



# REPORT TO COMMUNITY

## Principal's Message

By Nancy Janelle

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Perhaps the most important work we did this year was in regards to truth & reconciliation and climate justice. On our path to try and decolonize education here at SOMet, we started by having a student indigenize our school logo, which turned out beautifully. A big thanks goes out to Liam in grade 10! We were fortunate this year as we had the opportunity to learn alongside some incredible indigenous leaders in our community: Elder Allen Sutherland, Niigaan Sinclair, Nahanni Fontaine, Wab Kinew, & Duncan Mercredi. Through our Leaving-to-Learn experiences we have had the opportunity to visit both the Assiniboia & Portage La Prairie Residential Schools, walk with the Bear Clan, visit the National Center for Truth and Reconciliation at the UM, learn about Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women with Bernadette Smith and Drag the Red, study the Naadobhii exhibit at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and watch Tomson Highway's Rez Sisters performed at the Manitoba Theater Center. With a focus on land-based learning and cultural teachings, this year our students have had the chance to participate in traditional smudges, go medicine picking on the land, tend to our school's medicine garden, learn beading and fancy shawl dancing, attend the SOSD cultural credit (where they attended a deer hide tanning camp this spring) and participate in the grad Pow Wow. These powerful learning experiences helped move many of us along in our journey towards truth and reconciliation.

Well, it has been quite the year as we slowly transitioned back to 'normal' at SOMet in this 'post-covid' world. And while it feels like it has been a somewhat normal year, it's important to remember that our last lockdown was only five months ago back at the beginning of January. With all of this in mind, we set ourselves some pretty specific goals as we developed our school plan at this time last year: rebuilding community in a 'post-covid' world; rethinking internships & projects in a 'post-covid' world; our ongoing work towards truth & reconciliation and decolonizing education; our continued focus on climate action & climate justice and working alongside indigenous land defenders; our important everyday emphasis on anti-racist & anti-oppressive pedagogy as we work with LGBTQ++ & BIPOC communities; and of course, the ongoing effort we put into our student's mental health & general 'post-covid' wellness. We made positive growth across all these areas over the course of the year.



In addition to this, but directly connected to our work around truth & reconciliation, was our ongoing focus on climate action and receiving teachings from indigenous land defenders. As Divisional Elder Dan Thomas said, “we have to create something good while we are here on this earth”. With that in mind we kicked off the year learning from Clayton Thomas Muller, a local & global land defender of indigenous communities, and studying the films of Kevin Settee on the Lake Winnipeg Project and Camp Morningstar. Through our Leaving-to-Learn opportunities we had the chance to visit the Prairie Climate Center, Green Action Center, and WRENCH, work with the Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition, and through our interest-based advisory, we honed in on our land-based survival skills. Of note this year was the formation of the student-led Met Environmental Education & Activism Committee, by Max in grade 10, and the Lego model of a hurricane in the permanent climate change exhibit at the CMHR, created by Luke in grade 11. Way to go, folks!



Working on rebuilding community in a ‘post-covid’ world was certainly the fun bit this year! We were able to reinstate so many things that make us who we are: our free breakfast program, interest-based advisories, whole school outings (Kildonan Park, Birds Hill Park, and the Fort Whyte Centre), Leaving-to-Learn outings, kick-me-outs, and family BBQs. We were able to have our annual Halloween contest again, spirit week, ugly Christmas sweater day, and our annual grad school dance. Increased collaboration with the other two Met schools, MCAT & Maples Met, on things like the Senior Thesis Project Fair and the Community Needs Fair, meant our students were able to make new connections with other Met students. And our students really stepped up this year in terms of designing projects that improved the greater good of our community. Projects like: the anti-racism IBA group, the TRC student group, the Luther Care Home ‘Santa for Seniors’ initiative, our annual Winnipeg Harvest food & toy drive, multiple fundraisers to support the people of Ukraine, creating the SOMet GSA logo and banner for the annual Pride Parade, mock whole-school elections, support for the Children’s Rehabilitation Foundation, helping save the West Kildonan Library, and of course the amazing grade 9 upstander projects with the CMHR. We were also quite pleased to introduce two new sections to our school library this year: grade 10 student, Emily F’s, amazing Free Little Library and art installation, and our new lobby library showcasing books by BIPOC, indigenous, LGBTQ++ authors and cli-fi books (climate fiction). These new libraries have been a hit with both our students and the community at large.





Rethinking internships & projects in a 'post-covid' world meant we designed many new, and were able to restart, unique learning experiences for our students. Group internships, community service, and other learning opportunities were a hit with our learners in a year where our community is still slowly opening their doors to internships. Opportunities like virtual group informational interviews, Try-A-Trade, Food Handlers Certification, First Aid & CPR training, MICE & North Forge (entrepreneurship), Tech Hub, Kitchen Brigades, Toy Box, Beyond Grade 12 & Dynamics of the Inner-City courses were popular. As were our regular visits to Winnipeg Harvest, Siloam Mission, Agape Table and our participation in STEAMfest, the Historical Thinking Jam, and the Social Justice Hack-A-Thon. Having things open up once again meant we could participate in Model United Nations, Ethics Bowl and Law Day, get back into the university science labs, and continue to collaborate with the Manitoba Arts Council's Artists-in-Schools program. It's been a good year!

As we start to look ahead and plan for September, we are asking ourselves, what does mino-pimatisiwin (living the good life) really mean and how can we play a role in creating a world where it is a 'good life' for ALL – for people, for animals, and the planet. We want students to think about the gifts they've been given and how they can share them with the greater good for the world we live in. Zoe Weil says, "action is the antidote to despair", so with this in mind we plan ahead with hope and love and look for ways to empower the young people we work alongside everyday.

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

## GRADE 9

Living the Good Life or “Mino’ Pimatisiwin” was a theme that drove the grade 9 advisory this school year. It centered around the fundamental question, “If everyone in the world was “livin’ the good life,” what would we have in common?” We challenged the grade 9 students to consider factors that help people find happiness, peace, life purpose, and pleasure. We started by considering individual feelings and beliefs about these topics which inevitably led to discussion about what each of us wanted out of our lives.

However, the conversation didn’t stop there and moved into the idea of a collective Good Life and a sense of community belonging. How we can be a part within a community became a focal point for the school year. As we sat in our final sharing circle on the last day of classes, we shared our feelings about what we wanted to bring with us to grade 10, what we wanted to leave behind, and how our community had grown. It felt like we had come full circle.



A significant element of Seven Oaks Met School is project based learning. The first project students were introduced in grade 9 to was the Upstander project. This was a joint project created by Manitoba teachers and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and it led students through the fundamental aspects of project design. Students were asked to explore, investigate, and act on injustices they recognize and experience in this world. Students' topic choices were diverse and varied. From the exploring the rights of the disabled, to human trafficking, to the links between residential schools

and foster care, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, teen mental health, period poverty, extremism... Just to name a few. A final highlight was our upstander showcase where students' project work was shared with the entire school community and our grade 9's received feedback on their project work.





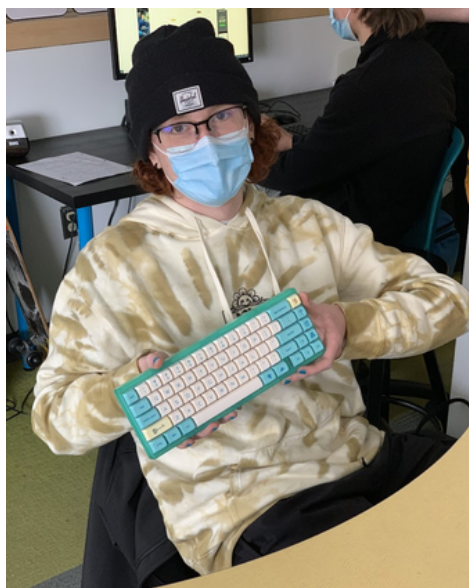
The grade 9s also spent a lot of time this year learning the fundamentals of Community Based Learning (CBL). One of the most important tasks students have while at SOMET is seeking out and nurturing their Circle of Support, the community members who will welcome them into adulthood at the end of their four years with us. Students spent considerable time practicing interview and conversational skills, as well as identifying the skills and interests that they were looking for experienced mentors to help them with. The grade 9s were then teamed up with older students to participate in an Amazing Race around downtown Winnipeg to learn how to move safely and quickly around major landmarks from City Hall to MCAT to the University of Winnipeg, the Legislative grounds, and the Forks. Students then spent Tuesdays and Thursdays in a variety of group and individual informational interviews and field trips, followed by group mentorships in graphic arts (with the University of Winnipeg Toybox program), culinary arts (with Kitchen Brigades), and entrepreneurship (with North Forge). Some students even began their first internships in schools, daycare centers, automotive repair shops, stores and restaurants. In these positions, students learned to ask questions, to solve problems, to take initiative and help others, and to master basic tasks in these different environments. Most importantly, they began to build relationships with adults in the community.

Finally, grade 9s spent the second half of the year examining the question of whether humans are alone in the universe. This unit involved extensive workshops, based on the Big History Project, about the thresholds of complexity that the universe has passed through in the past 13.8 billion years. These workshops helped students to understand the role of star formation and death in the creation of new elements, as well as the wide variety of stars and exoplanets scattered across the cosmos. The grade 9s then chose a particular exoplanet to research and to design an advanced life form that might be able to evolve there. They concluded their exoplanet study by writing a short story about what might happen when aliens and humans met for the first time. Many students used these stories to come full circle back to the themes we started the year with: avoiding othering and being an upstander for others and the planet. These are themes we are looking forward to exploring more in grade 10! exoplanet to research and to design an advanced life form that might be able to evolve there. They concluded their exoplanet study by writing a short story about what might happen when aliens and humans met for the first time. Many students used these stories to come full circle back to the themes we started the year with: avoiding othering and being an upstander for others and the planet. These are themes we are looking forward to exploring more in grade 10!

Grade 10 has come to an end and we are now beyond the halfway point of our high school career and the group has so much to be proud of, but still so much to look forward to! This year has been a wonderful experience, finally being able to share a space and engage with each other fully as peers. Our classroom discussions have been richer, our activities more dynamic, and our time spent all-around more SOMet-like.

We started our year with a focus on learning how to collaborate with one another. What other way then trying to break out of an escape room together?! With a focus on leaving-to-learn and project-based learning we took on an escape room-themed quarter in the fall. Our advisories went to The Real Escape to try out escape rooms for the first time. Working together in teams of 4-5, our students had to solve puzzles as a team in order to break out of their room. After experiencing this together, we challenged students to make their own versions of escape rooms. With mentorship from Real Escape staff, our students were able to work together in groups to build their own table-top escape rooms.

This quarter was challenging for our advisories as they not only were navigating project-based learning, but they were also conducting their projects with peers. Tons of learning took place on the social-emotional front alongside the critical thinking front as our advisories put together their escape rooms.





After experiencing a quarter of group project-based learning, students took on individual projects throughout the remainder of the year. Following the perspectives that Ikigai offers, students reflected on the things they love, the things they're good at, the things the world needs and the things they could be paid for. Ideally, our advisories worked towards projects that had all 4 aspects of Ikigai. However, this discovery is one's journey over an entire lifetime and we challenged our advisories to constantly reflect on their process. Over the course of the year, our students had a range of project ideas. These included: short films, business models, science fair projects, creating custom keyboards, learning about sociology, planning fundraisers, 3D printing parts, creating video games and building a little library. We can't wait to see what they come up with next year!

Our advisories were driven to get out into the community and find career development opportunities this year. We had a variety of leaving to learn experiences over the course of this year. We were able to make it out into the community to the Assiniboine Zoo, Arts Junktion, The Wrench, and Bruce Campbell Farm and Discovery Centre. These learning experiences were centered on exploring themes of sustainability and climate justice. To supplement these visits we also had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties, Prairie Climate Centre, and Green Action Centre. In addition to whole-school and advisory outings, students also engaged in independent career development opportunities as well. The experiences ranged from informational interviews, to shadow days to complete internships. Some of these included interviewing engineers, participating in Law Days, and finding sought-after internships in the fields of computer science, laboratories, art, and social justice. We are so proud of the initiative and career exploration our students engaged in this year!

Finally, our students were fortunate to explore various topics in geography throughout the year from our teacher candidate, Mia. Mia provided hands-on activities on the themes of space and place, sustainability, agriculture, and climate change. Mia thank you so much for sharing your expertise with our kiddos. Best of luck in your future endeavours!

As we look towards Grade 11, we expect our advisories to experience an increase in expectations, rigour, and workload. We will look for more independence and initiative from them as we continue the climb towards grade 12 and the end of high school. We look forward to all that is to come in the fall and wish you all an excellent summer!

This has been a year of ups and downs, as we made our way through a phase of the pandemic that allowed us some semblance of normalcy, but we still had to navigate through shutdowns and constant changes. We hit the ground running in September with several enriching outings, including Deer Meadows Farms and a day of Indigenous-themed outings including a visit to Portage La Prairie to tour a former residential school. Many other outings and trips were postponed or cancelled during and after the Omicron wave. Our exchange trip to Montreal was postponed until their Grade 12 year. (Currently, we have the trip booked for November!)

Despite these significant challenges, somehow students completed fantastic projects and engaged in successful internships. Grade 11 internships this year included engineering firms, animal hospitals, Child & Family Services, pharmacies, and political party headquarters! A highlight of the year was our visit to Try-a-Trade Day at the Manitoba Trades Association building, where retired tradespeople

came out to run brief workshops on more than a dozen trades. Three of our students left the day with a new interest in the trades. One of them started an internship in heavy mechanics and now is pursuing a career in that field. Another got an internship in masonry and was subsequently hired as a summer worker. Two of our trades students entered the Manitoba High School Apprenticeship Program, and are now earning hours toward their apprenticeship in their respective fields.

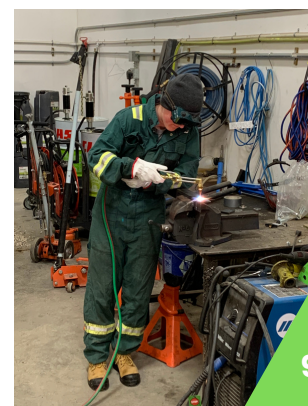






For our Student-Based Projects this year, many students opted to complete smaller-scale pieces of work that gave them joy and life. This was particularly important for the kids who started their second SBPs during the unsettling days of the Omicron wave. Students completed projects such as art portfolios, sewing projects, short stories, and a musical guitar piece. Some larger projects this year included a study on how COVID affected long-term care home patients (in cooperation with the U of M Food Sciences department) and a LEGO model of Hurricane Irma now on display at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights' climate crisis exhibit.

We had many focuses this year academically, but Science was our primary focus in our first semester. COVID made outings to university labs impossible, but our teacher candidate Mahalia was able to organize and facilitate several engaging in-school labs, including DNA extraction and making our cell phones into microscopes. Canadian History became the primary focus during our second semester when we completed our "Activate Canadian History" project. This project was conceived and designed by the Grade 11s, as they wanted to create hands-on activities to demonstrate their learning. Activities included a simulation of WWII Japanese internment, a women's suffrage craft, and a D-Day dodgeball activity. (A huge thanks to wellness advisor Clinton for allowing us to use the gym for most of these!) Near the end of the year, our students presented their History projects at the Seven Oaks School Division's Historical Thinking fair at Garden City Shopping Centre. Our kids' learning was on display and was judged by real historians science-fair-style. The judges were greatly impressed by the depth of understanding that our students gained.



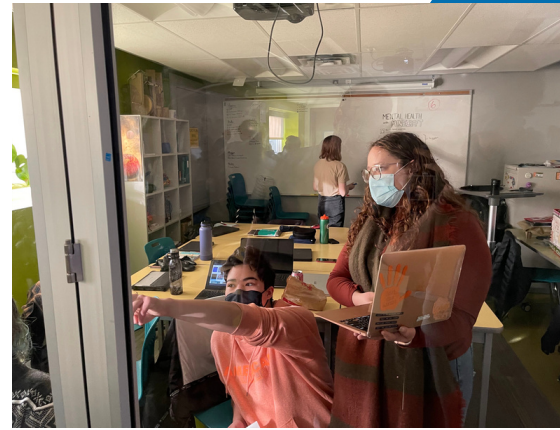
It was a wonderful and busy final year for our Grade 12 students. One of the major highlights of this year was the Senior Thesis Project (STP) Fair with Maples Met School, where students shared their learning and whole year projects. We enjoyed collaborating with Maples Met throughout this year, and we felt it led to more successful projects and lasting friendships. There were many amazing projects but here are a few: planning a series of fundraisers that raised over \$1300 for the Children's Rehabilitation Foundation, building a remote controlled plane, a stop motion animation of a scene from Star Wars, developing a candle company, teaching a monologue unit to the Grade 12s, and many more.

Another highlight of this year were the interviews and internships that students had. We were so impressed with how the Grade 12s found mentorship in whichever fields they were interested in, and many combined their internships and STPs in true Met School, cross-curricular fashion. Here are a few of the many amazing internships this year: Riverwood Church Community, The Edge

Skatepark, Urban Systems, Bit Space Development Ltd, Vantage Vintage Boutique, McGregor Automotives, the University of Manitoba STARLab, the University of Winnipeg Computational Chemistry Department, Capital Ford Lincoln, Endeavour Wealth Management, Annie's Attic, Winnipeg Film Group, Precursor Productions, HP Change and so many more. Thank you to our amazing mentors for all of their support and expertise.



# Congrats Gr. 12s!



This year we were lucky enough to have our amazing teacher candidate, Kristen, teach our students many things, centred around Global Issues and the theme of power and social structures. Our students engaged in group learning experiences to gain a background understanding of power, privilege and discrimination before they were given the opportunity to connect this learning with their internships or STPs through individual projects. We are so grateful for the expertise and care that Kristen brought to our classroom community, and we wish her all of the best as she begins her teaching career! We love you!



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 everything. 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.



This year in wellness we have seen many changes and challenges, but we have persevered through them all. Some highlights from our weekly wellness classes include learning disc golf, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, and playing our favourite low organized games such as bench ball and Yoshis. We were also fortunate to be able to have several outings to places like The Beach Volleyball Centre, The Forks for ice skating, Kildonan cross country ski park, bowling at Billy Mosienko Lanes, and our final outing to Wheelies Roller Rink. No matter where we went or what we were doing, we had a blast getting out and being physically active.

Even though we faced many changes to the way interschool sports looked this year, we were still able to participate in several different sporting opportunities. Starting off the school year, we participated in the golf tournament at Windsor Park Golf Course which was a blast. This year we had the Mets' very first girls JV volleyball team. While the season was short with only a few games, we still had a great time creating a solid team comradery.

Several Met students also participated in the Met School basketball tournament which was organized by an MCAT student. Finally, we had some students who attended the badminton tournament at the University of Winnipeg.



# Community-Based Learning



On Tuesdays and Thursdays we had the chance to go out and explore our community. Whether that was through the wellness breaks at Primrose Park or one of our monthly wellness hikes, it was nice to get out and explore. We visited several of the beautiful trails that Manitoba has to offer during our wellness hikes. We hiked Beaudry Park trail, Brokenhead Wetland trail, Cedar Bog trail in Birdshill Park, Spirit Sands in Spruce Woods Provincial Park, and urban trails like Bois des Esprit and Bunn's Creek Trail. Getting outside of the building and having the opportunity to connect with nature and each other was really great for our mental and physical wellness. We even got to go ice fishing on the Red River for our fishing IBA final outing. We had beautiful weather on the day and everyone who came out caught at least 1 fish. For many, this was their first time fishing and it was an exciting experience.

Throughout the school year, there were many chances for students to give back to their community through volunteering opportunities. We connected with organizations such as Siloam Mission, Winnipeg Harvest, and Agape Table to work in the kitchen preparing meals and serving community members, as well as working in the donation centre sorting food and clothing. Through these volunteering opportunities, students got to experience the joy of giving back to the community around them.

With the pressures of life and the uncertainty over the past few years with covid, there has been a great need for help around stress management and anxiety from our guidance counselling services. Whether that was students making appointments with our Norwest counselling service provided weekly at the school, or through our in-school guidance counsellor, students always had someone to talk to and to help them manage the challenges they faced.



## LEARNING THROUGH INTERESTS

Learning Through Interests and Internships (LTI) is a core pillar of the Met School model. Our program can be summed up this year as hopeful, agile, and renewed. Many students returned to in-person internships at the beginning of the year. As Omicron surged we went again into lockdown at the end of December, which meant our students returned to virtual internships, had them postponed, or some cancelled completely. By spring we began to see mentors welcoming students back into their workplaces. A huge thank you to the mentors who answered our call to do virtual informational interviews during the winter months. We are grateful that our students were able to continue their career development learning and happy to welcome new mentors to our community.

We continued to run our in-house internship programs such as the Met Innovation Centre for Entrepreneurship (MICE), Kitchen Brigades at Edmund Patridge School, Tech Hub at New Media, and external programs through organizations

such as Creative Manitoba. Students took part in the Dynamics of the Inner City University of Winnipeg course with Mitch Bourbonniere, as well as drone workshops with Volatus Aerospace. We are excited to announce that we now have an agreement with the City of Winnipeg to host Met students at the various municipal departments. We will be facilitating presentations with them in early September to learn more about what opportunities are available.





After three years of adapting to every curve ball that the pandemic has thrown us, our internship program is stronger than ever. Our community strength is because of the continued dedication to honest communication regarding capacity when building our relationships: student-to-student, student-to-adult mentors, and advisors-to-families. We as a Met School community look forward to the 2022/2023 school year with a renewed sense of hope of returning to not just regular LTI programming, but a more improved and inclusive version of it.

