

Report to Community 2020-2021 West St. Paul School

Schools in Manitoba present a Report to the Community each year highlighting the activities at the school for the school year. The 2020-2021 school year has been like no other in recent history with the focus across the world being on the COVID-19 Pandemic. To reduce and prevent the spread of COVID, the students and staff at West St. Paul School were very aware of the essentials of protecting us all - wash and sanitize, distance from others, wear your mask, etc.

The school year was NOT all about COVID. All students and staff were focused on learning and growing together both academically and socially. There remained a focus on learning in school! We are incredibly proud of the work of students and staff throughout this pandemic. Certainly, teachers and students used the outdoors as a classroom. Much of our learning took place outside the four walls of the classroom. Staff and students were excited to be at school, together, and learning.

Please take the time to read the short vignettes from different classrooms in the school. We are sure you will agree that the school year has been an exciting and educative experience!

Mrs Campbell

Forget Pigs in Space. This year it was KINDERGARTENERS IN SPACE! There were many experts in Campbell Kindergarten classrooms who knew a whole lot about space. Every day was an adventure because of what was happening in real life. There was the Super Moon, the Blood Moon, the piece of the Chinese rocket falling to Earth and Space X Dragon 2. We learned about planets in our solar system, gravity, what humans need to survive, the sun, rockets and spacecrafts. We learned about astronauts, what it's like to be in space, space suits and the moon. For Earth Day, we learned about Earth and how to take care of it. We were lucky to get

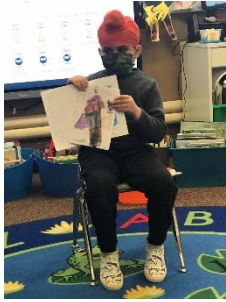


two large boxes. We made our rocket, painted it and added details inside and out. We made the other box into our Solar System. On FRIDAY, APRIL 30, it was KINDERGARTENERS IN SPACE DAY!

We did some *out of this world* kinds of things. We dressed up like astronauts, aliens, Storm Troopers – basically anything you could imagine that might be up in SPACE. Families even brought special Space Snacks. We tried to stay away from snacks with crumbs because crumbs would just float around in the spaceship and make a big mess, kind of what it usually looks like in Kindergarten after snack!.



Mrs Jowziak



In Kindergarten, students were fully engaged as Author's of their own stories. They've worked hard since January, to use their own best spelling when writing, and made a lot of discoveries about words and word sounds. Our writing process started with children saying they didn't know how to spell; and ended with children confirming whether they needed to end their sentence with a period or question mark. Every child wrote a story at their own level; and were brave to read their stories in front of the class. Some stories had one word on a page while others had multiple sentences. Everyone had a smile on their face as we celebrated the beginning of our journey in writing.

Mrs Moniz

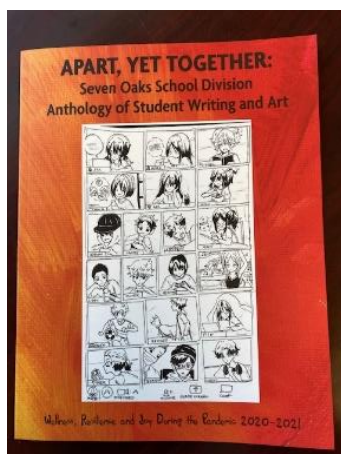
This spring, the students of room 2 spent a good deal of time outside exploring nature and making connections to our in-class learning. The students were inspired by the works of Andy Goldsworthy who is famous for natural works of art. The students collected specimens from nature ranging from twigs and leaves to rocks and sand. They were careful to only use what they found on the ground and did not disturb any growth. They used these materials to create beautiful works of art which were photographed and displayed. After they were done creating, they returned their natural supplies back into the landscape. It was a wonderful way of finding inspiration and beauty all around us.



Mrs Rempel

A highlight for me this year was seeing how resilient our little learners are and how they are already showing what great future leaders they are going to be. With all the changes this year I was so proud of how my grade ones and twos took care of each other. They reminded one another about guidelines, shared ideas and strategies and really stepped it up when we went to remote learning. So many of my students shared pointers about the new technology we were all suddenly expected to use. Even I learned a few tricks from my kiddos. We really are a community where we learn from one another the best.

Ms Morwick



This year, the grade 1/2 writers of Room 1 had the opportunity to participate in a writing anthology project being compiled by the Seven Oaks School Division and Project 11. The theme of the anthology centred on wellness, resiliency, and joy in the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. In our classroom, students wrote postcards addressed to themselves containing messages of support and reminders of ways they can focus on mental wellness and joy in times when they may feel sad, nervous, or angry. We read various books on the subject, watched videos, brainstormed extensive lists of the unique things we each do to feel joy, and had sharing circles to share our ideas. We spent time outside in nature, writing our ideas and rough drafts in special notebooks the students created themselves, and sketching some of our feelings and ideas. The lessons that students learned from exploring various mindful and joyous activities and healthy coping strategies can be applied to a variety of challenges they may face in life, not just COVID-19. All of the students were thrilled to have their authentic writing published in a book that they each got to take home a copy of at the end! During the period of remote learning, a

virtual Book Launch party was hosted by the division and featured Bryan Little of the Winnipeg Jets! The project provided a unique time for students across the division to capture and celebrate through writing and art the various ways that children have coped with challenges this past year, providing a sense of hope and possibility for all who engaged with the project and read the final product!

Mrs Walker

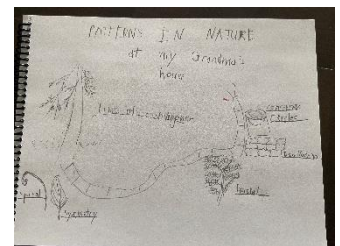
On Thursday, April 22, 2021, my students learned the meaning of Earth Day and the importance of taking care of this place. Students got into small groups wearing disposable gloves and went to the playground to pick up garbage. Many of the students wondered why others throw their litter on the ground. We talked about the kinds of trash and how much of it we were picking up. Most of the trash consisted of plastics such as water bottles, straws, plastic bags and wrappers. We also talked about how long it takes for plastics to break down and where they go before that happens. Students learned that much of the garbage ends up in waterways eventually destroying ocean life. Other garbage ends up in landfills taking up valuable space. The students believe that Earth Day should be everyday and are discovering ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle efficiently in order to live in a cleaner world.

Mr Heinrichs

The push to teach outside this year was a natural one for Room 5. Our class entered into an organic partnership with Ms. Barkman's grade 8 class through outdoor learning. I saw the grade 1s and 2s get to know the oldest of the students at West St. Paul and they looked forward to the opportunities they had to connect with them through gardening. Not only were relationships built with other students but relationships were built with the land in the school yard. Room 5 students went from viewing the garden beds as climbing structures to caring for the plants and the space, reminding other students to do the same. When springtime hit, the students started seedlings with the grade 8s to plant, and spent time noticing the changes as the plants grew. I look forward to watching as students continue to deepen their relationship to the school outside the walls of the classroom!

Mrs. Cervantes/Ms Millar

During remote learning students explored the outdoors by discovering a variety of patterns that can be found in nature. Students went on a nature scavenger hunt to look for patterns around them, while making a map of their route and drawing the patterns they found. Students were encouraged to ask family and friends to follow the map to see if they can find the same things. Students were excited and eager to document their discoveries.



Ms Gill

The Grade Threes in room 7 enjoyed using the outdoor space to learn their multiplication facts. They were excited to create hopscotch games for themselves and others based on all the multiplication tables up to nine. As the students were forming the boxes and writing in the numbers, they practiced skip counting by different numbers and sang the songs that they associated with their assigned times tables. Many students took the opportunity to do some social distant visiting to other hopscotch spots and help with the skip counting when needed. It was a fun cooperative learning experience.

Ms Aquino

The students in Ms. Aquino's grade 3/4 class are very curious, inquisitive, and they also LOVE to share their knowledge and wonderings. This year, they participated in TUSC (Totally Unbelievable Speaking Club) on a regular basis. Every Wednesday, students prepared a short presentation based on their role for the week. Some examples of roles are scientist, biographer, movie critic, travel agent, and zoologist, to name a few. Among the usual PowerPoint presentation, students also dressed up in costumes, recorded video "commercials", and did live demonstrations of science experiments and origami lessons. TUSC is a fantastic program because it allows students to think critically and provides them with an opportunity to learn how to speak confidently. This program had a huge impact in developing confidence and self-esteem in students and seeing their progress and growth throughout the year was astounding to say the least!



Ms Illagan



What a year! It was a blast being part of the WSP family, thank you staff, students and families for the warm welcome. Being new made it both a challenge and a lot of fun. One of the fondest memories I have with Room 9 would be getting involved in the some of the most cherished time of all – time spent outside! They taught me new games and caught me up to speed on games I thought I knew the rules too. To see the excitement, joy and true competitive nature of my class during recess brought me back to a simpler time. They also really enjoyed doing outdoor education with a visit from

FortWhyte. Students learned about animal adaptations and a familiar furry critter, how to “read” nature stories that tell about animal territory wars and took part in using materials from around the school yard to create a nest for a lucky creature. It's been a slice - thank you WSP!

Ms Greening



The most exciting thing our classroom participated in this year was the Jack Frost Challenge which led to the creation of Quinzhee-Ville! We were outside every day when the temperatures had plummeted to -40. We were dressed for those frigid days we've come to know as Manitobans and had so much fun. The finished product was 5 quinzhees that branched off from the main fort. We were proud to share it with the rest of the school and have all the other students enjoy it when they were outside.



Mr Sutton/Ms Olson

This year, my grade 5 class engaged in discussions of Reconciliation in Canada. We focused on the importance of learning about and acknowledging the harms of the past and present. We discussed the damage caused by the Residential School System as a whole and how the tragic discovery of the remains of 215 children at the Kamloops Residential School impacted survivors, the Indigenous community and the country. At the same time, we created a display where each student created a heart-shaped art piece with a message of reconciliation. We put up the display along the fence with 215 orange ribbons to show our commitment to standing with the Indigenous community through truth and reconciliation as a classroom.



Mr Luna

This school year room 17 had a unique opportunity to partner with the Assiniboine Park Zoo to participate in the Goodman School Residency. Due to Covid-19 the residency was held virtually. The class was introduced to the role of a modern zoo and explored how zoo's help endangered animals. Before the lockdown we had the opportunity to tour the zoo and explored how the zoo takes care of the animals. During the virtual residency the students participated in virtual presentations, tours and animal encounters. After the residency the students enjoyed extending their learning by exploring student focused inquiry projects.

Ms Lee



Room 41 (Grade 5) loved doing hands-on science this year! One of our most memorable hands-on activities was building our complex machines for our final project. A complex machine is a machine with two simple machines. We got creative while incorporating wheel and axles, levers, inclined planes, screws, wedges and pulleys. Our machines were able to carry out a specific function which can help us do work. The best part of the design process was seeing the students connecting what we learned before and applying it to a project!

Mrs Jackson/Mrs Stromberg

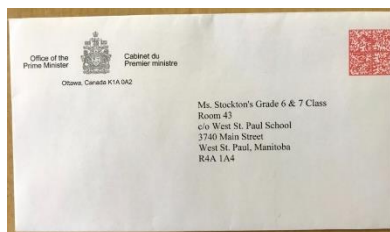
For room 45, an exciting time we had this year was learning about the Mars Perseverance. It was a perfect year to learn about space, since the Mars Perseverance launched in July 2020. We were able to kick off our year by learning about its mission and purpose, and then track its progress to landing. We used the design process to build and test our own air rockets and found out which materials and designs created the rocket that flew the furthest. Our learners loved stomping on the launcher and learned so much from their successes and failures.

Mr Robertson

The 2020/21 school year presented unique challenges, but some of these challenges were accompanied with benefits. One such benefit was an increase in our use of outdoor space. After teaching Grade 6/7 classes for a few years, one quickly comes to realize students do not typically give their best performance in the early hours of the morning. This year that changed and the change was significant. Each morning we would use one period as a *movement break* where we could read a chapter in our classroom novel, complete a math assignment or, more likely, play Man Tracker! Neither adult nor child can possibly play a round of Man Tracker and return to their classroom groggy. If you ever wake up in the morning and arrive at the office feeling lethargic, run around your place of work a dozen times with 20 of your favorite employees in hot pursuit. I guarantee that upon return to your desk, there is no way you will consider a sneaky daytime nap once focused on your alarmingly high heart rate. The 2020/21 school year highlighted the important connection of academics and physical activity in the lives of Middle Years students.

Mrs Stockton

Our class learned about the life and career of John A. Macdonald, and his role in the confederation of Canada. We examined various sources such as textbooks, documentaries and articles and discussed the different ways in which John A. Macdonald was portrayed. We then learned about an incident in Montreal when a statue of John A. Macdonald was taken down by protesters. Students agreed that John A. Macdonald was pivotal in creating the great country that we love, but also felt that it should be acknowledged that John A. Macdonald participated in policies that were harmful to many groups of Canadians, especially those of Indigenous ancestry.



Students recommended that the statue should be resurrected, but that it must be done in a way that honors and represents an honest history of Confederation. We sent a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau outlining our suggestion and received a letter back acknowledging our ideas and ensuring that our suggestion had been sent to relevant personnel.

Mr Zylstra

During our unit on the Solar System, the class took a particular interest in the Voyager program. More specifically, the students were fascinated by Voyager's Golden Record, which is a time capsule that was made with the intention of teaching extraterrestrials about life on Earth. As a project, each student created their own modern version of the Golden Record, an electronic document containing sights and sounds of Earth. Students used Google Slides and Google Docs to collect pictures, sounds, and songs that they believe best represent life on Earth. This included things like pictures of the natural world and major events in human history, a song from each decade since the 1960s, a variety of sound clips, and more! Then, they had the opportunity to deliver an interactive presentation of their time capsules to their classmates.

Ms Ebbeling

Our class came together in early October at a time of adversity to allow for the social distancing necessary during the pandemic.

I have two memories that brought a feeling of togetherness during this time.

The first is the winter relay that was hosted by a grade 8 class.

It was heartwarming to see a group of students pulled together from different classes support and cheer for each other during

friendly competition.

The second highlight was being able to watch NASA's Perseverance while teaching a unit on the history of space exploration. Being able to watch a moment in space exploration history while having to remain distanced brought an air of togetherness and showed that, even in the midst of a pandemic, humanity is capable of persevering and achieving excellence.

Mrs Penner

This year Room 42 students studied many artists and different styles of art. We were able to use the techniques that we learned about to create incredible art pieces. Our class became quite proficient when observing works of art by sharing the elements of art, and design principles within an art piece. Our study also focused on Indigenous Artists and their work which we were able to connect successfully to our Social Studies learning.

Mr La/Ms Jopka

This year in grade 8, we had learned about lighting and optics in our science unit. One lesson we had was going outdoors to explore concepts of reflection, refraction and color scheme. Our kids were very excited to learn and prospect at a little scavenger hunt about what types of objects reflect color and how it refracts lighting. We had gone to various parts of the community around West St. Paul School to learn and find these objects. Overall, this was a very fun and engaging experience for the kids and learning on-the-go was an exciting moment in our classroom.

Mrs Barkman

This term, we explored how water sustains life on earth. While we were limited to our classroom and surrounding community, we learned about many perspectives on water through virtual guests. This included teachings from Elder Dan, FortWhyte Alive, an environmental lawyer, and The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD-ELA). One workshop was hosted by Waterlution, an organization that provides sustainable solutions to water problems. This workshop taught us about the role of storytelling and promoting a culture of sustainability. They drew upon the ways in which many Indigenous peoples have used stories to foster relations to land and water, and pass knowledge on through generations. In this workshop, we practiced how to write compelling stories that revolved around a water topic such as pollution and contaminants, access to clean water, impacts of extreme weather, the role of wetlands, water filtration systems, and even our own family's stories of relying on the water to live. We calculated the volume of rainwater in our field, and went outside to learn about how West St Paul's infrastructure can help prevent damage from flooding. We then took that knowledge home to learn about our own houses' infrastructure.

After a few trips to the Aki Center, we decided to create a Walking Tour of the area so that more of our community would see what sustainability looks like at the divisional level. We each selected an area at the Aki Center that we thought was important. Each of our entries included the history of the area, its connection to the natural world, and why it is important to our school division. We ended up winning 1st place in a national Green Learning contest, which includes \$1000! We are planning to put that money towards planting a diversity of trees in the field at West St Paul School. After a year unlike any other, we were happy to be outside, to connect with our neighbourhood and each other, and to give back to the school and division as we move on to high school. We hope you can go visit the Aki Center this year and enjoy our stories!

During our water systems unit in science class, students investigated the ongoing water crisis on reserves across Canada and Neskantaga, ON in particular. Students learned about the conditions, promises that have been made, and brainstormed ideas on how to help. Since we were also learning about democracy and the responsibilities of being a citizen, we determined we would write letters to the Prime Minister of Canada. To the surprise of many students, we

received a response from the Prime Minister's Office. While no action to remedy the situation was committed, it was a good reminder to the class that their voices matter, even if they can't vote yet.

Mr Hodgins

This year in Band at West St. Paul was very different than a typical year. Even though the year presented many challenges for playing music, our students at West St. Paul School were able to continue performing and learning about music. Students visited playing wind instruments for a few weeks in September until singing and playing wind instruments were disallowed due to public health orders. Because of this, students in grades 4 - 8 had the opportunity to learn guitar for several months in their regular band and music classes. During the second term guitars were switched out for a class set of twenty electronic pianos. Students were shown how to use online resources and tutorials to discover and learn piano music on their own and as a class. As the end of the year approached many students were able to play, from memory, a variety of self-selected pieces of music on guitar or piano.

Mrs Raj



This year, Gaga Ball, a game similar to dodgeball, caused the most excitement and enjoyment among early years phys. ed students. A newly introduced game, gaga ball is a fast paced, high energy sport played in an octagonal pit. Two versions were taught to the students. One version included six teams that chose one player to enter the pit. The six members faced off to get the other players out by using the gaga ball. This allowed team spirit to grow among students through cheering on their fellow peers. The elimination round version of the game is one where everyone is in the pit trying to get the others out with the last one standing as the winner. The modified versions of the game kept the game interesting and the students, the level of engagement made them realize that time went by quickly when they played the game. Gaga ball was an ideal game during the pandemic where distancing between the students were maintained. In addition, gaga ball allowed students to develop their

movement and motor skills through dodging, striking, running and jumping. Among students, gaga ball was a highly demanded game in the gym, which fostered enthusiasm and increased their sportsmanship.