing their children are in a safe nurturing environment that fosters healthy development. We believe that children learn most effectively through play and focus on emergent curriculum. We plan our program based on the child's interest. If you have any questions or would like to register for our program please visit www.ywinnipeg.ca. Click on the "Child Care" icon on the left-hand side. You can contact us by e-mail at varennes@ymcaywca.mb.ca



Student Services News

How to Talk to Kids About Scary News - Dr. Michele Borba (adapted version)

If you are feeling a bit jittery about the news lately, imagine how our kids must feel. We know that constantly hearing about troubling world events does more than just increase children's jitters, but can also cloud their views about the world. Current events can pose additional parental concerns: how to calm kids' worries *and* answer their queries about news involving complicated things like fuel rods, fission, uranium and nuclear energy? Phew! Then there's ISIS, massacres of tourists, and unpredictable severe weather causing havoc.

Though we can't change world events nor shield our children from the harsh life realities, studies show that certain parent responses do make a big difference in helping kids adjust during tough times.

Be Calm to Help Your Kids Stay Calm

In scary times, kids use our behaviour as their model to copy. They will *mirror* our behaviour and will be calmer if you are calmer. Remember, it's not what you say about the news how you react that really makes the difference in helping reduce kids' jitters. So keep your emotions at bay so you don't scare the pants off your kid. Security for younger kids is often better conveyed physically (rocking, hugging and touching) than with our words.

Monitor News Reports

Too much television is never good for kid jitters, but especially those showing graphic images of tragedy. Monitor what your child watches. When in doubt, turn the television off. *Studies show that even though kids may not have personally witnessed a tragedy, they can still be traumatized from viewing troubling news images.*

Consider your child's age and temperament.

Toddlers and preschoolers: Young children are easily traumatized with graphic images and can't separate "real" from "fantasy." They may interpret replayed news reports of a troubling event (such as a tsunami wave or a plane crashing) as additional attacks. Turn off the television.

School-Age: Do not overexpose your kids to media coverage. Newspaper coverage is preferable as a news source because images are not so graphic.

Tweens: A study of over 600 middle school students found that that "late-breaking news without an adult there to comfort or explain" produced anxiety. Watch news reports *with* them so you answer their questions.

Don't forget that your child may get news from digital sources such as cell phones, Internet, and I-Pad. Monitor those sources as well.

Talk Calmly Offering Perspective and Reassurance

Don't assume because your child isn't asking questions that he isn't concerned. Peers talk and often give inaccurate facts increasing those jitters. Talk to your child about the news to offer perspective as well as reassurance using these keys:

- **Explain facts calmly and simply.** "There was troubling news in the world today. "What are you friends saying? Or "What have you heard?" Use your "birds and the bees talk" as a model: not too much, not too little, but just right for what the child needs at the moment.

Too much information can backfire. Instead, give small bits of information on a "need to know basis." The "Rewind Method" can help clarify that your child understands your message: "Now you tell me what I just said." It's always best to hold short, ongoing chats about tough new subjects instead of one long marathon. "I'm here anytime you want to chat."

Student Services News

How to Talk to Kids About Scary News (cont.)

- **Respect feelings.** You want your child to feel comfortable sharing his concerns or worries—whatever they may be. “I’m sad, too!” “Some people cry when they’re upset, other people keep it inside. *Hint:* Don’t try to reason your child’s fears away. His worries are real, but your calm reassurance with the right facts helps reduce jitters.
- **Be Age Appropriate.** Gear your responses to your child’s age, needs and maturity and what he needs to know. Try to anticipate your child’s queries and concerns. Here are things to consider:

Explaining Scary News to Younger Kids:

- **Reassure safety:** Young children are egocentric so reassure your child that harm won’t come to them. “That big wave did hurt a lot of people, but it is hundreds of miles away from here.” “Planes are dropping bombs, but not all planes carry bombs.”
- **Use simple, understandable terms:** Younger kids are literal, so hold off on terms like “tomahawk missiles,” “radiation,” or “nuclear.” A “no fly zone” to a preschooler may mean a place where insects aren’t allowed.
- **Keep it brief.** Don’t overwhelm with too many details: one sentence is often enough. Be prepared to hear the same question again and again which is how a young child processes new information.
- **Give words for feelings:** Their emotion vocabulary is limited so help them find words for their feelings: “You look scared. Let’s talk about your worries.” “I’m sad too. It’s okay to be sad.” Drawing pictures, storytelling or using puppets about worries is helpful.

Explaining Scary News to Older Kids:

- **Reassure safety about victims:** They still need reassurance and want specifics for their own safety as well as others. “The Canadian Health Department is checking the milk and none will be delivered to Canada.” “Our best scientists say radiation will never reach our coast and will blow out to sea.” Tweens and teens are also developing more empathy so often are concerned about other people’s safety. “*The coalition is using precision strikes which means they’re not firing missiles at night and not where there are civilians.*” Teens may want more clarification about what is being done to help those in need. “*Our military is there to offer support.*” “*The Red Cross is sending in food and blankets.*”
- **Give honest answers on “need to know basis.”** Adolescents can discuss events on a more sophisticated level and may ask those “What will happen next?” type questions. Be also prepared for more difficult questions about complicated new coverage like: “*What is nuclear energy?*” or “*Is nuclear power safe?*” Also, be ready to learn about radiation, nuclear reactors and fuel rods from your teen.
- **Extend learning.** Don’t pretend to know answers—just turn them into teachable moments: “*I don’t know. Let’s go online and read what a reactor plant is.*” “*I’m not sure where our ships are firing from. Let’s look on a map.*” Or say you’ll get back with the answer or ask him to ask his science teacher and then tell you. Adolescents are also concerned about “unfairness” issues: “*Why can’t the country solve the problem for themselves?*” Use those moments to discuss your values and hold some dynamic family political discussions.

Share News of Hope and Compassion

While the headlines feature devastation, war and death, there are glorious stories of heroism, cooperation and goodness. It’s important to assure your children that there’s more to the world than destruction and sorrow. Look those “Good News Repots”—the positive stories in the world—to share with your family. For instance, discuss the cooperation and resilience of the Japanese people. Or offer news about a rescue: “*Did you hear about the grandmother and her grandson in Japan who were found after nine days? The rescuers never gave up!*”

Student Services News

How to Talk to Kids About Scary News (cont.)

One proven way to reduce jitters is to find ways for kids to help victims. You might start by asking: *"Why do you think people should do to help?"* Or brainstorm ideas as a family. Model compassion and involvement for your kids to copy: *"I'm concerned about the children in Japan. I'm going to find a charity where I can make a donation to help."*

Or try these ideas:

- **Draw or write letters:** Young children can draw or write letters that convey concern to school children and send them to schools in Vanuatu
- **Put together care packages:** Help your kids put together a "care package" (a teddy bear, crayons, coloring book) and send to a child in Haiti or
- **Make donations:** Older kids can start a clothing drive, collect sleeping bags, raise funds with friends for the Red Cross, or gather all the coins to make a donation.
- **Attend a service:** If your family is religious say a prayer for those affected by the disaster.

Take Your Child's Emotional Pulse

It is normal for kids to be jittery when hearing or seeing tragic news events. Be concerned if anxiety signs like the ones that follow continue to last or increase. If so, get the help of a mental health professional: If your child shows signs of anxiety for more than a few weeks or if you're concerned seek professional help.

SIGNS OF WHEN TO WORRY

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| * Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness | * Behaviour regression: acting out | * Suddenly clingy or withdrawn |
| * Quick to anger, easily upset | * Fatigue, exhaustion | * Inability to focus |
| * Difficulty sleeping, nightmares | * Change in eating patterns | * Headache and nausea |

How a child copes with tragic news depends on factors such age, genetic predisposition, and past experiences. Younger children are often more likely to be overwhelmed by events that might not bother an older child.

Children more vulnerable to tragic news are those who may have experienced a recent tragedy or stress-related incident such as an accident, divorce, illness, death of a loved one, have a deployed parent or loved one near the tragedy or a more anxious or sensitive temperament.

The Bottom Line

Trauma, war, and natural disasters are a sad but inevitable part of life. The good news is that by offering the right support parents can reduce kid jitters, help them learn ways to rebound and instill optimism about their future.

Now take a deep breath, and go hug your kids.

LRSD Public Budget Meeting

Want to know how the Louis Riel School Division plans to spend next year's budget? The LRSD Board of Trustees would like to invite you to attend their annual Public Budget Consultation Meeting on **Tuesday, February 13 at 7 pm** at the LRSD Board Office at 900 St. Mary's Rd. The Board will present its Draft Budget for the 2018-2019 school year that evening and seek feedback from parents, school leaders, and community members.

IS IT BULLYING?



<p>TEASING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is having fun • No one is getting hurt • Everyone is participating equally 	<p>CONFLICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one is having fun • There is a possible solution to the problem • Equal balance of power
<p>MEAN MOMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone being hurt on purpose • Reaction to a strong feeling or emotion • An isolated event 	<p>BULLYING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone being hurt on purpose • Often repetitive • Imbalance of power

French for Life is on Facebook!

Come check out the page and watch for updates on all of our upcoming projects and events. You'll also be able to discover new music, books, movies, games, as well as other fun French language events taking place across Manitoba!

Visit the French for Life Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FrenchForLife; don't forget to **"Like"** us before you leave and spread the word!

Parents, teachers, administrators and students can also visit our blog at www.frenchforlife.ca to learn about cultural events and other upcoming opportunities taking place *en français* in Manitoba.



March 2018

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

			1 Stay N Play 8:45- 11:00am Closed PM	2 Gym N Play 8:45-11:00am Closed PM
5 Stay N Play 8:45- 11:00am Closed PM	6 Baby N Me 9:00-11:00am Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	7 Sledding at St Vital Park 9:30-11:30am Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	8 Stay N Play 8:45-11:00 Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	9 Family Breakfast 9:00-11:00am Closed PM
12 Gym N Play 8:45-11:00am Closed PM	13 Baby N Me 9:00-11:00am Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	14 Pancakes and Pajamas 9:00-11:00 Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	15 Stay N Play 8:45-11:00 Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	16 CLOSED INSERVICE
19 Stay N Play 8:45- 11:00am Closed PM	20 Baby N Me 9:00-11:00am Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	21 Kids Cooking 8:45-11:00am Coffee Time 1:00-2:30pm	22 CENTRE CLOSED Family Centre PD	23 Stay N Play 8:45- 11:00am Closed PM
26	27 SPRING	28 BREAK!	29 CLOSED	30

CENTRE FAMILIAL MARCH NEWSLETTER ÉCOLE VARENNES



Weather depending, join us at St. Vital Park for a morning of sledding and winter fun. We will bring some snacks, a few sleds and some winter outdoor activities.

March 7th 9:30-11:30am



Pancakes and Pajamas will take place on Wednesday, March 14th, 9:00-11:00am. Come in your pajamas, and bring your stuffies. Special pancakes will be served for snack, along with a special craft activity.



Ready for School will be starting up April 16th to May 31st. Any child starting Kindergarten in the fall at École Varennes can register for this FREE program that looks to help your child be successful in entering Kindergarten. Registration starts on March 1st at Kindergarten Information Night. Please see me for more information.

Baby N Me runs every Tuesday from 9:00-11:00am. We will be having some guest speakers and special activities coming up. Babies 0-12 months are welcome.

Gym N Play will happen March 2nd and March 12th. Come run around in the gym, play with some balls and maybe some parachute games. Indoor shoes required.

Shawna Crane-Family Centre Coordinator
shawna.crane@lrsd.net

Kristine Bettencourt-Family Centre Assistant
kristine.bettencourt@lrsd.net

École Varennes Family Centre is funded by Healthy Child Manitoba "Putting children and Families First", the Louis Riel School Division and St. Vital Parent Child Coalition. <http://www.stvitalpcc.ca/>