



ANNUAL REPORT



2023
2024



LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION
LRSD.NET



**“ONE CHILD,
ONE TEACHER,
ONE BOOK,
AND ONE PEN
CAN CHANGE
THE WORLD.”**

MALALA YOUSAFZAI



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We Are All Treaty People



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) brings together a community of schools on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Ininewak, and Dakota.

Our division is located on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We recognize that Manitoba is also the traditional land of the Anishininiwak and Dene.

We respect the treaties made on this land and acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and present. We dedicate ourselves to authentic alliances with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation.

We recognize and honour Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, the source of Winnipeg's life-sustaining drinking water, as well as the Treaty Territories that generate and provide the electricity that powers daily activity throughout the province and beyond.

The ongoing development of LRSD's land acknowledgement is guided by our Indigenous Council of Grandparents, and we thank them for their generosity and collaboration.

OUR VISION

OUR VISION

Our Vision is for all members of our community to excel as caring, confident, capable, and resilient life-long learners who contribute to a democratic and sustainable world.

OUR MISSION

OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment, where personal and collective learning are valued, and each one of us reaches our full potential.

OUR MOTTO

OUR MOTTO

Thriving Learners ∞ Flourishing Communities
Des apprenants épanouis ∞ Des communautés florissantes
Gegwe-gikenjigewaad ∞ Mamino-ayaang Eyaang

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

**Students and staff in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD)
are powerful forces for positive change.**

Individually and collectively, they raise their voices against injustice and intolerance, lead reconciliation efforts, challenge stereotypes, and advocate for equality and equity. They provide unwavering support for one another, offering a sense of certainty in uncertain times through kindness, caring, and thoughtfulness. This is evident in our Senior Leadership Team, who lead with experience, expertise, compassion, and genuine concern for the well-being of all students, families, staff, and each other.

Your school board remains steadfast in our commitment to safe and welcoming working and learning environments where everyone feels respected and valued for who they are. The work we are doing, the conversations we are having, and the bridges we are building in LRSD will lead to a more compassionate, understanding, and empowered community.

This year's report showcases success stories that demonstrate the impact of our focus on belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. It is full of reasons to feel proud of the accomplishments, successes, achievements, and milestones we celebrate as a growing and flourishing school division.

Sandy Nemeth,
Chair

**“We must always take
sides. Neutrality helps the
oppressor, never the victim.
Silence encourages the
tormentor, never
the tormented.”**

- Elie Wiesel

“

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2022
2026



The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is governed by a nine-person Board of Trustees elected every four years by the LRSD community.

The board advocates for, and is accountable to, the LRSD community on matters of public education throughout the division. Elections are held in conjunction with the Winnipeg Civic Election and are run on behalf of metro school divisions by the City of Winnipeg.

To see how the division is divided into wards and to find out which ward you live in, please visit our website at www.lrsd.net and click on the School Board heading.

Ward 1



Cindy Turner
(204) 294-3047



Ian Walker
(204) 781-0438
** Elected June 6, 2024*

Ward 2



Chris Sigurdson
Vice-Chair
(204) 230-4601



Irene Nordheim
(204) 290-3739

Ward 3



Sandy Nemeth
Chair
(204) 230-6475



Darlene Gerrior
(204) 293-3621



Ryan Palmquist
(204) 290-9976

Ward 4



Chipalo Simunyola
(204) 688-7479



Pamela Kolochuk
(204) 297-5339



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Louis Riel School Division Community,

Reflecting on the 2023-24 school year, I'm filled with gratitude for the efforts and achievements highlighted in this Annual Report to the Community (ARC).

Our community's resilience and dedication shone brightly through various initiatives and recognitions. These pages celebrate some of our students' and staff's achievements and outstanding contributions in 2023-24. Here is a glimpse into the stories I invite you to read.

Our Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) took flight, setting the stage for an exciting and hopeful future.

A highlight for me was the bold decision by trustees to ask local taxpayers to support the expansion of Universal Full-Day (everyday) Kindergarten to all 30 early years schools starting in September 2024, giving all our youngest learners a strong start and supporting working families.

The René Deleurve Centre's Community Kitchen has become a vital source of nourishment, providing essential food services and cooking classes, contributing to food security and community building. With the Manitoba government making a significant annual investment of \$1.5 million to expand school nutrition programming, I'm excited to see the reach and impact the Community Kitchen will have this upcoming school year.

We continue to make explicit commitments to equity and inclusion on the policy front. Our new Employment Equity Policy obligates us to build a workforce that better reflects our diverse community. It holds the promise of being a key step toward creating a more just workplace in the service of a more equitable learning environment.

Project-based learning isn't only for students. In 2024, we introduced a project-based approach to support our school leaders' learning and growth. This initiative has enhanced collaboration and better empowered our leaders to inspire and guide meaningful change. Through hands-on projects and practical experiences, we are cultivating a culture of collaborative inquiry to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

We're also making our mark locally and globally. The Dakota Collegiate Concert Band's performance in Japan, our International Student Program, and École St. Germain Enviroclub's environmental advocacy showcase our students' talents and commitment to positive change here and on the international stage.

We launched the LRSD Data Hub, our "one-stop-shop" for division-wide data. This tool offers metrics on our MYSP by sharing up-to-date data on student enrolment, attendance, wellness, and achievement. It allows deeper insight into our work to support flourishing school communities while reinforcing our commitment to data stewardship and transparency. I'm excited to see the new data reports we publish to measure the impact of our strategic actions.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on these accomplishments. My sincere appreciation goes to our families, students, staff, educators, leadership team, and board of trustees. Your dedication to our shared values and commitments makes our vibrant learning community possible.

I hope reading the ARC for 2023-24 inspires excitement as we continue to nurture a workplace and learning community where everyone can thrive in 2024-25.

Warm regards,

Christian Michalik,
Superintendent & CEO

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) supports and works alongside more than 2,000 staff, serving more than 17,500 learners across 40 schools.

VISION

The SLT's vision for LRSD is for every person to be cared for morally, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally on their journey of learning and well-becoming.

MISSION

The central focus of the SLT is to nurture learning and well-becoming in LRSD by cultivating the conditions for impactful collective practice in all LRSD schools.



Christian Michalik
Superintendent & CEO



Ron Cadez
Assistant Superintendent,
Student, Clinical, & Instructional Services
J.H. Bruns Collegiate and
Collège Jeanne-Sauvé Family of Schools



Jamie Rudnicki
Secretary-Treasurer & CFO



Jeff Anderson
Assistant Superintendent,
Policy, Planning, & Research
Collège Béliveau and
Windsor Park Collegiate Family of Schools



Michelle Jean-Paul
Assistant Superintendent, Staff Services
Glenlawn Collegiate Family of Schools



Darcy Cormack
Assistant Superintendent,
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion &
Anti-Racism Services
Dakota Collegiate and
Nelson McIntyre Family of Schools
René Deleurme Centre
Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre



LRSD BY THE NUMBERS

STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, & STAFF



17,526
Total students*



40 SCHOOLS:



26
English



13
French
Immersion



1
Technical
& Vocational



2,085
Total staff*



1,190
Teachers (includes principals
and vice-principals)



895
Non-teaching staff

*Numbers pulled on
June 28, 2024

LOUIS RIEL ARTS & TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

The Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre offers courses to students in trades, hospitality, media, early childhood education, business management, and more.

13

Certificate Programs

243

Certificate Program Recipients

175

Participants in
work experience
opportunities

102

Recipients of
apprenticeship accreditation

6

Adult Education
Certificate Programs

119

Adult Education Certificate
Recipients (on June 28)



RENÉ DELEURME CENTRE

The René Deleurme Centre (RDC) shares a building with Lavallee School and hosts a range of community-based programs and services to support children, youth, adults, and families. Staff at RDC also coordinate school-based summer programming with a focus on equity and inclusion.



Through a weekly food depot and emergency food cupboard, RDC distributed:

More than **67,693** pounds of food to community and schools

961 cost-shared Fresh Food Boxes, which community members purchased over 22 pick-up weeks

Through the LRSD Zone Settlement program:

More than **623** new client referrals received for settlement service via community partner organizations

574 clients participated in programs and information sessions (including English Conversation, Sewing, and Youth Wellness Programs)

The settlement team provided service in more than **12** languages

Through RDC, LRSD has an ongoing partnership with the Mobile Vision Care Clinic (MVCC) to increase access to eye care for students and families in the LRSD community. In the 2023-2024 school year, this included:

1,644 Comprehensive eye exams

392 Prescription eyeglasses

16 Mobile Vision Care Clinics (15 schools + 1 community clinic)

Indigenous Cultural Programming:

37 Traditional Teaching sessions with Knowledge Carrier Eric Flett for caregivers

34 Beading & Breakfast sessions

10 Full Moon Ceremonies, **1** Pipe Ceremony, and **1** Letting Go Ceremony

3 Sharing Circles

2 Medicine Picking Outings for caregivers and youth

1 Red Road to Healing program

Parent Mentorship Programming:

10-week program, **9** adult participants volunteering in classrooms and receiving weekly professional development sessions

ASPIRE (Academic Summer Program Including Recreation and Education) is an equity-based program designed to help students continue to grow as learners throughout the summer. In the summer of 2024, there were:

380 children from **19** schools

5 sites

RDC also hosted conversations to guide its work:

1 formal Community Conversation

DOLLARS & CENTS

At a special meeting on Tuesday, March 12, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) Board of Trustees approved a \$247,000,027 budget for the 2024-25 school year.

“Ensuring the success of our students is at the heart of our decision-making,” said Sandy Nemeth, LRSD Board Chair. “With careful consideration of our strategic priorities, we have allocated resources to support student success and address the needs of our rapidly growing school division. This budget will enable us to continue delivering high-quality education while meeting the evolving needs of all our students and staff.”

Of the 7.5 per cent increase to the special levy in the 2024-25 budget, 6.5 per cent is allocated for additional classroom and support staff, bringing the total to 675 full-time equivalent (FTE) educational assistants and 1,193 (FTE) teachers, including principals and vice-principals; six additional bus routes, bringing the total to 91; and an increase of \$1,572,829 to the maintenance and local infrastructure budget, signaling a commitment to repairing and upgrading aging elementary and high school buildings.

“As we navigate the challenges of growing enrolment and inflation, as well as having for too long underfunded the maintenance of aging school buildings, this budget emphasizes a forward-thinking approach to providing adequate and sustainable funding for public education in LRSD,” said Jamie Rudnicki, Secretary-Treasurer.

The other 1 per cent of the special levy is for the expansion of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) to all 30 schools

offering early years programming, with a projected cost of \$2,571,469. This projected cost includes:

- **Additional Teaching Staff (22.00 FTE);**
- **Additional Educational Assistants (12.50 FTE);**
- **A one-time Furniture and Resource cost; and**
- **Transportation (cost savings).**

“Foundations are everything,” said Christian Michalik, Superintendent & CEO. “By adding Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) to all 30 schools, we’re laying a foundation for every child’s success. This initiative supports working families, nurtures students, and strengthens our community. I’m looking forward to the work ahead collaborating with staff, families, and childcare partners to implement the Board’s vision.”

PROJECTED ADDITIONAL COST TO MAKE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN UNIVERSAL

Additional Schools	21
Additional Classes	42
Additional Teaching Staff (22.00 FTE)	\$2,248,726
Additional Educational Assistants (12.50 FTE)	\$554,510
Furniture and Resources (One-Time)	\$112,000
Transportation (Cost Savings)	(\$343,767)
Projected Additional Cost	\$2,571,469



A SNAPSHOT OF LRSD'S

2024
2025

\$247,000,027 BUDGET

925

84%

\$207,292,996

Staff Salaries
and Benefits

16%

\$39,707,031

Operating

YEAR OVER YEAR ENROLMENT GROWTH

*budgeted
enrolment



2021-22

349



2022-23

918



2023-24



2024-25

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



49.22%

\$121,583,214

Local Funding



48.70%

\$120,282,715

Provincial Government



1.14%

Other

0.94%

International Student Program

TOTAL STAFF



1,114

Teachers



675

Educational Assistants



333

Non-Teaching Support Staff



79

Principals & Vice-Principals



68

School & Classroom
Support Team
*Includes Clinical, Instructional,
Indigenous Support Teams*



53

Board Office Staff



9

Trustees



8

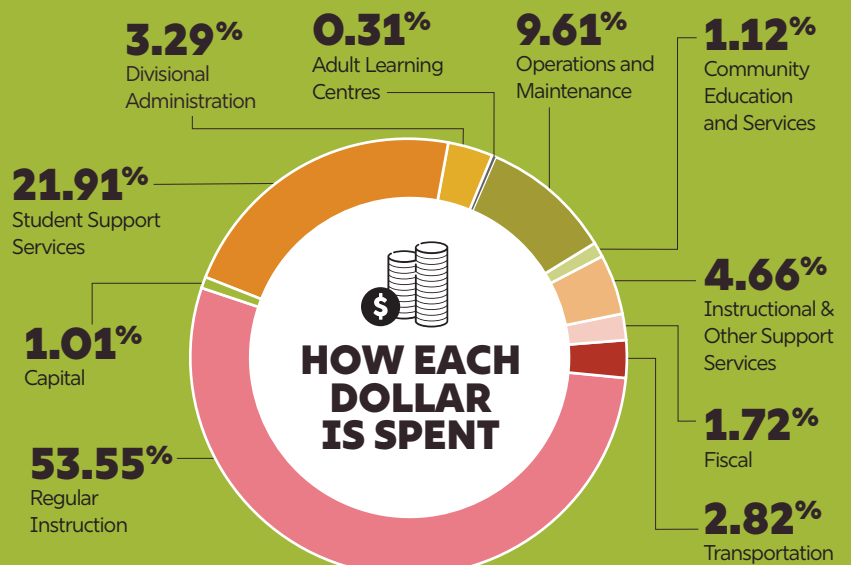
International Program

WHAT DOES THIS BUDGET MEAN FOR PROPERTY OWNERS?

Based on an average home in LRSD valued at: **\$381,300**

Results in a property tax increase of:

7.50% or
\$149.95 a year
(**\$12.50** a month or **\$0.40** a day)



ADDITIONAL STAFF

2024
2025

59.37

Teachers

34.84

Educational
Assistants

4.56

Support
Staff

2.00

Clinicians

DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Divisional administration is made
up of the following:

Board Office
Administration

2.70%

International Student
Program Administration

0.59%

BRICKS & MORTAR



Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) invests in spaces where learners thrive and communities can flourish. Funding for capital investments is a combination of mostly provincial and divisional investments. Additionally, we receive support from the City of Winnipeg, parent advisory councils for playground improvements, and generous contributions from private donors.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN SPACE RENOVATIONS

École Van Belleghem

Library Reconfiguration to Build
Additional Kindergarten Classroom

\$139,630

Island Lakes Community School

Additional Washrooms and
Reconfiguration of Library

\$491,285

OUTDOOR FACILITY PROJECTS

Collège Béliveau

300-metre Rubberized Running Track

\$838,000

Glenwood School

Parking Lot

\$90,300

Monterey Board Office

Catch Basin Replacement

\$53,025

Nelson McIntyre Collegiate

200-metre Rubberized Running Track

\$555,450

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

Dakota Collegiate

Carpet Replacement

\$53,182

Darwin & Glenwood School

Gym Floor Replacement

\$59,263

École Howden

Floor Replacement

\$82,929

École Guyot

Music Room Renovations

\$58,768

École

Marie-Anne-Gaboury

Gender Neutral Washrooms

\$64,625

Shamrock School

Classroom Renovations
and Additional Lockers

\$45,145

École Howden, École Marie-Anne- Gaboury, & Windsor School

Public Address System Replacement

\$56,461

CAPITAL PROJECTS

A new French Immersion K-8 School in Sage Creek
to serve Sage Creek and Bonavista communities

\$63,843,833

Island Lakes Community School Modular Classrooms

\$924,046

J.H. Bruns Collegiate Roof Structure
Reinforcement Project

\$1,233,396

J.H. Bruns Collegiate North Basement Wall Repair

\$67,804

THE FIRST YEAR OF THE MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2023-2027

In 2023-24, we marked the inaugural year of our new Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP). The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) MYSP is comprehensive and progressive. The plan draws its strength from a holistic approach and features a strong emphasis on decolonizing systems and practices, student agency, and broad community engagement.

The plan is a response to key insights gleaned from the Progress Report: *Taking Stock of our MYSP for 2019-2023*, published in March 2023. Ongoing opportunities for community engagement further shaped and refined the 25 strategic actions guiding our journey until 2027.

Three other important documents also informed the plan: the *Manitoba Government's K to 12 Education Action Plan*, Manitoba's Indigenous Education Policy Framework — *Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With* — and the *International Science and Evidence based Education (ISEE) Assessment*, published in 2022.

The MYSP articulates a multi-disciplinary effort, building on many provincial and national research projects and initiatives that LRSD is co-designing with universities and educational partners.

The focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) is robust. It infuses all aspects of the plan. Strong emphasis on Indigenous perspectives, languages, and teachings are central to the overall strategy. The inclusion of UN Sustainable Development Goals with an emphasis on Indigenous rights and land-based education is forward-thinking and intended to offer tangible hope for our children's future.

The proposed expansion of language programs — including Indigenous languages, French Immersion, and international options — strives toward equity.

The plan's explicit and significant focus on learner agency, student voice in decision-making, and personalized learning aligns with contemporary educational research.

Some of the proposed actions include universal early screening and a focus on formative assessment to better support learning, as well as an emphasis on project-based learning, arts, practical arts, technical vocational education, and career readiness to better engage learners.

The MYSP commits LRSD to community involvement, through partnerships with families and collaborations with governments and external organizations.

The inclusion of employee wellness to support student wellness, trauma-responsive practices, and social-emotional learning demonstrates a progressive approach to mental health and well-being.

In the first year of the MYSP, two strategic actions made particularly strong progress:

- **Strategic Action 4.3 Universal Full-Day Kindergarten & Access to Before-and-After School Care**
- **Strategic Action 4.4 Universal Nutrition Program**

As part of its budget deliberations, the board boldly decided to implement Universal Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) for September 2024. This locally supported taxpayer investment will provide all five-year-olds in LRSD with a full day (everyday) to explore, learn, grow, and play. With FDK implemented, we can now strengthen our collaboration with

childcare partners to expand access to before-and-after school care and better support the creation of more pre-school childcare spaces.

As part of its budget for 2024-25, the Manitoba government has committed to a significant annual investment of \$1.5 million to expand our school nutrition programming for the 2024-25 school year. This annual funding will help us take an important leap forward in providing universal access to healthy, nutritious meals and snacks — nourishing the bodies, minds, and spirits of our students.

The MYSP's success will ultimately depend on resource allocation, implementation, and ongoing evaluation. By identifying specific, measurable targets, LRSD is effectively tracking progress, identifying areas needing attention, and demonstrating the impact of its strategic plan. To learn about the latest updates regarding the plan's 25 strategic actions and measurable improvements, visit our website using the QR code.



Use the QR codes below to review the documents mentioned in this article.



Taking Stock of our MYSP
for 2019-2023



K-12 Education
Action Plan



Mamāhtawisiwin
The Wonder We Are Born With



International Science and
Evidence based Education (ISEE)
Assessment



LRSD.net

SCHOOL STATS MADE SIMPLE: LRSD'S DATA HUB



All around us, we see a world increasingly driven by data. Data can help us understand the bigger picture, allow us to compare situations, and give us the context needed to make informed decisions about how to improve our school division and help students. It can also help others in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) community understand what's happening at their schools.

We launched the LRSD Data Hub in 2023-24 to provide the LRSD community with data dashboards about enrolment, attendance, student achievement, student diversity, engagement, and well-being, as well as to reinforce our commitment to data stewardship and transparency.

While student and staff attendance dashboards have lived on our website since midway through the COVID-19 pandemic, those resources lacked an easy-to-access location. Enrolment statistics have always been displayed but were updated just once per year.

We decided a more obvious and regularly updated “one-stop-shop” webpage was in order.

“The Data Hub promotes data literacy across our community,” said Marnie Wilson, Divisional Vice-Principal of Data Literacy. “And it gives us another opportunity to be transparent about the decisions and progress we’re making.”

Our one-stop-shop Data Hub refreshes daily, so community members can be sure they’re getting the most accurate and up-to-date picture of the division. The data is presented in an interactive and eye-catching manner, because let’s face it, the modern eye struggles to focus when a webpage looks as though it’s running on Windows 95.

Besides providing a wide-scope view of our division’s make-up and goings-on, the Data Hub can also help people delve

deeper into the specifics of their school communities.

For example, if you wanted to know how many students live in homes in which Tagalog, Urdu, Tigrinya, or more than 120 other languages are spoken, you could. If you wanted to follow illness-related absence trends — which of course was of great interest in recent years — you could do that, too.

Our most recent addition is the Learning, Engagement, and Well-being Dashboard, which measures the impact of our

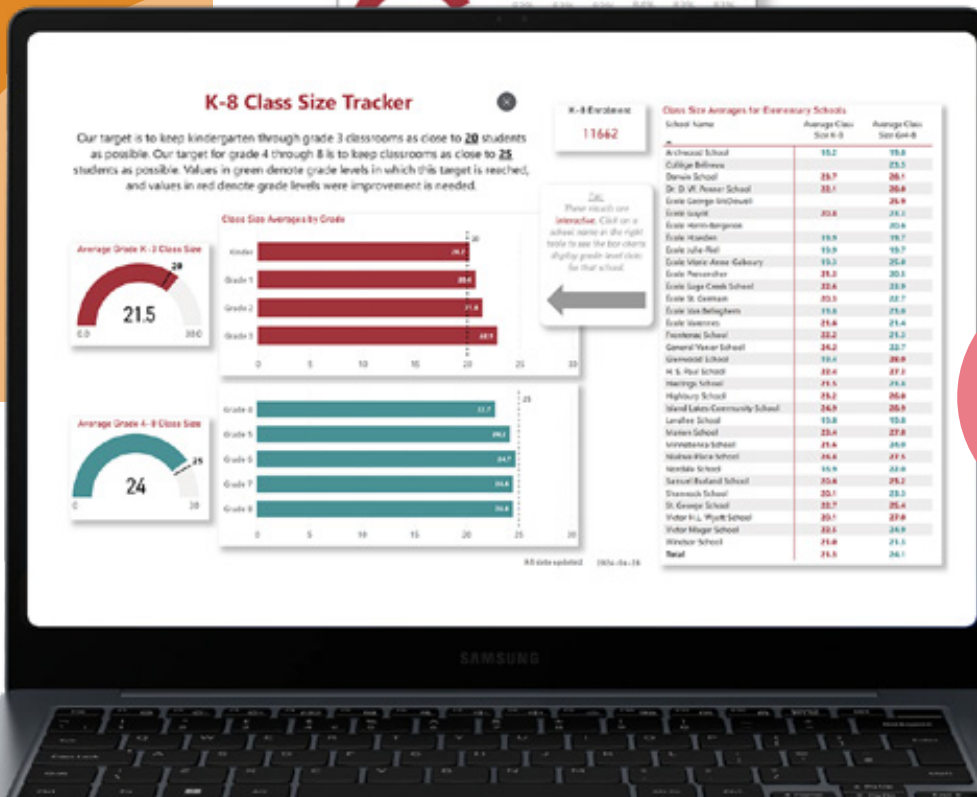
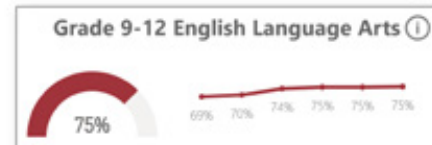
new Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP). It shows progress on key indicators and allows the community to drill into data like never before. We've also recently added the Graduation Rates Dashboard and the Grade 9 Credit Attainment Dashboard.

The Data Hub is a living project. We'll continue to refine and improve it, adding more key data, particularly to the newest Learning, Engagement, and Well-being Dashboard — and we'll keep our eyes and ears open as we respond to the emerging needs of the LRSD community.



Learning Indicators Dashboard

Tip: Hovering over the top right corner of a tile will provide a description of the measure. Clicking on a tile will open a more detailed view of the data.



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS TOO

In the fast-evolving landscape of education, effective leadership is paramount to advancing strategic priorities.

Nurturing that leadership is essential and starts by being responsive to school leaders' learning and well-being needs. In November 2023, the executive of the Louis Riel Association of School Administrators (LRASA) shared results of a wellness survey with the Senior Leadership Team. One takeaway was a need to reimagine the monthly leadership meetings to be more meaningful, collaborative, and productive.

In January 2024, Christian Michalik, Superintendent & CEO, introduced the idea of Project-Based Leadership Learning to the monthly leadership meetings as a response to the survey. Superintendent Michalik proposed a project-based learning approach to better support principals and vice-principals. He suggested a research-informed model inspired by the project-based learning teachers are implementing across classrooms in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). Just as project-based learning is proving to be a valuable approach for engaging students in active, student-centered learning, it could prove to be an effective way to develop collective efficacy amongst our leaders. By using the project-based learning process to solve real problems and advance strategic priorities in our schools, we could reimagine monthly meetings to be genuine opportunities to learn and grow as leaders.

Since February, Project-Based Leadership Learning has transformed the monthly leadership meetings into amazingly creative, collaborative, and productive learning opportunities bringing together school administrators and colleagues from the School and Classroom Support Team (SCST). The projects stemming from this collective learning have supported a wide range of initiatives in 2023-24:

- **implementing structured literacy**
- **supporting multilingual learners**
- **developing anti-racist practice**
- **creating trauma-sensitive classrooms**
- **building data literacy**
- **raising student voices**
- **supporting neurodivergent learners**
- **integrating Indigenous perspectives and land-based learning**
- **promoting an ethic of care and hospitality**

Project-Based Leadership Learning has provided a framework for meaningful engagement. Each project has aligned with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), ensuring efforts focus on the four strategic priorities. The MYSP gives direction, helping leaders allocate their time and energy toward advancing the 25 strategic actions.

One exemplary project that highlights the effectiveness of Project-Based Leadership Learning is the Nelson McIntyre Collegiate Family of Schools initiative. Their project centred



around the need for culturally responsive education that prioritizes the voices and experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

“We started with the overarching question: how do we develop our leadership capacity in developing culturally responsive practices?” said Shelly Hopper, former Principal of NMC. “We met with one of the grandmothers from our divisional Council of Grandparents as part of this work and asked them, ‘How do we engage community? How do we be culturally responsive leaders?’ She shared the importance of going into the community to engage with people, rather than just inviting people in.”

The discussions and activities focused on unpacking stereotypes and dismantling colonial structures through storytelling and dialogue, as well as fostering lifelong learning among staff to respond to the culturally diverse needs of the community. Key to the project was the importance of continuous learning and growth for both students and staff in all four schools and embedding the principles of anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their shared MYP.

The Indigenous Education team’s activities included teepee building, activities centred around art from the land, a Red River Walk adapted from the Métis Walk, and storytelling learning. An activity on the land involved a fire and gathering for community building.

The staff aimed to engage the community through various events, including first aid courses, babysitting, and community bingo.

The project emphasized the importance of recognizing and challenging colonial structures in education, highlighting the ongoing nature of learning and the need to continuously unpack stereotypes and challenge assumptions.

“We learned from community members who carry the teachings and the knowledge to better do the work of serving the community,” said Alana White, Principal of Marion School.

Participants shared experiences challenging stereotypes and recognized the importance of continuing to grow and learn to create a more connected and responsive community.

“We hope to sustain this work of creating safe spaces when engaging in potentially polarizing conversations,” said Izzeddin Hawamda, Anti-Racist Education Professional Learning Initiative Coordinator. “As a Palestinian, my story is one that could be called polarizing, but to me it isn’t. My existence is not polarizing or controversial.”

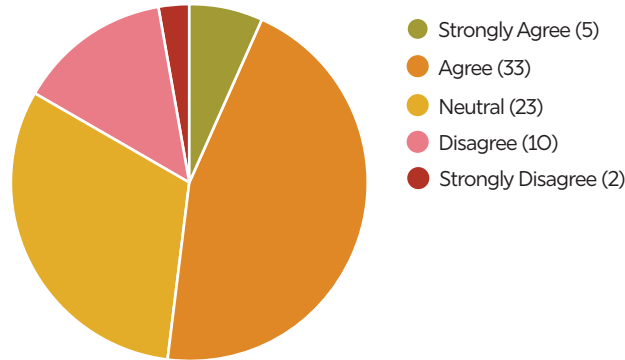
As the survey results from the spring survey suggest, Project-Based Leadership Learning has transformed monthly leadership meetings and fostered a rich culture of collaboration and continuous learning. That learning has sparked creativity leading to concrete action. This innovation is proving to be an effective approach to nurture school leaders’ collective ability to navigate meaningful change in schools.

NELSON McINTYRE COLLEGIATE FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

Archwood School Marion School Nordale School Nelson McIntyre Collegiate

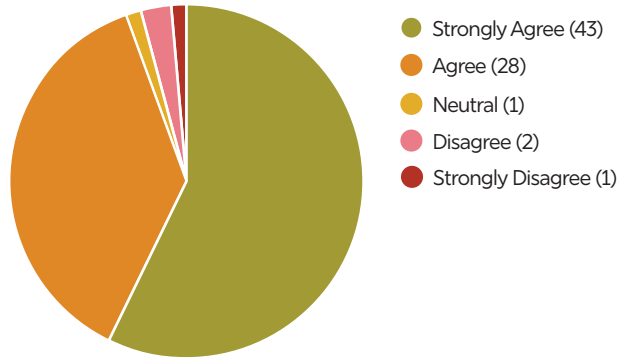
FALL 2023 SURVEY

Leadership Team meetings offer meaningful time for me to collaborate with my colleagues



SPRING 2024 SURVEY

The new Leadership Team meeting format offers me an opportunity to collaborate more effectively with my colleagues



A SHOUTOUT TO STAFF & STUDENTS

With 40 schools and more than 17,500 students, there's a lot to celebrate in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). Here are just a few of the highlights and achievements from the 2023-24 school year:

Governor General Awards:

Lord Dufferin, Canada's third Governor General after Confederation, created the Academic Medals in 1873 to encourage academic excellence across the nation. Over the years, they have become the most prestigious award students in Canadian schools can receive. At least one student from each LRSD high school received the award:

- Jenna Armstrong, Dakota Collegiate Institute
- Sarah Boissonneault, Glenlawn Collegiate Institute
- Stephany Chuang, Nelson McIntyre Collegiate
- Samantha Eagles, Collège Béliveau
- Jenny Hwang, J.H. Bruns Collegiate
- Kavlesh Galhorta, Dakota Collegiate Institute
- Olena Khudina, Collège Jeanne-Sauvé
- Kai-Yi (Sylvester) Mao, Windsor Park Collegiate

Celebrating Social Work

The Manitoba Association of School Social Workers recognized one of our school social workers, Kim Mackey, for her outstanding contributions to the Social Work profession. An integral member of both clinical and school teams, Kim approaches her work holistically, fostering positive change within the realms of crucial relationships and environments.

Excellent Educators

Karen Duffield was this year's recipient of the Province of Manitoba's Outstanding School Leader Award, which recognizes the work she has done to welcome students and staff merging from a nearby school and cultivate a feeling of belonging for all. Karen tackled difficult and delicate situations with grace and set up a student group to encourage and empower students to take the initiative to create positive change amongst their peers and community.

Rachel Robinson was this year's recipient of the Province of Manitoba's Outstanding New Teacher Award. Rachel has worked to improve school culture through initiatives including Community Helpers, a student advocacy group that helps students become leaders by helping organize meals-to-go, spirit week, newsletters, eco-friendly activities, and otherwise respond to the needs of the school.

Guardian of the Books

Brad Fallis, Teacher-Librarian at Darwin and Victor H.L. Wyatt Schools won the 2024 Outstanding Teacher-Librarian of the Year Award. This annual provincial award honours practicing teacher-librarians who are making an outstanding contribution to school librarianship in Manitoba. Brad was honoured by the Manitoba School Library Association for "the high calibre of his work, commitment to professional development, and demonstrated leadership."

Inspiring Environmental Action

In March 2024, the École St. Germain Enviroclub received recognition from Mike Moyes, MLA, marking a significant milestone in their journey of environmental advocacy. The MLA commended the club's dedication and innovative approach towards promoting sustainability within the school and beyond. This acknowledgement not only validates the efforts of the students and faculty involved, but also highlights the importance of grassroots initiatives in driving environmental action.

Jules Lavallee Memorial Bursary

Zailey Cameron and Dominique Elk, graduating students at Dakota and Windsor Park Collegiates, both received the Jules Lavallee Memorial Bursary at the 2024 Graduation Powwow. This award recognizes graduating Indigenous students who have developed/used/shared their gifts to fulfil goals and aspirations in relation to themselves, their families, and communities.

Parlez-Vous Français?

Each year the Éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba recognizes an individual or group that promotes French-language education in Manitoba. Philippe Picoux, a teacher at École Henri-Bergeron was selected as the recipient of the Award for Promoting French Language Education. Philippe's dedication to promoting French language education is evident through his work in the Grade 4 Middle Immersion program. Philippe fosters a dynamic and immersive learning environment where students develop proficiency in French and gain a deep appreciation for Francophone culture.

Positive Catalyst Effect

Randy Lange, science, geography, and chemistry teacher at J.H. Bruns Collegiate won the Outstanding Dedication to Science Education Award. This annual award recognizes a teacher who has demonstrated excellence in science teaching. His engaging and fun approach to science helps students feel welcome and accepted in his classroom.

Sharing and Celebrating Culture

Sequoya Handel is one of Manitoba's youngest Indigenous flute players and has travelled all over Turtle Island performing musically and dancing Fancy Bustle, Men's Traditional, and Grass Dancing. Sequoya, a Grade 10 student at Dakota Collegiate Institute from St. Theresa Point, was honoured at the 2023 Manitoba Indigenous Youth Achievement Awards in the category of Artistic Performance. This award goes to an individual who achieves artistic distinction in a performance medium.

Strumming into Schools

MusiCounts, recognized as Canada's music education charity, has demonstrated a commitment to making music education inclusive, sustainable, and accessible for youth across the country. In the spring of 2024, MusiCounts made a generous donation to LRSD through Long & McQuade, which was

made possible by Gibson Guitars. LRSD was privileged to receive a donation of 17 brand-new Epiphone Songmaker DR-100 full-sized acoustic guitars that were distributed amongst five schools within the division.

Top 10 Honour

CBC Music challenges music educators across Canada every year to teach their students a Canadian song from a designated list. Teachers then create a video and send it to the Canadian Music Class Challenge. In 2024, Collège Jeanne-Sauvé submitted an entry to the Top Non-live-off-the-floor Performance category. The students performed "Flowers Need Rain" by Preston Pablo, Banx & Ranx. Although they didn't win, they received an honourable mention for their hard work and were ranked in the Top 10.

1 Million Views

In a remarkable milestone for the Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre, LRSD TV surpassed 1 million views on its YouTube channel in December 2023, solidifying its position as a go-to resource for educational content. The achievement is particularly noteworthy as LRSD TV has become integral to high school sports coverage in Manitoba. Through partnerships with the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association and the Winnipeg High School Football League, LRSD TV has been instrumental in bringing live broadcasts, highlights, and analysis of various high school sports events to a broader audience.

#GoForTheGoals

Gunnar Moyer, a Grade 8 student from Nordale School, won the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation's #GoForTheGoals Challenge. The #GoForTheGoals Challenge is a unique initiative designed to empower students, teachers, and communities to engage with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT EQUITY:

POLICY GBA





On October 17, 2023, the Board of Trustees adopted Policy GBA Employment Practices: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

The path to bring this policy forward started in March 2022 with a review of national and international equity policies and an invitation to join a working group for the development of an employment equity policy in the Learning Circle.

The working group, consisting of students, community members and staff from all employee groups, met four times in 2022. Union partners were invited to join and received updates throughout the process.

The Process for the Working Group included:

- Incorporating a hybrid meeting structure to promote inclusion.
- Establishing working norms.
- Presenting how policy is created in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD).
- Reviewing employment equity policies in other educational organizations.
- Creating a shared understanding of employment and equity.
- Brainstorming practices to be included in the policy.
- Drafting each section of the policy in smaller working groups.
- Drafting Administrative Guidelines.

Staff members at individual schools and worksites were invited to review the policy and provide feedback at the February 2023 staff meeting. A request for community feedback on the policy went out via the Parent Post on March 24, 2023. On April 6, 2023, the working committee reviewed and revised the policy to reflect the feedback received.

“It was a real pleasure to participate in helping a divisional aspiration become a reality,” said Amy Warriner, Principal, École Varennes. “While the policy is only the beginning, it is an important step forward to supporting our schools to become places that better represent the diversity of those we serve.”

The policy and protocols received first reading at the Board of Trustees meeting on June 21, 2022, and was shared with all community in the Parent Post in June 2022. On March 14, 2023, the updated policy was shared with union partners and feedback invited.

“This policy aims to ensure qualified people from equity seeking groups are welcomed to work in LRSD,” said Cyril Indome, Vice-Principal, Dakota Collegiate Institute. “In the development of this policy, we recognize that community consultation and policy accountability are essential. By having diversity across the various employment groups, we believe this policy will have a direct positive impact on our learners and families.”

Policy GBA and Administrative Protocols received a second reading at the Board Meeting on May 16, 2023; September 2023 saw a review of the implementation of Administrative Protocols.

After nearly two years of development, Policy GBA - Employment Practices: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion including Policy GBA Administrative Protocol received a third reading and was adopted October 17, 2023.

USION



LETTING THE PRIDE FLAG FLY

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) community turned up in droves for the 2024 Winnipeg Pride parade, joining more than 6,000 people participating in the parade, the event's largest turnout to date.

Long polyester flags draped over shoulders, and smaller paper flags stuck in the backs of hats. Painted rainbows arched over smiling cheeks, and heart-shaped paddles popped up everywhere among the crowd, with the words "Love is Love" scrawled across them. And almost visibly among the kaleidoscopic crowd, a sense of celebration and joy pervaded everything.

The LRSD group was headed by a school bus draped in banners on either side, followed by staff leaders, students carrying Dakota Collegiate's Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) banner, the Pep Band, and many others.

Staff, students, parents, family, and friends of LRSD made

their message clear: everyone is welcome here.

The Pride parade was a wonderful time, but special mention needs to be made of the GSA.

The group, run out of Dakota Collegiate, works to provide a welcoming space for all 2SLGBTQIA+ students within the club and their school.

Grade 11 student Gracie Holowachuk had been in the club for two years before taking on a leadership role in 2023.

"One of the main things I've worked on is our announcement campaign," Gracie said. "Every Tuesday, we'll get someone from the GSA on the announcements. They share an educational fact on the queer or trans community over the school intercom."

Gracie writes all the facts at the end of the month and sends them to the office. The facts cover a variety of topics, including heroes and activists in the community, awareness days or weeks, and explanations of whatever the GSA feels needs explaining.

"It feels really good, and it's definitely something I'm happy we're doing," Gracie said. "The fact we have a voice here is great. I love being able to educate people who otherwise aren't going to look into or know about it."

Other initiatives included:

- **A Day of Silence / Day of NO silence and a Day of Pink to stand up against anti-2SLGBTQIA+ bullying.**
- **Bringing in speaker and creator of the transgender flag, Monica Helms.**
- **Pride flag raising.**
- **The Pride parade.**

Besides its initiatives, the GSA offers a safe space for students to find community.

"The GSA is just an amazing place to come and talk about problems I'm having," Grade 12 student and GSA leader Quinn Epp said. "If there's someone being a bit rude about something, I can come here, and we can talk about it."

"It's freeing to be able to come here and talk about issues with people who are experiencing the same thing. Not everyone can relate to what I'm going through, but the people in this room can."





STUDENT VOICES FOR CHANGE

While teachers, staff, and leadership strive to model a better, more equitable world for students, there are also many times we must stand aside and let students inspire us.

During the 2023-24 school year, students stepped up in a big way to try to tackle important social issues. One such student-driven initiative was the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) Student Anti-Racism Forum held on May 8, 2024.

Nelson McIntyre Collegiate student Loujayna El Aste worked to create the event, and she said the forum was empowering for her and others.

"It was amazing. I got to see so many people who looked like me and had similar experiences to me," Loujayna said. "It's what we want — to work towards making things better, and students have the initiative to do that."

The forum featured a presentation by Alexa Peters, a counsellor and psychotherapist with expertise in racial trauma, among other areas. Alexa is also the creator of the *R Stories Project*, a social media initiative in which people can submit their personal stories of racism

(anonymously or not) via text, audio, or video to create awareness for racial trauma and racial healing.

Izzeddin Hawamda, Anti-Racist Education Professional Learning Initiative Coordinator for LRSD, also spoke about his experience and life story — which he'd previously described in greater detail for many of the same students from across LRSD's seven high schools, who came together to commemorate the March 21 International Day of Eliminating Racial Discrimination.

Loujayna said listening to these speakers' stories was an emotional experience.

"At the end of the day, it shows me I'm not alone," the Grade 11 student said. "It's so important to work against racism. We like to think it doesn't exist so much now, but it is deeply rooted in people."



Loujayna said she was proud of her and her fellow students' work.

"We want the community to be safe and not afraid to show their cultures, languages, and who they truly are."

Grade 11 student Esther Raji of Glenlawn Collegiate took on another crucial issue with her art exhibit, *Voice of the Voiceless*.

"The point of the exhibit was to spread awareness about sexual assault and that it doesn't matter what you're wearing or your gender," Esther said.

Esther said she'd started working on this project in the summer after Grade 9. She'd been researching sexual assault against teenage girls and had spoken to peers about their stories, which led her to write a letter and record anonymous videos of her peers' stories to send to MLA Jamie Moses.

From there, she continued working to try to provide a medium to, as the exhibit's title implies, give a voice to those who might otherwise be voiceless. Esther held showings of her exhibit at LRSD's high schools, where counselling supports were ready for students who might need them.

"When people looked at the exhibits they were shocked, because nobody talked about these things," she said.

One impactful moment was speaking with one of the girls whose story was shared in the exhibit, Esther said. The girl had come to the exhibit to see how her story might affect others.

"She said, 'I'm so glad I shared my story. I didn't know it would impact people like that.'"

Esther said she's proud of her accomplishment and grateful for the opportunity to make a change. Something tells us students like Esther and Loujayna will continue to make positive changes for years to come.

These are only a couple of the stories of students making a difference. Others included students like Diversity Alliance leaders at J.H. Bruns Jenny Hwang and Sagan Kaur, who spearheaded Culture Day at their high school, and Shafia Razzaq and her peers, who helped make a similar event happen at Windsor Park Collegiate.





FOUNDATIONS IN LITERACY



The Literacy Project is a hands-on professional development program focused on improving literacy instruction for the crucial early years (Kindergarten to Grade 3), giving children the boost they need in their reading abilities.

“One of the reasons it’s so important is we know through research a child’s brain needs to follow a scope and sequence and explicit instruction to understand the rules of why parts of words make the sounds they do,” said Kristyn Artibise, a Divisional Instructional Support Teacher involved in the project.

Joining Kristyn in spearheading this important project were fellow School and Classroom Support Team (SCST) teachers Kristen McDowell and Genevieve Shyiak. The three brought their usual zeal for improving learning to their new Literacy Project team.

“Once we know that’s the way the brain learns, that’s the way we should align our teaching. That’s what we’re doing here.”

**- Kristyn Artibise,
Divisional Instructional Support Teacher**

This year, staff learning through the Literacy Project included five elementary French Immersion schools and seven elementary English schools — 12 schools total.

All participants attended three staff learning sessions, and the team held regular check-ins with 48 classroom teachers and three SCST teachers using Dr. Simon Breakspear's Teaching Sprints model.

Breakspear describes his model as a way to answer the question: *How do overloaded teachers keep getting better at their craft?* The model involves focusing on enhancing evidence-based instructional habits through the three "big ideas" of making tiny shifts toward better and better habits, research engagement, and the intentional practice of research-backed techniques and strategies in the classroom.

On top of that, 16 student services teachers and 12 administrators worked closely with classroom teachers, supporting about 680 students. SCST teachers helped by co-planning, modelling, observing, and providing resources. The team guided participants in using early years literacy assessment data to shape their teaching strategies. The main goal is to ensure teaching practices match the latest reading research.

"A big thing we're trying to do is help teachers understand the why behind everything they're doing in their classrooms, so students can understand why they're learning in this specific way," Kristyn said.

"This allows teachers to align their assessments with how they respond to a student and know how to bring them to the next step."

When the team reviewed feedback from participating teachers, they were ecstatic with the response. More than 95 per cent of participants felt their literacy teaching practices had improved.

So far, 30 per cent of elementary schools have been part of the project. Eight more schools will participate next year. SCST will continue to support the schools involved this year with ongoing professional development and mentorship.

Learning to read is a basic human right and a key to lifelong learning. With the Literacy Project, the Louis Riel School Division is bringing research-based practices into classrooms and empowering teachers to meet the needs of all their students.



CONNECTING FOR WELLNESS

At the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD), our strategic priorities centre around building belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity.

We use these as guideposts as we strive each day to improve ourselves and our community, and we know there are many other organizations doing what they can to make life better, too. Together, we can do more.

That's why we kicked off the month of May with the inaugural LRSD Community Wellness Fair at the St. Mary's board office. The admission-free fair offered all who wandered down the opportunity to connect with and learn about the many social organizations available to folks in the LRSD community.

"We see our students on a daily basis, so we see what they're struggling with and what their families are struggling with," said Amber Zetaruk, Supervisor of Student and Family Supports, that organized the wellness fair.

The 20 organizations with booths at the fair offered attendees a broad variety of resources. Whether people

needed employment aid, information on finding a lawyer, family counselling, 2SLGBTQIA+-specific assistance, help navigating issues around disability, a place to exercise and swim, or much more, they could find information on what they needed at the wellness fair.

"There was something for everyone," Alex Peniuta, Supervisor of Well-Becoming, said. "That's really important because of the diversity in our community, the diversity in our population, and the diversity of the supports people rely on."

While some services focused on helping people through crises, other participating organizations centred around enriching families' and other community members' daily lives.

"These weren't only community agencies who support extremely marginalized or disadvantaged families," Alex said. "Some may have a more specific mandate, but



these were resources in the community that everybody should be taking part in. Every family relies on more than their school."

Given how integral these services are for families in the LRSD community, we as a school division are always striving to understand what's meaningful to families. Understanding how they navigate the community and how they access supports provides us with crucial insight into the diverse lives of the LRSD community.

The LRSD Community Wellness Fair also aimed to equip families for the future. Even if they didn't need immediate access to support, just knowing what services are available better prepares them to deal with whatever life throws their way.

"They may not have a need right now, but in two years or so, some issue might crop up and they can say, 'Hey, I think I remember some place that can help,'" Amber said.

LRSD thanks all participating organizations for walking alongside us in our mission. Because when communities flourish, learners thrive.

"That's really important because of the diversity in our community, the diversity in our population, and the diversity of the supports that people rely on."

“

WHO WAS THERE?

1. Huddle
2. Sexual Education Resource Centre
3. SCO Jordan's Principle Program
4. Rainbow Resource Centre
5. Manitoba Possible
6. Youville
7. Community Legal Education Association
8. Aurora Family Therapy Centre
9. St. Vital Parent Child Coalition
10. Morrow Early Learning and Child Development
11. René Deleurve Centre
12. Healthy Muslim Families
13. Employment and Income Assistance
14. Accueil Francophone
15. EDGE Skills Centre
16. MITT Adult Learning Centres
17. Community Financial Counselling Services
18. Klinik Community Health
19. Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network
20. YMCA





LANGUAGES OF LEARNING



With the ethic of care and hospitality as a guide, the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is making strides toward creating significant and far-reaching supports for the diverse and thriving newcomer communities within our schools. The need to continue to build capacity among staff to support multilingual learners (MLLs) has been clear.

“This work is ultimately about creating a culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism. It’s ensuring we disrupt old perspectives that did not best serve MLLs,” said Rose Pagtakhan, a Divisional Instructional Support Teacher who leads much of the work on MLLs and someone who was once a newcomer student herself.

“I understand the loneliness and fear of being in a totally new environment. Not only was I learning a new language, I was also learning a new culture and way of being. I had some hard times growing up as a newcomer, and I want to ensure every newcomer and MLL student in LRSD feels welcome, safe, and seen,” she said.

To make this LRSD vision a reality, all teachers need the

skills and knowledge to respond appropriately to students at various stages of English language proficiency. This requires keeping in mind the multitude of pathways, backgrounds, needs, and circumstances of students and families.

Ensuring staff are equipped to support MLLs is about more than meeting logistical needs. It’s about understanding the question “*How will we support multilingual learners?*” really means “*How do we honour the diversity of learners in our community?*”

Sometimes, responding to this question requires going beyond the immediate MLL curriculum and taking the time to celebrate the incredible diversity that makes the LRSD community so wonderful — such as when radio personality Tyler Magz and restaurateur Jackie Wild came as guest speakers for Asian Heritage Month. They shared an impactful presentation on Asian Heritage in Canada with some of our middle years students, as well as describing their own experiences growing up with Filipino identity in Winnipeg.

Of course, honouring diversity in our school division also means training staff to better support MLLs. This not only bolsters educators’ abilities to support students but also

equips them with the tools to foster a culture of unity, belonging, and reciprocity in their classrooms and schools.

Here are several steps LRSD took in 2023/24 to move toward this goal:

- **Educational Resources:** We educated schools on important government resources, including the *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum Framework for English as an Additional Language (EAL)* and *Literacy, Academics, and Language (LAL) Programming*. These resources help teachers plan lessons to meet both language and academic goals. Additionally, the Divisional Instructional Support Team created guides and documents to help fellow teachers in the division support multilingual learners.
- **Training for Student Services Teachers:** Student Services Teachers received training to better support other teachers. New teachers participated in ongoing training through the Mentorship Program. We directly supported schools through activities such as staff development sessions, meetings, and collaborative work.
- **MLL Committee:** We selected teacher-leaders for a division-wide MLL committee, in collaboration with the Manitoba Teachers' Society, to understand and plan for staff needs.
- **Guest Speaker:** Dr. Nadia Prokopchuk was invited to discuss Culturally Responsive Teaching, emphasizing the benefits of incorporating students' cultures and languages into learning.

Underpinning all these efforts was a drive to shift perspectives on MLLs.

"We're recognizing and focusing on their strengths, rather than on skills they may not currently have. Teachers now understand we're all additional language teachers," said Rose.

While some may not speak English fluently when they arrive, all come with their own skills, knowledge, and experiences.

"We've been working hard to change old ways of looking at and working with MLLs. While there's still lots to do, we're collaborating with staff eager to understand and implement best practices for all," Rose said.

In the 2024-25 school year, we will honour these strengths, aiming to empower newcomers and help them learn English in alignment with several MYSP strategic priorities.

We'll also be working on projects to support MLLs who've had schooling interrupted, collaborations with the Indigenous Education team, anti-racism initiatives, school information nights for newcomer families, evidence-based learning initiatives, and a host of other projects addressing the needs of diverse MLLs.

This work builds on the carefully thought-out strategic priorities in the division's MYSP, namely priority 3.4, which spurs us to "Develop a framework to assist staff in supporting multilingual learners in becoming proficient in English – and French in the context of French Immersion schools – by valuing and developing their first language."

By continuing to focus on these initiatives, with the MYSP to guide our actions, LRSD continues to strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all learners, celebrating the rich diversity that each student brings to our community.



SETTLING IN WITH LOUIS RIEL SCHOOL DIVISION'S ZONE SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) believes in fostering inclusive communities where every person can thrive. That's why we're proud to re-introduce the Zone Settlement Program, a vital initiative offering settlement services to permanent residents in the neighbourhoods of St. Vital and St. Boniface, completely free of charge.

The Zone Settlement Program, formerly known as the Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker (NISW) Program, was established in 2012 to address the unique needs of newcomers and permanent residents in our community. The program was and continues to be supported through a funding agreement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The Zone Settlement Program helps permanent resident newcomer and refugee families throughout LRSD transition to life in Canada.

Recognizing the challenges individuals face navigating unfamiliar systems, the program provides essential support and resources to facilitate their initial transition and long-term integration and success.

How is the Program Implemented?

The program is implemented through a variety of supports and services, including:

- Identifying, welcoming, and supporting newcomer families: Through phone, email, in-person meetings, and home visits.
- Assessing client needs: Supporting clients in accessing services and community resources and helping them complete necessary documentation and applications.
- Building trusting relationships: Establishing respectful and supportive connections with newcomer clients.
- Collaborating with schools: Assisting in student registration and attending school intake and orientation meetings.
- Information and orientation sessions: Providing individual, family, and group sessions on topics like health, education, employment, finances, community services, school readiness, and parenting.

A Day in the Life of a Zone Settlement Worker

"A Zone Settlement Worker's day is a dynamic blend of support and guidance for newcomers navigating their new community," said Misty Belcourt, Manager of Community & Settlement Services. "Staff welcome daily walk-ins and complete initial intakes with them, as well as support existing clients with various ongoing needs."

The day involves extensive client interaction, with many clients learning about the René Deleurme Centre through word of mouth and other service providers. While staff prioritize families in the LRSD catchment area, they make everyone feel welcome, often going the extra mile to ensure people feel supported and connected with appropriate services.



- Referrals to appropriate agencies: Connecting clients with specialized services for language, employment, gender-specific violence, disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+, mental health, and seniors.
- Oral interpretation: Offering direct interpretation services for immediate settlement needs.
- Maintaining positive relationships: Working with local serving agencies, other Zone providers, stakeholders, and community partners to deliver coordinated settlement services.
- Organizing group programming: Offering programs based on client needs, such as English conversation circles, youth wellness activities, cooking and nutrition workshops, parenting support, and more. Transportation support and childcare are available for group programs.

These services are not exhaustive but illustrate the breadth of support provided to LRSD newcomer families.

Administrative tasks are also a significant part of the day, including client intake, filing, client tracking, email correspondence, and assisting clients with important documents and IRCC reporting.

A substantial portion of the day is dedicated to accompanying families to schools, helping overcome cultural and language barriers, and liaising with hospitals and dentists to facilitate communication for medical appointments. They also assist with government interactions, such as with Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) for annual assessments, and vital statistics for client representation.

Home visits are crucial for delivering food, assessing client needs, and assisting refugees with low English proficiency to understand and navigate official correspondence required for their settlement. Zone workers provide practical help like bus training, food bank registration, income tax communication, and helping people apply for the rent assist program.

Community engagement is another aspect, with workers participating in various sectors and community committees. They work hard to network and build relationships with other service providers and school staff, benefiting their clients. Staff are amazing problem solvers and often do this on the fly, as clients come in with a broad array of needs. The needs of clients are diverse and ever-changing, ensuring no two days are the same. Staff collaborate with other Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) and assist clients with transitions, such as changing utilities or schools when moving.

"In essence, the life of a Zone Settlement Worker is filled with opportunities to make a significant impact on the lives of newcomers, fostering a sense of belonging and helping them establish their new lives with confidence and support," said Misty. "It's a role characterized by compassion, adaptability, and a deep commitment to community service."

Future of the Zone Settlement Program

The Zone Settlement Program is in the final year of its multi-year funding agreement. The team looks forward to signing the next contribution agreement with IRCC. Its goal is to ensure the Zone Settlement Program can continue to meet the needs of clients within LRSD, with plans for expansion, improvements, and adaptations to better serve the community.



A RECIPE FOR COMMUNITY

Chef Michael Erin is the smiling sort. Running the Louis Riel School Division's (LRSD) Community Kitchen at the René Deleurme Centre (RDC) puts Chef Michael at the intersection of threads of many lives that weave together the fabric of LRSD.

"It's really the best job," he said. "When the kids come in and you see their faces when they're cooking — it's really fun."

High school students from across the division sign up for classes at the centre, where Chef Michael and his team teach them to make all sorts of delectable foodstuffs: shepherd's pie, lasagna, quesadillas, fettuccine Alfredo, about 20 varieties of soup, and more.

Grade 7 and 8 students at Lavallee School (which is attached to RDC) have hopped over to the kitchen for baking classes, where they made muffins and other goods. The students then saw some of their work donated to their school's breakfast program, for which the kitchen prepares other food, as well.

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"If you're hungry, you're not learning,"

- Chef Michael

For the 2024-25 school year, the Community Kitchen will help even more students get the energy they need to be active learners, as provincial funding begins to roll in for the universal nutrition programming. It will become the commissary kitchen for four schools, and planning for the increased output began well before the summer break.

But that's only the beginning of the work the Community Kitchen has cooked up since firing up its ovens for the first time in September 2023. During the year, the kitchen cooked for the RDC's Full Moon Ceremonies, making bison stew and fruit cobblers.

It also ran cooking and nutrition courses for newcomers through the LRSD Zone Settlement Program. Chef Michael said while many newcomers arrive with their own set of cooking skills, he hears from his course-goers it can be

daunting to adjust to a place where grocery stores are so different from what they've known, and where certain ingredients might be difficult to find or too expensive.

The kitchen also helps with RDC's biweekly free food hampers, which alternate with another biweekly offer of a \$20 box of food staples such as milk, bread, eggs, and produce that would cost three or four times that in store. It regularly donates food to the community freezers and fridges at RDC and meals to community members through the centre's community liaison.

"Sometimes this is one of the first stops for people right after they arrive here, sometimes with nothing and no food or anything," Chef Michael said.

That means newcomers who might struggle with English are common visitors, he said, but RDC staff speak a whole host of languages and are ready to find a translator if they encounter one they don't speak.

Food is something that binds all people. Through classes for students and adults, catering school and community events, food security initiatives, front-of-house sales, and so much more, RDC's Community Kitchen serves as a focal point for the diversity of LRSD.

RDC's Community Kitchen is a place of joy and connectivity. No wonder Chef Michael smiles so much.



"This place is so important. People love food – even just the sounds and smells of the kitchen. And when you can feed students and give their families a boost, it's just incredible."



GOVERNMENT



HARMONY ACROSS CONTINENTS

It was an early February morning when the Dakota Collegiate Institute (DCI) Concert Band boarded planes for Kochi, Japan, where they'd perform in the 11th triennial International Goodwill Charity Joint Concert.

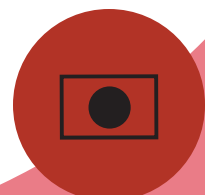
DCI students joined school bands from Sydney, Australia; Hanoi, Vietnam; and Kochi. The band from Kochi's Meitoku Gijuku School featured some familiar faces, as students from the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) who'd been living and learning on the Kochi campus as part of a long-standing exchange program were included among the performers.

For LRSD students, the concert was the culmination of months of dedicated preparation and rigorous practice. Each band played several pieces before joining together to serenade an appreciative audience at the Kochi Prefecture Concert Hall in a wonderful show of unity. It was an evening

to remember and a testament to the students' hard work and commitment.

"I consider myself lucky to have been able to go on this trip. I had a lot of fun," Grade 10 tubist Helena Rebuldela said. "I'm proud I was able to perform so well, and the environment was great."

Helena said meeting the students from Meitoku Gijuku School and learning about them, their culture, and their language was one of the coolest things about the trip — besides the incredible concert, of course.





JAPAN



This was the first trip outside of Canada for many students, and the first chance for them to immerse themselves in a different culture. They experienced new sights, sounds, language, foods, and customs. On the Meitoku campus, they participated in taiko drumming and traditional flower arranging. They also assisted Japanese students who wished to learn English.

“It was just a completely different experience from everything I’ve been used to,” Grade 12 alto-saxophonist Davis Watson said. “There was a bit of culture shock, but once you buy into it and accept it, it was fantastic.”

Davis said the musical format turned out to be the perfect way to bridge cultures.

“Everyone always says music is a universal language, but you don’t really see that until you’re over there experiencing it. The whole thing is a core memory for me.”

After spending a week at Meitoku School, students spent several days touring and sightseeing. They experienced a variety of enriching activities, including making traditional paper, climbing to the top of Himeji Castle, visiting the Kinkakuji Temple, walking through the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, and seeing the iconic Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island.



The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum offered a profound and sombre insight into an event that shaped the world long before the students were born. The emotional weight of being in a place marked by such a horrific event was deeply felt as the students placed 1,000 origami paper cranes — folded by students at Hastings School — at the memorial to Sadako Sasaki in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

LRSD students continue to actively learn and embody global citizenship. Having immersed themselves in Japanese culture, they returned to Winnipeg with lasting memories and experiences that will inform their identities and worldviews. As respectful and conscientious ambassadors, they admirably represented their school, LRSD, and Canada.





FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS

The global community seems to get smaller and more connected by the day. News, viral videos, and all sorts of information zip from one end of the Earth to the other at the speed of light.

But often, screen-centred connection fails to stir compassion and create the bonds of community in the way that meeting face-to-face has the power to do.

In this modern world, the Louis Riel School Division's (LRSD) International Student Program is perhaps more important than ever. It provides opportunities not only for LRSD students to immerse themselves in other cultures, but also for members of the LRSD community to host students from diverse nations, helping to create a greater connection and understanding between the peoples of this shared planet.

Perhaps this sounds a tad grandiose. But it's easy to be inspired when hearing stories like those of LRSD International Student Program homestay family Cheryl Lazarenko and her Brazilian student, Lizzie.

"She lived with me for five months, and we hit it off immediately," Cheryl said. "I love her as if she's my own child."

For Lizzie, this was the first time she'd ever travelled. For Cheryl, who had been a homestay family before and who said she does not have children of her own, this was a special connection.

Near the end of their time together in Canada, Lizzie's

mother in Brazil asked if Cheryl would fly south for Lizzie's high school graduation ceremony in December 2023.

"(Lizzie) was so excited for me to come, because then I could experience her life," Cheryl said.

So, Cheryl hopped on a plane and travelled 23 hours to the small town of about 6,000 in Brazil, where Lizzie lives.

When she arrived, Lizzie, her mother, sister-in-law, and boyfriend were there to greet her.

"There were a lot of tears," Cheryl said.

"From minute one until I left, I could not have been treated any better. I was welcomed by everybody — not only her family but her community... Her mother even said it was like she was meeting a sister."

Cheryl said Lizzie and her family introduced her to many, many people—so many that she felt humbled and even a touch embarrassed by all the attention.

No doubt many would feel the same if a school thousands of kilometres from home hosted a luncheon for them, and they arrived to the reception Cheryl received.

"I was blown away by walking into a gym full of young people clapping and cheering, not even at that point realizing it was for me. But it was for me. It was unbelievable," Cheryl said.

At the graduation ceremony, Lizzie was chosen to give a speech about the impact families had on students' journeys. After delivering much of the speech in Brazilian Portuguese, Lizzie paused, then continued on in English.

"She thanked me for coming and told me I was a second mother to her," Cheryl said.

"I knew I had an impact on her, but not as much as it was."

The experience has also had a profound impact on Cheryl, who has already discussed returning to Brazil someday, just as Lizzie hopes to return to Canada after her five-year university program.

Cheryl said of Lizzie: "She found my heart."

Helena Lehn signed up to be a homestay family in the 2024-25 school year. Her daughter Ellie, a recent graduate of Collège Jeanne-Sauvé, spent two months in Meitoku, Japan.

"Honestly, I had such a wonderful experience when I was there," Ellie said. "I loved being fully immersed in a new environment and culture. It forces you to learn at a quicker pace."

When Ellie arrived in Japan, she noticed all the little differences in their society and how things worked. It helped her develop a new, more global perspective. But more than that, it gave her a new lens through which to view her home society when she returned.

"I got a whole new perspective on a place I've lived my whole life," she said.

She also developed a much stronger sense of independence and confidence. And her dorm roommate inspired her to study harder than ever.

"I have intentions to be a doctor, and so does she," Ellie said. Her roommate studied every day before school, starting at 4 a.m., then again after school.

"I thought, I can study like that, too."

Helena said it was remarkable to see the change in her daughter.

"She was just beaming with confidence and world experience," Helena said. "She was living life and glowing."

Watching her daughter find her footing and develop a sense of not only being a global citizen but also of where she fits into the world meant a lot to Helena.

"I was so proud of her," she said. "It made me feel confident in her ability to go out into the world as a fledgling adult."

So, Helena picked up the phone and volunteered her services as a homestay family. As someone who knows what it feels like to be a parent whose kid is halfway across the world and what it feels like to see such incredible growth in their child, too, Helena wanted to help another have that experience.

She's also looking forward to learning all about the culture of her student and to providing a great experience for them.

Helena and Ellie have a message for anyone considering signing up for the International Student Program, whether as a student or homestay family: *Do it!*



LEARNING FROM THE LAND



Land-based learning highlights land as our first teacher. It recognizes humans are not separate from the land they live on — they are an extension of it.

Land-based learning works to decolonize Eurocentric education systems and privilege Indigenous ways of knowing and being. It provides students with all the holistic health benefits of outdoor learning.

As Matthew Wildcat and colleagues said in a 2014 paper: “If colonization is fundamentally about dispossessing Indigenous peoples from land, decolonization must involve forms of education that reconnect Indigenous peoples to land.”

This form of learning is not new to the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). It is a practice and philosophy our Indigenous Education team has always held.

This past year, the Healthy Living Department and members of the Indigenous Education team worked on further developing land-based learning in the division. After initial planning, research, and collaboration, the team piloted an Indigenous land-based learning event at Dr. D.W. Penner School.

“Our team also looked through the lens of physical education to consider how we can draw on land-based learning to decolonize outdoor education at LRSD and increase participation in outdoor education, specifically in high schools.”

**- Jordana Milne, Administrator
of Athletics and Healthy Living**

At nine stations in the school field and community, students participated in many activities, including drumming, the history of the land their school sits on, and building community through sharing food around a fire. Station facilitators modelled ways for teachers to use outdoor space to continue land-based learning at their school.

To this end, the team held a land-based learning development session for phys-ed teachers on March 15, 2024.

Teachers returned to school communities with activities and resources anchored in Indigenous games and histories, recognizing the interdependence between people and place.

“In the years to come, we aim to create a divisional land-based learning event for Grades 5 and 6, continue to offer full-school events for middle-years students, and offer additional training for high school outdoor education teachers,” said Jordana.

“Our Indigenous Education team has led, and continues to lead, countless professional development opportunities, school events, and educational opportunities centered around land-based learning.”

- Sean Oliver, an Indigenous Education Teacher in LRSD

The above is but a small summary of the great work our dedicated team is doing at LRSD to help reconnect students with the land.



WE ARE ALL TREATY PEOPLE

The Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) wholeheartedly welcomes *Manitoba's K to 12 Treaty Education Plan: Treaty Education for All* and looks forward to including this mandatory staff learning in our ever-expanding efforts to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and work towards building a kinder, more equitable society.

Most notably, this Treaty Education initiative responds to Call to Action 62(i), which calls on all levels of government and educators to "make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students."

All K to 12 teachers in LRSD will complete the two-day course by Dec. 31, 2025, and all other divisional staff will attend a day of Treaty Education learning. And by all divisional staff, we mean everyone: educational assistants, secretaries, board office staff, custodians, lunch supervisors — everyone.

"To move forward together as a society, we all need to understand our shared agreements and treaty obligations. We need to understand the relationships of the past and how they've shaped the present," said Corey Kapilik, Director of School and Classroom Supports and Indigenous Education Coordinator.

"Only in that truth can we take meaningful steps toward a better future for all."

The goal of day one for the teachers' sessions is to provide deep understanding about the historical, contemporary, and foundational importance of treaties for all.

That includes delving into the worldviews and intents of parties involved in treaties. It means discussing protocols, responsibilities, and resistance. And, of course, it entails

meaningful learning about both numbered and modern treaties.

The goal of day two is to provide teachers an opportunity to explore the Treaty kits and teaching resources, deepen their understanding of treaties, and collaborate with other grade-level educators.

To best deliver this crucial staff learning, LRSD will identify divisional teachers or leaders who will act as "catalyst teachers." Members of the LRSD School and Classroom Supports team will assume these roles for these staff learning events throughout the division.

Catalyst teachers will introduce, promote, facilitate, and deliver local Treaty Education training throughout the division. They are tasked with being knowledgeable on Treaty Education resources; participating in a wider learning network of catalyst teachers from beyond the division, coordinated by the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba and the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate; keeping up with updates to training materials; including local Elders and Knowledge Keepers to support Treaty Education at divisional, school, and classroom levels; and more.

"As educators, we have a responsibility to ensure we all understand the importance of the original spirit and intent of treaties — as well as understanding treaty relationships, which requires understanding a balance of oral and written history. And we have a responsibility to pass that learning on to our students," Corey said.

Treaty Education is not new to LRSD, and the division strives to develop increasingly robust understanding of treaties in staff and students, year after year. These staff learning opportunities are one piece of a larger effort to improve Indigenous Education in the division, as exemplified in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan's strategic priorities 1.4, 1.5, and 4.5, which focus on bolstering exposure to and learning about Indigenous languages, worldviews, histories, and perspectives.

"Understanding treaties comes from an understanding of pre-contact history and understanding how First Peoples thrived in traditional ways of life. It's essential to understanding the damage caused by colonization, the residential school system, and the 6Os Scoop, and how the effects continue to ripple through today," Corey said.

We all have an obligation to learn and to act. We are all treaty people.



**“TO EDUCATE IS TO
GUIDE STUDENTS ON
AN INNER JOURNEY
TOWARD MORE
TRUTHFUL WAYS OF
SEEING AND BEING IN
THE WORLD.”**

PARKER J. PALMER



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