



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

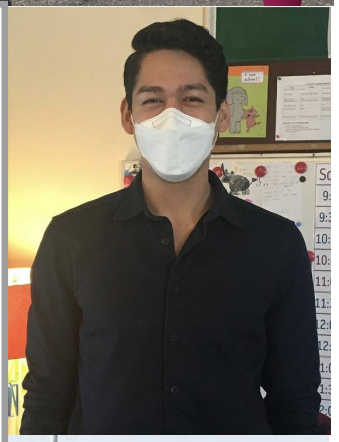


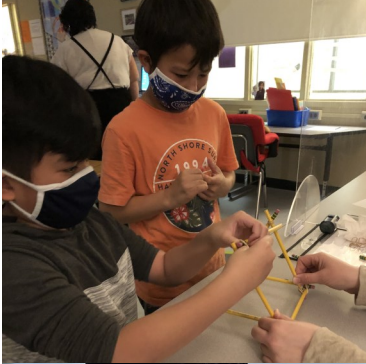
June 2021

Art by Gabriela Milla Trujillo in Ms Jolene's Kindergarten Class



Another year has come to its end, and with it the annual Report to the Community. In this report, we share some of the learning highlights of this school year under the categories Curriculum, Care and Community. The information found here is in no way a comprehensive report on all of the work completed at Margaret Park, but a summary of some of the parts that stand out. There is much overlap between the curriculum, care and community, as you will read and see in pictures. However, these headings do capture three important aspects of the learning we aim to provide to your children as students of our school. Please enjoy this report.





Despite the challenges of this school year, literacy learning has remained a priority. We carried on with our professional learning around literacy, engaging with opportunities through Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery, a partnership with the Department of Education, and with professional literature in our Teacher Teams. Collaboration between teachers is central to our approach, and we continue to team to ensure our practice is effective and our growth ongoing. Paramount to our work around literacy is the belief that every child is capable of accessing literacy and that we must ensure their continued progress in every step of their educational journey.

Our librarian, Miss Sara, has curated a truly amazing and diverse collection of books for children and families to enjoy. Throughout the periods of remote learning, she ensured that books were still getting to children in their homes, but also created a YouTube Channel called "[Miss Sara's Story Time](#)".

We celebrated the theme of "Be-You-Tiful You" for I Love to Read month in February. Students engaged with a wide-range of literacy activities that celebrated our unique identities.

Thanks to the extremely generous support of Seven Oaks School Division, we were able to purchase a set of books for every family in our school, sent home in the last week of school. We hope they create opportunities for families to enjoy quality children's literature together over the summer.

This year, our Grade 3/4/5 Team used the Jump Math program in their classrooms for the first time. We observed that this approach to math learning was effective in engaging students and showing them that math is for everyone. The team attended virtual meetings with John Mighton, the creator of Jump Math, as well as with other school teams in Seven Oaks. Next year, more teachers will be working with the program, and our team will continue to engage in professional discourse around numeracy teaching and learning. As with our work in other areas, we continue to collaborate to bring the highest standard of math education to your children.

CURRICULUM



CARE



Keeping our students healthy and safe in a pandemic year required an incredible commitment from staff, students and families. In the Margaret Park Community, everyone rose to the occasion. Together, despite facing ongoing challenges and changing protocols, our school remained a safe and healthy place to learn. We want to express sincere gratitude to everyone in our community for coming together in various ways to support each other through this trying year. It was an incredible collective effort and we were successful!

Our nutrition programs were adapted to ensure children still had access to healthy snacks, and lunches when needed. The health protocols forced us to try offering new healthy options, and many were a great success! During the Code Red for Schools, food packages were prepared by the division and delivered by Margaret Park staff to a number of families in our community.

Outdoor learning opportunities were an important part of our approach. Natural environments support exploration and inquiry, deep and rich learning, but also mental and physical health. Pandemic or not, the outdoors will continue to be one of our classrooms going forward.

Our gardens are thriving this year, thanks to work by students in all grades who started seeds, prepared the soil, planted the seedlings and are responsible for their ongoing care. Families are invited to the gardens over the summer to have their child share their experience, to care for the crops and to notice the amazing changes week to week. These garden experiences have supported rich, authentic, student-led and integrated learning in all subject areas. In the fall, we will enjoy the harvest together.



COMMUNITY



This pandemic year did not allow us to have the large gatherings we are accustomed to at Margaret Park, but we found ways to connect none-the-less. One way we connected students across cohorts was by doing the daily announcement on Microsoft Teams. This allowed students to participate with both video and audio, and to see each other live. Students shared learning with each other using this platform.

A highlight for the students this year was our outdoor recess dance parties, DJ'd by no other than Mr. Lim. These were high-energy events, with kids and adults alike busting a move on the hardtop.

We continued to connect with Elders Barb and Clarence Nepinak and Cliff Spence. They visited Margaret Park many times throughout the year to offer teachings through stories, drumming and singing. When schools moved to remote learning in the spring, Elder Barb and Cliff held a virtual drum session for families.

Another virtual session was led by Margaret Park EA Sabrina Leister, who led a group of families in a Dream Catcher workshop. Each family had a kits delivered so they could create their own pieces along with Sabrina.

Once again, Margaret Park students were dedicated members of Pow Wow Club. This year, our students worked with instructors from the Aboriginal School of Dance and filmed a grand entry and intertribal for the Seven Oaks Virtual Graduation Pow Wow. We even had two virtual pow wow sessions with ASOD during remote learning.

This year, we lost Elder Theodore Fontaine, who's kind spirit and uplifting teachings touched the hearts of both children and adults in our community in lasting ways. We are so honoured to have been part of his journey. We thank him for his time with us, and send Morgan our care and support.

This spring, our nation has been confronted with truths long known in Indigenous communities but never acceptably acknowledged. The unmarked graves of hundreds of Indigenous children on the sites of former residential schools have been found and will continue to be found. As a school, we expressed our grief though a pair of trellises tied with 215 orange ribbons. While the ribbons symbolize what has been lost, we know our work does not end there. As educators, we must bringing forth the truth and give all our students the opportunity to create a future where no children will ever have such an experience again.

As a staff, our professional focus this year was on anti-racist education and anti-racist schools. We engaged in deep and ongoing work to identify and eliminate systemic racism within our school. All staff completed a survey to take stock of where we are at in this work, and to uncover the areas where we must make change. Next year, we hope to bring families into this work with us. It is our mission to make sure that all voices are heard and that everyone has a seat at the table.

Just this week, we celebrated our Grade 5 students who are off to bright futures in middle school. We are so proud of them.



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MAYA ANGELOU

Maya Angelou wrote, “You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them”. This is what we have achieved this year at Margaret Park School. We have carried on in the good and important work of education and of community. We are proud to have walked beside your family through this challenging year, and hold a great deal of hope for brighter days ahead. Despite the hardship, we are thankful for the learning and the growth this time has cultivated in us all. We look forward to seeing you again in September and wish you a healthy and happy summer!

