



**SEVEN OAKS
MET SCHOOL**

REPORT TO COMMUNITY

SEVEN OAKS SCHOOL DIVISION, TREATY NO. 1



"WE DO NOT INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN"

BEYOND BELONGING – BECOMING A OKIHCHITE

By Nancy Janelle

»»» MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL

There are four parts to the Circle of Courage: mastery, independence, generosity & belonging. The concept was first described in the book *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*, co-authored by Martin Brokenleg. "The model integrates Native American philosophies of child-rearing, the heritage of early pioneers in education and youth work, and contemporary resilience research." As you know, we do a pretty

good job creating belonging here at SOMet, it's literally built into our school design. But how can we move beyond belonging and really focus on helping students develop in the other three areas? When planning for the 2022-23 school year, we were guided by a saying, "we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children", with our work around Truth & Reconciliation and climate justice. With that in mind, we set out to have our student ask themselves: what is the purpose of education, what does Mino-pimatisiwin (living the good life) really mean, and what is our role in creating a world where there can be a 'good life' for ALL – for people, for animals, AND for the planet.

With a focus on the fact that we are all interconnected (the 7 generations), we asked our students to think about their identity and their connections to the greater community. While drawing on the teachings from the Circle of Courage, we wanted students to think about Mamāhtawisiwin; the gifts they've been given and how they can share them with their community for the greater good.

»»» MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED

“When we are born into this world, we come with a gift to help people live a good life. A person becomes an Okihcite (great heart) when they begin to share the gift. A person who goes above and beyond in sharing their gift and connecting people to the root of their existence is referred to as “e-mamahtawisit.”

We planned ahead and looked for ways to empower the young people we work alongside everyday to set the tone of ‘taking meaningful action’ for the school year, by becoming ‘solutionaries’ and problem solvers, and by doubling down on project-based learning. By learning from Indigenous land defenders, not only are we working towards climate justice, but we see this as a small step for our school towards reconciliation and decolonizing education. As such, our theme for 2022-23 became ‘Be the Change’, drawing from the tutelage of Gandhi and MLK’s non-violent social change, with a focus on solutionary- based projects and community-based internships.

By asking students to be a solutionary, a problem solver, or an agent of change, in both their SBPs & LTIs, we hoped to improve our project development and planning process to facilitate deeper, more purposeful, and more meaningful work that would be sustained over the long-term. By focusing on solutionary projects, we hoped to empower students and as it is said that ‘action is the antidote to despair’, and we hoped that by focusing on local issues that students would have a greater chance to make a real difference. We had an added focus this year on having an ‘authentic public audience’ for student exhibitions to tie into the ‘action component’ of their solutionary project. This was highlighted at the inaugural Met Ex, STEAMfest, and the Historical Thinking Jam.

By focusing on identity development (community vs individualism), we hoped students would gain an improved understanding about the impacts their actions have on the larger community, and that in identifying the gifts they have been given, they would see the importance of using them for the greater good. We wanted to help students feel empowered, so we introduced them to local solutionaries: poets, land-defenders, filmmakers, climate activists, politicians, etc.; to local Okihcite’s who are using the gifts they have been given to do their part to make the world a better place. Our guest list this year included:

- SOSD Divisional Elders, Dan Thomas & Mary Courchene
- Indigenous Filmmaker, Kevin Settee
- Environmental Activist, Dennis LeNeveu (fracking)
- Indigenous Politician & Activist, Nahanni Fontaine
- Climate Action Group, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition
- Indigenous Poet, Duncan Mercredi
- Environmental Activist, Tangi Bell (silica mining)
- Indigenous Hydro Activist, Ellen Cook
- Non-binary BIPOC, Politician & Activist, Uzoma Asagwara
- Resistance camp/land-defenders, Camp Morningstar residents

We hoped this would inspire our students to take on meaningful projects, to help them build their skills in mastery, independence, and generosity, and begin to move towards Mamàhtawisiwin and share their own gifts with those around them.

So, did it work?



➤➤➤ MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED

Using Mamàhtawisiwin as the foundation for planning whole-school activities and student projects certainly pointed everyone in more meaningful directions. Some of the highlights from the year include our:

- Visit to Camp Morningstar, the Indigenous resistance camp opposing silica mining on treaty land
- Participation in the annual Global Climate Strike
- Grade 10 camping trip to the Experimental Lakes Area working alongside the International Institute for Sustainable Development
- Monthly volunteer opportunity with the Bear Clan, a grass-roots organization of community members providing aid the inner city in a non-threatening, non-violent and supportive way
- New school group of Indigenous Elders & Knowledge Keepers
- Expansion of our Indigenous Traditional Medicine Garden
- Growth of our Community-based Volunteer Opportunities with Siloam Mission, Harvest Manitoba, & Agape Table
- And our incredible student projects:



- o Kai's MMIWG2S T-shirt Campaign
- o The Social Justice Club's presentation at the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission's trial opposing the proposed silica mine in the Anola area
- o LJ's Dream Catcher workshop for Orange Shirt Day
- o Ty & Trevor's Guitars not Guns Benefit Concert
- o Rut's Student Song Writer's Club
- o A New Brain – our amazing school Musical with students from all three Met Schools
- o Nathaniel & Rasnoor's incredible science focused projects winning medals at the MSSS
- o Matt's Student Dance Group, Galaxy
- o Emily's Sex-ed for Social Change student workshops with Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties
- o Paige, Ally, Elena, and Alex's work with the North End Women's Shelter, the Main Street Project, Harvest Manitoba, & Funding Change

In implementing the above plan, and now looking back over the last 10 months, we truly can see our students have made progress in moving beyond belonging and towards developing their skills in mastery, independence, generosity.

Looking ahead to next year, we hope to move from Beyond Belonging to Becoming a Okihcite. With a continued focus on Mino-pimatisiwin & Mamahtawisiwin & the Circle of Courage, we aim for our students to become an Okihcite (great heart) as they continue to share their gifts with the world around them.

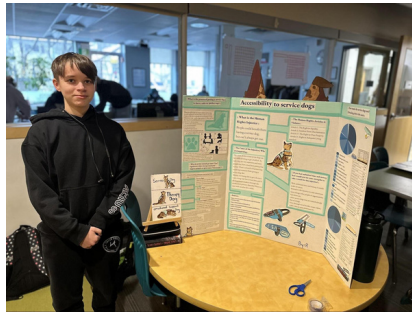
Wishing you a wonderful and restful summer,
Nancy Janelle
Principal, SOMet

Note next year's focus: TRC School Plan, Climate Justice Action Plan, Project-Based Learning, Community-based Learning, Mental Health and developing a Circle of support

FROM THE GRADE 9S

By David and Shandra

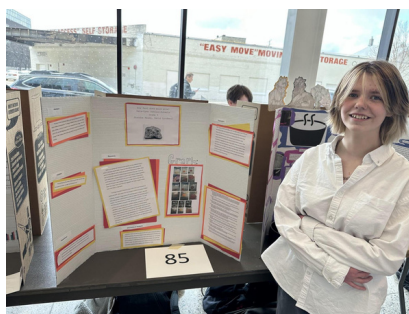
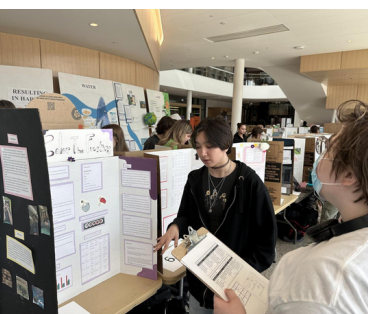
The Grade 9s dove head first into project-based learning this year. One of the focuses was to create projects for authentic audiences and to be publicly excellent. We are proud to say that the students surpassed these goals! First, students became upstanders by identifying issues they cared about, identifying their strengths and then used these strengths to make a difference. Students shared their learning in an Upstander Museum for the Grade 10-12 students. Our students also had the privilege to visit and learn from the Upstanders at Camp Morningstar, a sacred camp which aims to share Indigenous teachings and protect the land from a proposed silica sand mine.



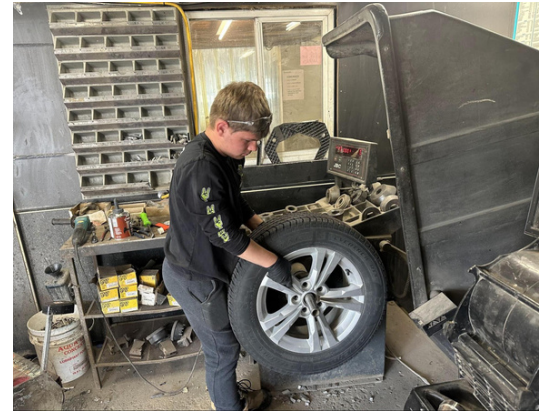
Next we learnt about the Lake Winnipeg Watershed and the issues it is experiencing. Students learnt about the water cycle and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in order to write and submit project proposals to the Caring For Our Watersheds contest through Oak Hammock Marsh. We had two students in the top 11 and six students in the top 30, who received funding to make their projects a reality!



Students developed scientific method projects, and presented their experiments at the divisional STEAM Fest. It was fun to see the creativity and diversity of questions students explored. Some examples were: "How is mindset affected by meditation?", "How is the speed of a car affected by the height of a ramp?", "Can people tell the type of milk in matcha based on taste?", "Are red velvet and chocolate cake different?", and so much more! Another focus of Grade 9 was for students to explore their identities and prepare for life long



success. We are incredibly proud of how whole-heartedly the Grade 9s worked towards this through their Career Development learning. They created resumes, conducted amazing interviews, went on community-based learning field trips, and had meaningful internships in careers they were curious about. Thanks so much to Maribeth for all of your hard work and expertise. Good luck on your Masters degree, we will miss you!



A final focus of our year was developing belonging within our advisory, school, and the greater Met community. We went on too many field trips to count, learning just as much about the world as we did about each other along the way. It is awesome to see the community of support, love and care that we developed through these experiences. Though he isn't going far, we are going to miss the humor and genuine care David brought to our advisory everyday. We would wish you luck in your new role as internship coordinator David, but you don't need it!



FROM THE GRADE 10S

By Terri and Rory

The grade 10s spent this year exploring their relationship with nature through a series of projects that helped them to build their understanding of the amazingness of Earth systems, the degree to which human activity has destabilized these systems, and actions we can take collectively to ensure a healthy environment for ourselves and future generations.



In the fall, students started by exploring the various modes of thought and communication we use to describe the relationship between human beings and the rest of the natural world, through tools such as music, art, poetry and math. They put these tools to use on their trip to the Experimental Lakes Area in Northwest Ontario where they collected data to try to understand why different lakes had very different zooplankton. They also spent beautiful days hiking, repairing trails and listening to traditional sky stories late into the night. Returning back to the city, students developed and shared presentations about other places in nature that were personally important to them and their families. They also studied how scientists use systems thinking to understand the complexities of ecosystems and weather. We also spent as much time as possible outside at places such as the Aki Centre, Birds Hill Park, and Assiniboine Park Zoo.





In the depths of winter, students then explored the notion of the Anthropocene - the time period in which human beings have left a permanent mark in the geologic record - and the science of climate change. Diving into physical and natural geography, each student chose one of the 30 Most Populous Countries of the world to focus on. After students had explored the environmental, economic, and social conditions of these countries, they analyzed the most common types of environmental challenges faced by these countries. This analysis formed the basis for phase 1 of their collaborative World of Solutions project. In this phase, students developed a series of 4'x8' boards explaining environmental problems and their root causes over the past century. These boards were displayed at the Met Expo on 1 March at Garden City Mall.



In the spring, students dove into Phase 2, researching solutions to these environmental challenges being developed by people in their focus countries to present at STEAMfest on April 27 at Red River College. These solutions ranged from the technical (e.g. South Korean community composting depots with RFID tags, Italian fabrics made from the waste of orange juice processing) to the political (e.g. Kenyan Wildlife Management Strategies, decommissioning the Three Gorges Dam in China) to the economic (e.g. establishing partnerships to fund energy retrofits in the United Kingdom, financing agroforestry programs in Colombia to combat drug-trade related deforestation). Students also developed persuasive essays in order to practice critical thinking skills necessary to become changemakers in their communities.

»»» FROM THE GRADE 11S

By Jane and Scott

This year at SOMet we have chosen to get students thinking about their futures and their effect on the world around them. To frame their journeys this year we have been using the indigenous concept, Mino-pimatisiwin. This loosely translates to seeking The Good Life and we've been challenging students to explore what this means for them and how it directly connects to the circle of courage. More specifically, students have been looking at the aspects of belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery, and seeing where they fit in. Primarily, our advisory has been focused on mastery (the things they want to learn) and independence (what problems they want to solve). This has a greater connection to one of our school goals of being solutionaries, meaning that we're challenging ourselves to be active changemakers. For their exhibitions throughout the year, they were asked to reflect on what Mino-pimatisiwin means to them and to describe the transition from Mino-pimatisiwin to Mamàhtawisiwin, which challenges students to share their gifts with others around them.



For our School Based Projects (SBPs), students were challenged to use the skills and gifts they have cultivated throughout their lives to give back to other communities; to apply their perspective of Mino-pimatisiwin to others. Students were asked to take the things they were good at, things they enjoy, things they wanted to learn about and apply them to the problems they want to solve. After thinking about these prompts, they had to propose what they wanted to do for their project. Examples of projects that students took on were: several workshops designed with MARL, creating an anatomy AR simulation, examining the effects of physical activity on teens, designing audio/visual experiences simulating a natural disaster, teaching dance and running a dance team, creating a society and mythology, studying the link between diabetes and heart disease, performing a monologue and so much more. Students celebrated their learning throughout the year at public project exhibitions at Met-Ex, STEAM Fest and the Historical Thinking Jam.



Over the course of career development this year, many students had informational interviews, shadow days, and continued full-time virtual and in-person internships. In relation to Mino-pimatisiwin, many students began conversations and explorations looking at the internship experiences they want to have in grade 12. Some of our students interned with the University of Manitoba Chemistry Department, Bit Space Development, Amber Trails School, St. Boniface Research Centre, Winnipeg Film Group, Canadian Tire Automotive, Kitchen Brigades, The Leaf, Ginakes Law and so much more! Everyone took the chance to try something new this year. We look forward to all of the new explorations next year!



In other academic areas over the course of this year, students have worked on analyzing Winnipeg as a city, looking at mayoral candidates, and confronting major issues with the goal of making our city better. We began reading the graphic novel anthology, *This Place*. While reading these stories, students engaged in activities and discussions that had them question the meaning of good leadership and the way people and events are remembered. Our teacher candidate, Shelby also supported the academic areas in history by introducing historical thinking to our students. We explored the Indigenous history of Canada by looking at the Pre, Post, and Modern Day Treaties and how they still affect Canada today. We also explored the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with a final museum exhibit project that was based on students' interests that had ties to Canadian history.



Throughout the year we took time to conduct leaving-to-learn opportunities. We invested time in facilitating experiences for our students to be able to connect with various communities. These included meeting with the Gr. 11s from Maples Met and MCAT at The Forks, going to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights to learn about telling a narrative, attending the Skills Canada Competition to see some of the nations top tradespeople and try different trades, exploring culture by attending the Asian Heritage Festival, experiencing history by visiting the Morden Fossil Discovery Centre, and trying new things in the Curiosity Based Advisory (CBA) outings. We finally capped off the year with a camping trip with our Gr. 11 Maples Met and MCAT cohort at Birds Hill Park to share in the celebration of an awesome year together.



»»» FROM THE GRADE 12S

By Dave and Jennie

It was a wonderful and busy final year for our Grade 12 students. After all the missed opportunities during lockdowns and distance learning, it was redemptive to be able to have a “normal” year. And boy, did we try our best to make up for lost time.

The main focus at the beginning of the year was our Montreal exchange trip. This trip had been in the works since the fall of 2021, but had to be postponed twice due to COVID. However, we and our twin school (Lakeside Academy) managed to make it happen, with them coming here during the first week of October and us going there in mid-November. Thanks to a whole lot of work from parents, staff, local businesses, and students, our “hosting” week went amazingly well. Highlights included going to the Winnipeg Zoo, the petriform site in the Whiteshell, the CMHR, and a night time “ghost tour” of the Exchange District. The Lakeside students had a great time and only positive things to say about our city. (Although one student asked, on their first day here, “Where are all the people??”)



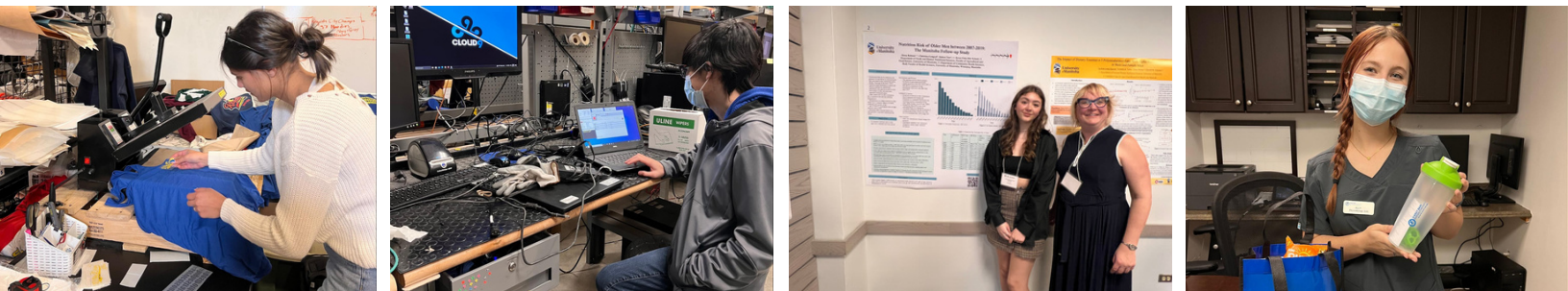
Our trip to Montreal was also an incredible experience. We shopped in Old Montreal, toured the Montreal Biodome, and learned how to juggle like clowns at circus school. The highlight for most of the kids was the day trip to Quebec City. Snow had just fallen and it was like something out of a holiday movie!



Another major event was the Senior Thesis Project (STP) Fair, where students shared their whole-year projects. There were many amazing projects but here are a few: A cookbook, a children's book, a working arcade game, a benefit concert, a photorealistic 3D model of our classroom, a scientific study on brine shrimp, and testing Mars Rover technology. Two of our students brought the two vehicles they completely restored. It was great to see a couple of elementary classes attend the event, with a small group of kindergarten students even coming!



Grade 12 students finished their year strong with solid internships. This was their last year to gain more experience or finish exploring. All students can now definitely say what they love to do and equally as important what they do not love to do. Some of our internships this year were: Star Labs at the University of Manitoba, Computers for Schools, Women's Health Clinic, Aura Hair salon, Victory School, University of Manitoba Faculty of Nutritional Food Sciences, Inner City Science Lab, Funding Change, D'arcy Bain Physiotherapy, Shalom Residences, Architects at Play, Signal Noise Music Marketing, Ice Time Sports, Dead Man's Hand Tattoo, MTYP, and McKim Marketing. Many of our internships have offered our students part time jobs or for them to come back and visit which only speaks volumes about the quality of work our students have done. I am sure we will continue to see many of our graduates working in the community.



Last but not least, the Grade 12 students graduated from high school! We are so proud of the hard work, learning and growth the students demonstrated, despite having a global pandemic thrown into the middle of their time here at Met. We are looking forward to hearing about the journeys they embark on next, and we are sure that they are going to change our world for the better.



FROM THE WELLNESS ADVISOR

By Clinton

It has been a welcomed change to be able to return to a regular schedule for wellness classes this year after having disruptions the past couple of years. Some highlights from wellness this year have been the outings that we have gone on. We went tobogganing at the Aki Centre, ice skating at the Forks, cross-country skiing at Kildonan Park with the grade 9 and 10 advisories, curling at Elmwood Curling Club with the grade 11 and 12 advisories, wall climbing at Altea Active, and our final wellness outing to Wheelies Family Roller Rink. During our wellness classes, we played low organized games in the east gym as well as sports like badminton, volleyball, floor hockey, soccer, and basketball. We also spent time in the weight room training and playing table tennis in the halls of Garden City. When it wasn't crazy cold outside, we played broomball and a variety of other games/activities at the parks nearby. We even had a neighborhood scavenger hunt that had students exploring the area in search of different landmarks and items..



The Met school was quite successful in the zone 12 MHSAA sports as well. The girls junior varsity volleyball team had several wins this season and finished 6th place in the league. We also had a first place finisher in the cross country races and our grade 11 student Emily Hever-Kapko qualified for and played in the provincial high school golf tournament in Carman Manitoba. The badminton tournament held at the University of Winnipeg in the spring was a great time and several students competed against other students from across the city.



Our community based learning opportunities have really ramped up this year with the addition of several new volunteering opportunities. Students had the chance to volunteer at places such as Harvest Manitoba, Siloam Mission, and Agape table. In addition to these regular volunteering opportunities we also started going to Animal Services to help with the dogs, Christmas Cheer Board to deliver hampers during the holiday season, and community patrol with Bear Clan Patrol. During our patrols with Bear Clan, students had the opportunity to connect with members of our North end community handing out snacks, hygiene kits, and hot meals. They also had a chance to learn about the issues that people are facing on a day to day basis and how they can help. Something else that was new this year was informational tours of some of the community resources that we have here in Winnipeg. We visited places such as The Link: Youth and Family Support, RaY(Resource Assistance for Youth), and SERC (Sexual Education Resource Centre) to learn about what they are doing for the community.



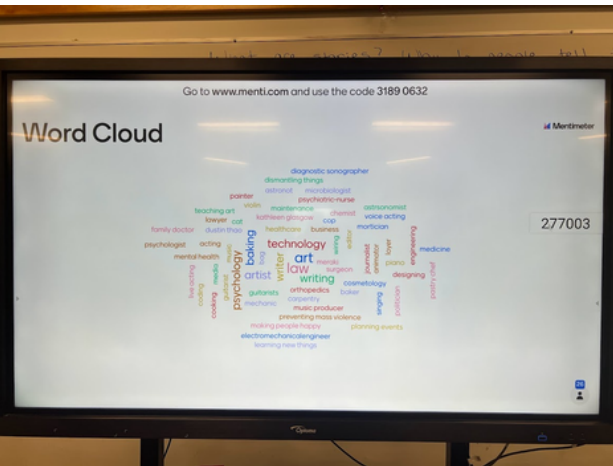
Some other highlights from our Tuesday and Thursday outings include monthly wellness hikes to Beaudry Park, Cedar Bog Trail, Bunns Creek Trail, Grand Beach, La Barriere Park, Grand Beach, and the Brokenhead Wetland Trail. We also attended the Project 11 Manitoba Moose game and the Goldeyes Baseball game. There was also an opportunity for students to go on an ice fishing outing in the winter and a shore fishing outing in the spring. Overall, it has been a busy year exploring, learning more about our community, and being active.



FROM THE LEARNING THROUGH INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR

By Maribeth

Our Internship program was back in full swing this year with the most number of students we have ever had out in the community. With over 300 students across the Seven Oaks Met, Maples Met, and Met Centre for Arts and Technology interviewing, shadowing, and interning with mentors on-site, hybrid, and remotely from September to June.



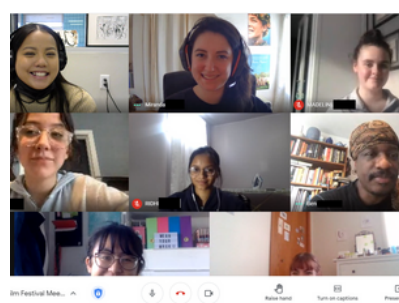
I began the year with the grade 9s in our Internship Bootcamp where students developed their understanding of being and working in community. Thank you to my co-facilitators Youth Employment Services, Safework Manitoba, Red Cross, and Rory Brett for your help this year. Students developed their skills in writing resumes, writing professional emails, making phone calls, conducting interviews, and working in professional settings.



We had successful community engagement events like our Informational Interview Kick-Off, Leaving to Learn Kick-Off, and Community Needs Project/Internship Fair. I am thankful to have been able to join Jennie and Dave's grade 12 advisory trip to Montreal on the fall. Pictured above is Paige and I with a veteran we were able to chat with on the trip. Beside it is a photo from a workshop we did with Guro Alvin Catacutan from Pamana Kali visiting from California that included students from all three Met Schools. It was amazing to see and hear about all of the community learning the students were engaging with all year, and I so proud of the the growth the students have displayed despite the difficult few years of lock-down.



Virtual internships sought
Have an expertise to share with a high school student? Your help would be appreciated



As of September 2023, I will be going on a leave of absence to start full-time studies at the University of Toronto Master of Education in Social Justice Education. My research will focus on community-based learning. I have lived in Winnipeg all of my life, so deciding to move away to go to school was not a decision I made lightly. Over the last ten years of teaching in the Seven Oaks School Division, I have had the immense honour of working with thousands of talented students and colleagues. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for all of the wonderful moments spent together. I'll be checking in and visiting with all of you as much as I can, and I hope you reach out to me if you feel called to. I'll miss you all so much!

Wishing you an incredible and restful summer.
Ingat! Take care!

