

## Level Up: Winnipeg Sparks Imagination and Innovation in Manitoba Students with Minecraft Challenge

WINNIPEG, MB (April 10, 2023) – Launching April 10, Level Up, Winnipeg will give students the opportunity to imagine a more sustainable and inclusive vision of our city in a custom Winnipeg world rendered in the Minecraft universe.

Microsoft Canada and Minecraft Education collaborated with Winnipeg’s six school divisions, Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, Lord Selkirk School Division, Balmoral Hall, and the City of Winnipeg to create a virtual version of Winnipeg designed specifically for students.

“We know that our students let their imaginations run wild within Minecraft, so we want to provide a structured approach that encourages our students to design solutions to challenges we’ve faced throughout our past and into the present,” said Andy McKiel, IT Coach, St. James-Assiniboia School Division. “Through Level Up, Winnipeg, we’ll be able to see our city through the eyes of our students and imagine a brighter future for everyone who calls Winnipeg home.”

Students from all grade levels across the city and surrounding area will have the opportunity to explore, create, and model designs in Minecraft, reimagining Winnipeg’s downtown area. Students will visit Old Market Square in the Exchange District, the Legislative Building, the Thunderbird House, and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Beginning April 10, students will work with their teachers to build a design that responds to the challenge prompt: “How can we envision a connected, equitable, and sustainable downtown that moves Winnipeg forward without leaving anyone behind?” Schools will submit their top designs to be evaluated by a selection committee before being presented to the City of Winnipeg.

“Level Up, Winnipeg is a dynamic project that will fuel the creative spark for the next generation of urban planners and designers,” said Mayor Scott Gillingham. “By diving into the world of Minecraft, our young builders will have fun reimagining Winnipeg’s downtown area and exploring some of our iconic sites. The next game-changing idea for Winnipeg’s future might just emerge from this project.”

Minecraft Education is a game-based learning platform that helps build key 21st century skills such as coding and creative problem-solving, which is why many teachers in Manitoba schools use the platform to help students explore learning a variety of topics.

“We’re delighted to support Level Up Winnipeg and look forward to seeing the creative ideas that students bring to life in Minecraft,” said Allison Matthews, Head of Minecraft Education. “This challenge is a unique opportunity to engage young minds in envisioning a connected, equitable, and sustainable future for Winnipeg’s downtown, and to empower them to make a positive impact on their community. We’re honoured to be a part of this exciting initiative.”

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