

Everyone Matters – Celebrated at Red Rock Public School!



SGDSB Director's Newsletter March 22, 2016 *"Small Schools Make a Difference"*

All learners at RRPS spent the week working as a team participating in collaborative tasks where EVERY person on the team had a very important role to play. We had a photo-scavenger hunt and a relay race plus a tasty taco lunch! We started our mornings with our regular MeMoves activities and then listened to the Song "What I am is..." On Friday, everyone in the building participated in a show-and-tell where everyone including staff members brought in an item that shows one of their strengths or their passions. We learned a lot about each other and understand that if you work hard and set goals they can be reached! We had the opportunity to go to GONPS and participate in the Powwow they hosted. A big thank you to them for including us. It was a memorable experience for each of us! Overall, this week has been about celebrating what we each bring to our school community. We can make a difference, we are valued and we need to always do our best!





"We" was done by Ms. Purdon's 5/6 class. The other picture is of Mrs. Sivic's grade 1 class with the 'Challenge Fairy' who visited their classroom daily leaving challenges such as, "Give someone a high 5 today", or "Give someone a compliment today".



B.A. Parker Celebrates Everyone Matters Week; Submitted by Kathy Pietsch

The week of April 11-16 was a very exciting week at B. A. Parker Public School as it was Everyone Matters Week. The week of Everyone Matters is a week where we celebrate our board's inclusivity; focus on our wellness, learning, and growth. It culminates with Neurodiversity Day on April 15. In the last two years we have focussed on different themes. In 2014, for example, it was "Think Differently". This year our theme is "WE BELONG". The week kicked off with each student being given a hexagon puzzle piece on which they were to write their name and then use words or pictures to describe them. These pieces were then used to create a whole school Beehive which was built and displayed in the school hallway. In Mrs. Pleson's class, they talked about how unique and different we all are; that we all have different needs and qualities that make us who we are. The class made acrostic poems together to help celebrate these differences. It gave each student a chance to shine and feel good about themselves.

B.A. Parker is also becoming technology driven by creating interactive bulletin boards in our school. Follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/BAParkerPublicSchool/> to learn more.

10 and 25 Year Employee Recognition Awards (2015-2016)

Non Teaching

- With 10 years as of September 5, 2016
- Hired between September 6, 2005 and September 5, 200

EMPLOYEE	HIRE DATE	SCHOOL
Tammy Lewandowski	October 19, 2005	Beardmore Public School
Daniel Lam	October 24, 2005	Marathon Area
Lisa Zeleny	October 21, 2006	George O'Neill Public School
Maria De Lorenzi	October 31, 2005	Nipigon Red Rock High School
Maggie Ratte	November 18, 2005	Manitouwadge Public School
Paula Bellerose	November 21, 2005	Manitouwadge Public School
Daniel Faubert	February 14, 2006	Manitouwadge Area
Judy Cain	March 20, 2006	Nipigon Red Rock High School

- With 25 years as of September 5, 2016
- Hired between September 6, 1990 and September 5, 1991

EMPLOYEE	HIRE DATE	SCHOOL
Evelyn O'Quinn	September 24, 1990	GCHS/B.A Parker PS
Patti MacAlpine	November 5, 1990	George O'Neill Public School
Bonnie Gingras	February 20, 1991	Marathon High School
Andrea MacGillivray	July 15, 1991	Schreiber Public School
Don Henry	August 1, 1991	Marathon High School
Judy St Denis	November 21, 1990	Marjorie Mills Public School

Congratulations to both our 10 & 25 Year Employees!



Teaching

- With 10 years by September 2016
- Hired after the commencement of the 05/06 school year or September 2006

EMPLOYEE	HIRE DATE	SCHOOL
Diana Goodmurphy	October 3, 2005	Margaret Twomey Public School
Serena Davis	September 1, 2006	B.A. Parker Public School
Candice Calhoun	September 5, 2006	Manitouwadge High School
Michael Leclair	September 5, 2006	Geraldton Composite High School

Teaching

- With 25 years by September 2016
- Hired after the commencement of the 90/91 school year or September 1991

EMPLOYEE	HIRE DATE	SCHOOL
Catherine Kurish	October 31, 1990	B.A. Parker Public School
Jim Hendricken	January 9, 1991	Nipigon Red Rock High School
Noel McQueen	January 30, 1991	Marathon High School
Sylvie Fortier	September 1, 1991	Geraldton Composite High School
Robert Haslam	September 1, 1991	Geraldton Composite High School

Administration

- With 10 years by September 2016
- Hired after the commencement of the 05/06 school year or September 2006

EMPLOYEE	HIRE DATE	SCHOOL
Marc Paris	January 9, 2006	District

Thank you for your support & dedication! Congratulations!

Board Learning Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being: A Global Competency Document

Research is telling us that our students need to be globally competent to achieve success and well-being in their lives.

What are the Global Competencies that have been identified?

Dr. Fullan tell us that they include the “6 Cs”:

1. Creativity
2. Communication
3. Citizenship
4. Critical Thinking
5. Character
6. Collaboration



Dr. Fullan reminds us that “when you are proficient at all six competencies, this is tantamount to having a life of well-being as you have the skills to flourish in the world today and in the future”.

Our BLPSA emphasizes these 6 Global Competencies. How are you emphasizing them in your practice?

Have you ever thought about...your strengths in terms of *which side of your brain you tend to develop more?* If you are a linear, knowledge-based, answer focused thinker, you are strongly dominant in your left brain. Right brain dominant individuals are creative, problem-solvers who see many solutions to problems! Which are you? Which are your students?

Special Education Report

By: Will Goodman Special Education Coordinator

WFAS/ABLLS Learning - Special Education teachers spent 2 days learning how to administer in-school assessments that help us to better understand student learning needs.

The Wechsler Fundamental Skills Assessment (WF-AS) allows schools to quickly and easily gain an understanding of an individual's reading comprehension, spelling, numerical operations, and word reading skill levels. Based on Canadian norms, the WF:AS^{CDN} can be used as a school-wide screener to identify students at risk of academic failure, or in a clinical context to guide intervention strategies and further diagnostic options based on test results. The empirically-based assessment instrument also provides the ability to monitor progress.

The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS) is an assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system used to help guide the instruction of language and critical learner skills for children with autism and other developmental disabilities. This practical and parent friendly tool can be used to facilitate the identification of skills needed by students to effectively communicate and learn from everyday experiences.

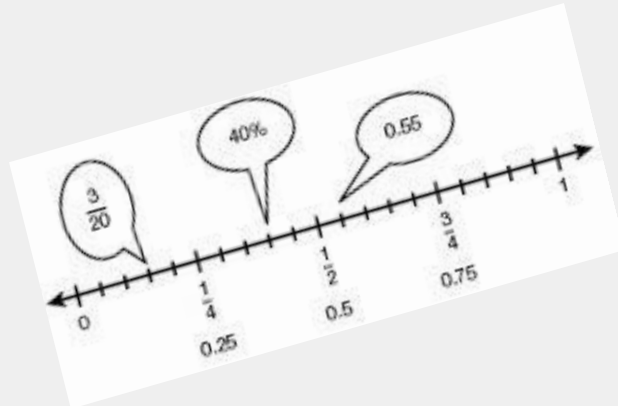
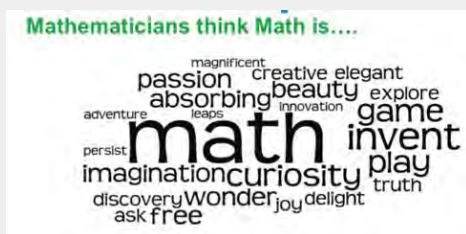
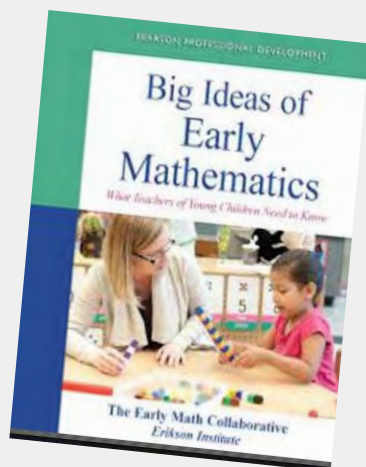
Both of these tools will be assets to our school based teams when screening students who have become part of the in-school referral process. These assessments offer schools a greater understanding of strengths and needs for our learners. Over the next few weeks schools will be engaging in their own assessments with support from Hillary and Melissa.

****New Resources****

The SEAC committee has been busy creating resources to help support parents of student with special education needs. These resources can be found on the board website or by using the link below.

<http://www.sgdsb.on.ca/article/reports-and-publications-165.asp>

Reports & Publications	
Reports & Publications	
Below is a compilation of published reports and publications pertaining to Special Education.	
2015-2016 Special Education Master Plan	
Parent's Guide to Special Education	
Parent's Guide to Special Education Appeals, Support Organizations and Contacts	
School to Community Transition Information	
Parent Guide to IEP	
SLAC Information Booklet	



Numeracy News - Board Wide PLC's

Submitted by Leslie Blackwood, SWST /Numeracy Facilitator

"Through collaborative inquiry, educators work together to improve their understanding of what learning is (or could be), generate evidence of what's working (and what's not), make decisions about next steps and take action to introduce improvements and innovations. And then they start again on emerging new issues and challenges. Notably, collaborative inquiry sees educators as key participants in understanding how to achieve excellence and equity in education."

Capacity Building Series - Collaborative Inquiry in Ontario

Since January, Superior Greenstone elementary educators have been engaged in 3 different professional mathematics learning communities;

- Early Years Book Study
- Primary Math Learning
- Junior Math Learning

Each of these groups has a focused learning goal which involves deepening our understanding of the big ideas of mathematics and building on strategies to develop student understanding.

Through the use of a book study, early primary educators are exploring the concepts of "play that involves math" and "playing with math itself". Recent research has shown that "early math competence is one of the best predictors of school success across the curriculum" (Erikson Institute 2016) and our collaborative conversations and the research from the text are extending our knowledge of how to ensure we as educators are paying close attention to both of these types of experiences in the early primary classrooms.

Our Primary and Junior Math PLCs are building on sessions that were initiated last year. We are continuing to deepen our understanding of developmental continuums in mathematics in order to be better able to respond to student learning needs. Through our focused sessions on visual representations and number talks in the primary group and fractions with junior / intermediate teachers we have been exploring classroom strategies that will facilitate a better understanding of the "quantity relationships" of number.

As a numeracy facilitator it is very exciting to be a co-learner in each of these professional math inquiries. As we collaboratively look at student work and discuss student thinking we are all enhancing our mathematical knowledge for teaching.

"The study of mathematics, like the Nile, begins in minuteness but ends in magnificence." - Charles Caleb Colton

FINDING THE BALANCE OF TEACHING MATHEMATICAL SKILLS & CONCEPTS USING A CONTEXT

-Katie Kennedy (SWST)



WHY a CONTEXT?

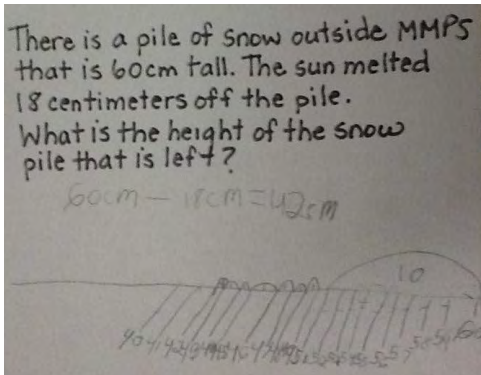
It is important that students see mathematics as sensible, useful and doable. The Ontario Curriculum, Mathematics (2005) states: "students will make connections among mathematical concepts and procedures and relate mathematical ideas to situations drawn from other context. Students need to see the connection and the relationship between mathematical concepts and skills to use their learning in other context and more than a series of isolated skills." (TIPS4RM Mathematical Processes)

❖ Creating the Context



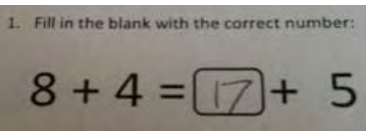
Are mystery students showing that they are unable to make connections because of context? Providing a balance of creating a context within which we teach

knowledge skills/concepts requires us to think of ways the mathematical concept/skills occurs naturally and holds meaning for the student. From the student desk:

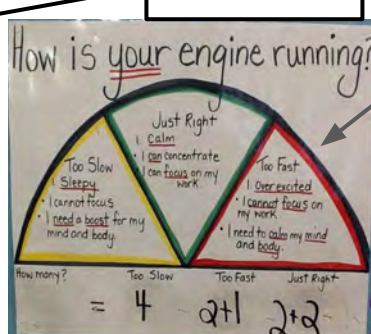


Mystery student struggled with subtraction as an isolated skill and transferring either the removal or adding up strategy. When

given a result unknown problem with a context of snow melting the student was able to complete with no difficulty and use a tool (number line) which has been modelled in the class



Mystery student not yet able to transfer a skill of balancing an equation without a context provided. Each day students complete a balancing activity with their 'engines' and self regulation however the transfer of knowledge is YET to happen from concrete to abstract.



CONTEXT

NO CONTEXT

❖ What the research is telling us

The ability to make sense of number operations depends on the foundational understanding that every operation tells a story and that numbers are not just a "naked number" Big Ideas of Early Mathematics (2014). When students discover meaningful relationships and make connections between abstract ideas and practical applications when there is a context (ie. real world), this allows for internalization and the development of conceptual understanding. (Teaching Math Contextually, CORD, 1999)

❖ What context have you provided for a skill/concept?

Ask yourself:

- Are new concepts/skills presented in the context of what the student already knows or a familiar experience, thus allowing for connections to be made?
- Do lessons and activities encourage the students to transfer concepts/skills to a similar or new context?
- Did providing the context allow for student success or not yet?

CONTEXT

SUPPOSITION DEVELOPS:

IF we provide a balance of both meaningful context and the development of mathematical skills and concepts **THEN** students will build a deeper understanding, connecting skills and concepts to a variety of similar and new context.

BMST – An Integrated Framework to Support Positive Behaviour in Our Schools We're in This Together

by Melissa Bianco, Positive Behaviour Support Lead

To date fifteen staff throughout our board has been certified in BMST. Every effort was made to make this a multi-disciplinary team and it includes special education teachers, educational assistants, child and youth workers, guidance, and a principal. Ongoing training is occurring and there are plans to roll out more broadly next school year.

BMST is an overall framework to support positive behaviour in schools that is based on a train-the-trainer model. It was developed by educators for educators and incorporates evidence-based practices on child development and behaviour. BMST teaches educators how to deal with critical behaviour incidents but more importantly focuses and emphasizes proactive and preventative approaches to behaviour on a daily basis. It includes relevant educational procedures and up-to-date information regarding legislative materials that have a direct impact on our schools and how we interact with students.

March 3rd and 4th wrapped up our four day BMST learning sessions which helped our 'multidisciplinary' group align this framework with the pyramid of intervention and our board's theory of action. BMST perfectly aligns with our urgent need of persistence, engagement, motivation and belonging as it directly focuses on our conditions for learning, our assessment as/for learning culture and centres around the foundational pieces needed within our environments to support safe, inclusive and welcoming environments for all.

Until PD for all staff is provided next school year, our current work within schools will be to look at the structural components (based on the BMST survey) that are pivotal to a school-wide approach to positive behaviour. These are essential components and basic elements that are foundational to the effectiveness of our approaches regarding behaviour in schools. You will note that "teams" are a common theme throughout the survey. The intention of BMST is to simply enhance what is already occurring and not as an extra add-on.

Our next steps with BMST will be conversations with the BMST committee to align frameworks for a more consolidated approach delivered within schools. Behaviour does not occur within a vacuum, as was discussed during our BMST sessions, and a consolidated approach will ensure we are aligned and focused with key initiatives such as mental health, and aboriginal and special education moving forward.

Since our time together at our BMST sessions we are aware that some schools have been investigating further into 'restorative practices'. This approach goes hand in hand with progressive discipline and the focus on teaching, and taking responsibility for behaviour. We are very interested to hear from schools that may be ready and interested in aligning this work with restorative practices moving forward as a pilot project next school year. Please contact me directly if interested and we can have further conversations to plan for next school year.

DOPS PRO Grant a Huge Success

Monday April 11, 2016 Parents gathered at Dorion Public School to have dinner and certify them in Safe talk as part of a Parents Reaching Out Grant. A big thank you to Andrew Carr for providing the training as well as the resources. Our communities are in need of more Safe Talk trained people and our parent community has responded.



Tech and Trades Day

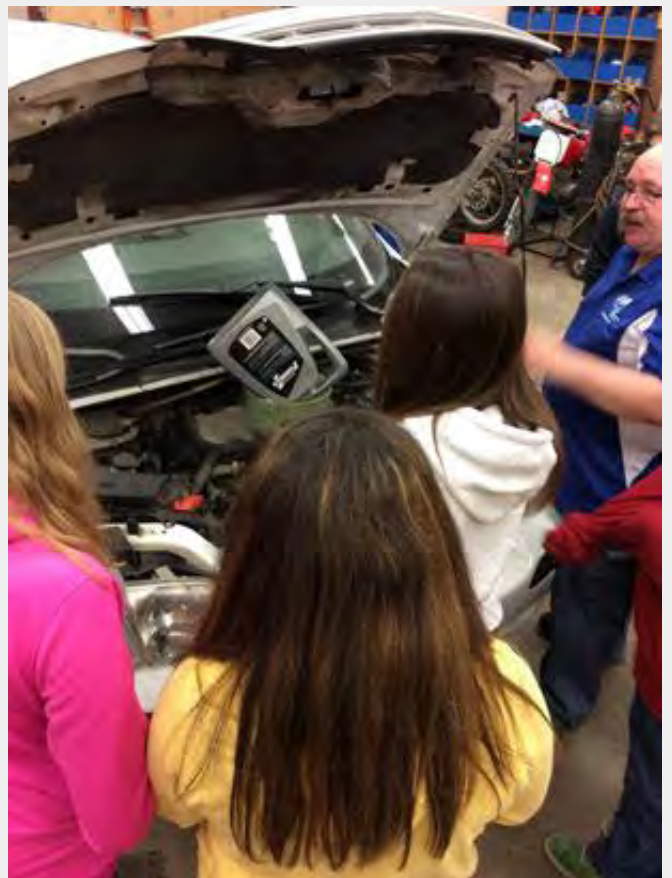
By Carole Leroux, Student Success Lead

Skills Canada, in partnership with SGDSB and SNCDSB, hosted the first Tech and Trades day of this year on April 5th at Nipigon Red Rock District High School. This is the third year that this partnership has been offering this reach-ahead opportunity to our students. This year 85 grade 7 and 8 students from this region participated in activities from the 4 major sectors – Construction, Motive Power, Industrial and the newest addition, Service - offering a variety of exposure to the courses available at the high school level and to potential career pathways. From the educators who get an opportunity to showcase their skills, to the students engaged in the activities, everyone learns. Tech and Trades days are designed to inspire and engage our students with rich, hands on learning experiences while the educators get a snapshot of the students who will be transitioning into their programs the following year. Truly a valuable opportunity for all involved! The next Tech and Trades day is set for May 17 at Marathon High School and we are expecting approximately 92 students to attend.

I.C.E. Project – SHSM Program

By Carole Leroux, Student Success Lead

This year, as a part of the SHSM program, our board committed to a full implementation of the ICE (innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship) process-based approach to help prepare our students for the future. All of our SHSM teachers received training to our support students to utilize and develop the key skills used to solve real-world and sector relevant problems in consultation with sector and community partners through an innovative project. Because Manitouwadge High School has newly become an Eco-school and their SHSM is Environmental, they partnered with the Plant Department of our board to come up with innovative solutions to this problem: ***How can we reduce energy consumption and waste production within our schools without spending money?*** From March 21st to April 1st, the 12 SHSM students engaged in relevant learning, collaborated with their peers, sector partner and educators and developed and utilized problem solving skills to devise innovative and detailed solutions to this question. The problem was real and so was the learning. More details about this day will be shared in the Director's Newsletter this month and Lake Superior High School will be facilitating similar projects with their sector partners in the upcoming months.



Two Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) Projects Receive Approval

Submitted by David Tamblyn, Director of Education

SGDSB has received Ministry approval for two TLLP projects worth a total in funding of more than \$70,000. Project leads Colleen Rose (NRHS) and Yvonne Bergeron (TBPS) both received letters this past week confirming the Ministry's approval.

Steve Wilson (GCHS) and Lindsay Costa (LSHS) worked with Colleen in putting the project proposal together. Although the three teachers will work independently in their schools they will continue to collaborate through technology.

Teaching for Artistic Behaviour is an educational philosophy that respects each student; rather than a traditional model of teaching that focuses on skills, students are encouraged to interpret themes using their choice of materials and techniques. We also want to use technology to document student learning and thinking processes using a variety of apps and programs.

The Ministry's goal of achieving excellence will be met by "...[investing] in innovative teaching practices and instructional methods enabled by technology to more precisely engage and address the learning needs of all students." If we use a variety of methods to assess student knowledge (i.e. the apps "Audioboom" and "ShowMe"), we will also ensure that we are providing an equitable environment for all learners.

Allowing students the freedom to explore themes and topics using a variety of mediums and techniques through TAB will support their individual growth as student-artists. The choice of medium and technique allows for student autonomy and in effect increases engagement and achievement (eg. Growth Mindset).

We want to embrace pedagogy that is responsive to the learning preferences and needs of each student while complementing the curriculum designed for our courses. To do this, we want to see our learning environment as "the third teacher", and in doing so, re-structure our rooms to provide the optimal learning spaces for student-artists. We will need to spend time thinking about the design for our spaces, which will complement choices we will offer in our classes. We also plan to help each other in the re-organization of our rooms, to provide clear communication about the use of our physical space. In this phase, we would incorporate the feedback of students to help us redesign a TAB-friendly learning environment.

Yvonne Bergeron has partner with her colleagues Aimee Capy, Shawney Tuuri and Chelsey Tegal. Their project entitled "Rooms of Wonder" will involve a transformation of the traditional classroom environment. By improving the classroom learning environment we will provide a functionally successful and inclusive classroom that will foster inquiry-based learning. We would like to be responsive to students interest so that our students feel a sense of belonging. In our school community we have a growing immigrant population and we want to make sure every student has the opportunity to participate in the classroom. We recognize the importance of the environment as the third teacher in any learning space and believe that a more open natural working environment will provide opportunities for a collaborative learning and foster further learning and engagement. Our new learning space will improve student learning by making their thinking visible and promoting opportunities for dynamic discussions in environment that is flexible with work space that can be reconfigured to meet the needs of every student. In our rural communities we lack access to new and innovative technologies and design features for our physical environment. Inquiry-based learning is an emerging focus in our school and requires equipment to support this initiative. Our students require a variety of gathering spaces and areas for inquiry investigation and wondering which develop social collaborative listening and communication skills. Our students need to have the opportunity to engage with their learning environment without barriers and have access to current technology so that they are able to think critically, creativity and succeed in a culture of high expectations.

Do you have an idea for your own TLLP? Visit:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/tllp.html



Save the Date:

Marathon High School 2nd Annual Powwow -- June 3rd, 2016

Beardmore Public School Powwow and Graduation -- June 17, 2016



SGDSB is pleased to join in year 2 of 3 of the Ministry of Education First Nations Metis Inuit Collaborative Inquiry project. A *Collaborative Inquiry* engages its team members as researchers. Teachers, school board staff, community members and students at Geraldton Composite High School are meeting on a regular basis to discuss, study and evaluate what success and what well-being look like for our FNMI learners. We are examining what supports need to be put in place to make sure the school is a welcoming learning environment and that students are engaged with the learning.

So far, we are learning that many of our FNMI students do feel a strong sense of belonging at GCHS, but students are looking for ways to teach students and staff about Anishinabe culture. We are learning that having a safe, welcoming and collaborative space to drum and share cultural knowledge makes it easier for students to learn from one another. We are also learning that little things make a big difference in increasing sense of belonging - playing O'Canada in Ojibway, having Woodland art on the walls, honouring elders through posters, having conversations about reconciliation, and inviting community members into classrooms.

In May, some members of the Collaborative Inquiry Team will travel to Marten Falls First Nation, a fly-in community which is 170 km north-east of Nakina, to meet with in-coming GCHS students, together with their parents and community members. Two current GCHS students who are from Marten Falls will be invited to join GCHS and school board staff on their visit, to support the students in their transition to Geraldton in September 2016.

Shown above are: Andrew McFarlane, Maurice Waboose, Victor Chapais, Al Luomala, Nicole Richmond, Lisa Echum, Audrey Fisher and Krista Young.

Out and about in Superior Greenstone District... and beyond!



Beardmore students are becoming expert readers and are carefully studying the 7 Grandfather Teachings - Wisdom, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, Truth, Love.



George O'Neill Public School students celebrate their 2nd Annual Aboriginal Spring Celebration by powwow dancing and feasting on traditional food.



Dorion students plan how to implement their Speak Up Grant to increase Aboriginal awareness at their school.

Torey Thompson (LSHS) shares her thoughts with Dr. Sean Lessard and Aboriginal Liaison, Nicole Richmond, at the Ministry of Education in Toronto.



How do you like our revised map? Our previous map showed only the ten communities where we have schools, but our new map includes many of the communities where our students live and come from.

Did you know that our District covers a vast territory of 45,100 km² -- bigger than both Switzerland (41,285 km²) and the Dominican Republic (44,482 km²)?



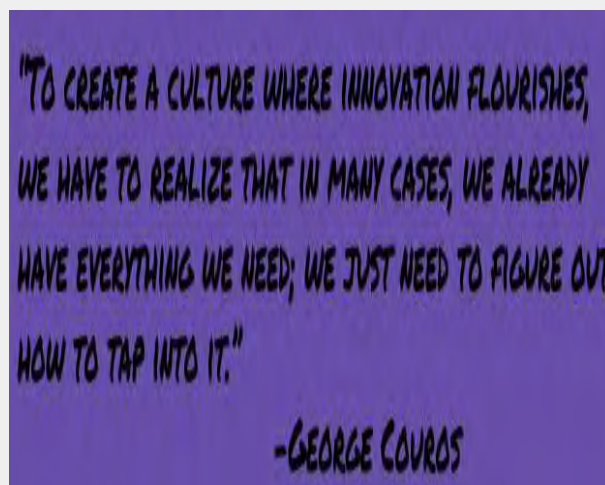
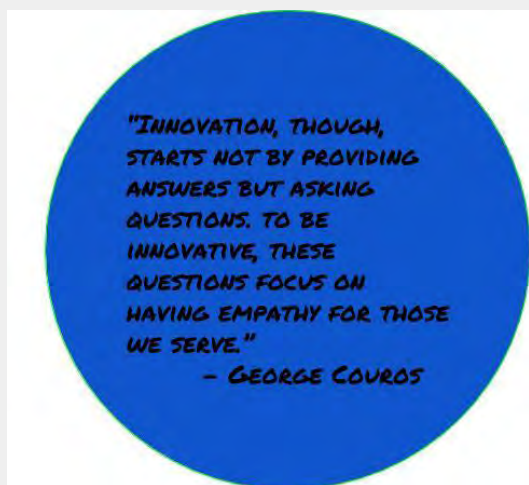
Congratulations to Laura Mason, English teacher at LSHS, for your excellent, insightful and comprehensive presentation at the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Education Partnerships Program forum on Best Practices in First Nation Education. "Opening Minds With Aboriginal Voices in Novel Studies" shared her and her students' work on the Indian Horse novel by Richard Wagamese.

Coincidentally, Richard Wagamese was the Keynote speaker at the forum! We invited him to come to SGDSB next year to do some writing workshops with our students. Richard tells us that his novel, Indian Horse, is being made into a movie and the filming will take in the fall 2016 / winter 2017. He tells us that perhaps when he comes to SGDSB in spring 2017, he'll have some rough-cuts of the film to show us. **How cool is that!**

"That's what's important really, Keeper says. Learning how to be what the Creator created you to be. Face your truth."

— Richard Wagamese, Keeper'n Me

Superior-Greenstone District School Board and Superior North Catholic School Board Come Together to Learn with George Couros



On March 29th, educators from both Superior-Greenstone District School Board and Superior North Catholic District School Board had the opportunity to learn and share together as they spent the day challenging their thinking with [George Couros](#). The principal, and education and leadership consultant is the author of [The Innovator's Mindset](#) and he spent the day sharing his experiences, connecting educators and pushing our learning as we work together to meet the learning needs of ALL our learners in our communities in an ever-changing world.

Chelsey Tegel a grade 6,7,8 teacher with Superior -Greenstone District School Board was also excited to learn "how to incorporate technology in the classroom in a meaningful way" for her students.

The event organizers, Katie Di Biagio and Stacey Wallwin: the two Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contacts for their Boards, were excited to provide educators from both Boards the opportunity to learn together and they hope that they have many more opportunities to come together to provide the best learning opportunities for all learners by tapping into the resources we have within our schools Boards. We look forward to implementing George's ideas and sharing our learning with our school communities!



Directors of both Boards, Dave Tamblyn (SGDSB) and Alexa McKinnon face off for the friendly, competitive-collaboration rock-paper-scissors challenge! The SNCDSB Technology Enabled Teaching and Learning Contact, Katie Di Biagio and George Couros cheer them on!

Congratulations to Karrie Cavner, from Margaret Twomey Public School, for winning that challenge!



Stacey Wallwin

Technology Enabled Learning and
Teaching Contact (TELTC)

@WallwinS

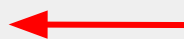
During the weekend of April 16th & 17th, the Superior-Greystone District School Board Technology Champions and 5 additional lucky educators, got their Google on at the [Thunder Bay Gafe Summit](#). The participants were able to attend sessions that met their learning needs and that of their learners. The weekend also provided us with the opportunity to connect with educators from across Northwestern Ontario to share effective practice in our classrooms. If you were unable to attend the Summit, but would like to learn more, you can click on the [session resources](#) and learn from your couch! Need assistance with GAFE? Please ask [your school's Technology Champion](#) for assistance or reach out to me!

Teachers now have access to a secure Google account within SGDSB. If you have not yet activated your SGDSB Google account, please click [here](#).

Upcoming Events: April 21, 2016: [O365 PD](#)



L-R Jenna Muzyka-Elder, Linda Stansell,
Stacey Wallwin, Karen Enders, Jamie
Mallais, and Kristan McMahon



BR/L-R-Jamie Mallais, Jenni Scott-
Marciski, Linda Stansell, Dave Binette
M/L-R: Colleen Rose, Amy Buchan, 
Stacey Wallwin, Kim Mannila, Karen
Enders, Amanda Paakkunainen,
Jenna Muzyka-Elder, Dallas Watson
F L/R-Marcia Falzetta, Kristan
McMahon



Why Teachers Participate in Twitter Chats (and What's Coming Next)

By Brad Spirrison

Teachers who want to expand their knowledge, share instructional resources, and interact with others who have complementary professional interests are discovering that class is always in session thanks to the hundreds of regularly scheduled Twitter chats that happen each week.

Collaborative conversations between like-minded educators from different schools - that previously and serendipitously only took place at conferences and on other irregular occasions - are now accessible to any teacher from any geography at any given time. Since 2009, hundreds of thousands of teachers have participated in Twitter chats to varying degrees. When you consider the volume of this unprecedented and cumulative knowledge sharing among professionals, who are trained to instruct and enlighten, it's not hyperbole to say that the impact Twitter and other social platforms are having on education is revolutionary.

Before we get into why teachers are embracing Twitter chats, poke holes in the structure's inherent limitations, and showcase platforms that provide additional collaboration opportunities, here's a quick primer of how Twitter chats currently operate.

How Twitter chats work today

Twitter chats for (primarily PreK-12) teachers are anchored around hashtags that can be applicable to all educators ([#Edtechchat](#)), or specific to any given topic ([#MineCraftED](#)), age group ([#1stchat](#)) or region ([#Intechchat](#)). Typically, one or a team of organizers will informally claim a hashtag and then invite colleagues and others from their professional learning networks to participate in weekly (sometimes biweekly, monthly or sporadic) conversations. Chat durations are typically 60 minutes (some are 30 minutes, some are "slow chats" that occur over the course of a day. The hashtag serves as a common denominator for all tweets within a given chat or wider topic associated within that hashtag.

Most chats begin with participants - often chiming in from all over the globe - introducing themselves to others within the chat. Within a few minutes, the moderator(s) will tweet an initial question typically preceded by "Question 1", "Q1" or some variation. Corresponding answers will most often begin with "Answer 1", "A1", etc. Questions are usually separated by five-to-ten minute intervals, and on average half a dozen questions are asked and answered throughout an hour-long chat.

While hashtags cannot be claimed like a Twitter handle or Internet URL, Twitter chats for the most part are self-regulating, with a continuity of moderators, participants and topics from week to week. Chats, particularly trending and popular ones, attract a fair amount of spam. However, even the most gratuitous or political messages don't seem to disrupt the underlying conversation. Any educator who wants to create a community can find an unused or abandoned hashtag, announce a topic, and invite others to chat.

When asked why educators are drawn to Twitter for collaboration, Rocco, a superintendent in Spotswood Public Schools in New Jersey, replied that the social network makes it possible for the first time for teachers to "define our own learning and professional needs. It provides opportunities, collaboration, and resources whenever we want them."

While there is a critical mass of technology and social media-savvy teachers on Twitter right now, it is only a tiny percentage of the millions of teachers around the globe who are not yet taking part in the conversation. As Rocco explains, "the limitation is getting teachers and administrators to connect and see the value. I believe the actual number of connected educators on Twitter compared to the total number of educators around the world is rather small." See the full article: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brad-spirrison/why-teachers-participate-_b_9684270.html



L to R: Callum Richter, Dawson Grouette-McDougall, J. J. Baisch & Quinn Tammi

L to R: Chad Cooper, Ash Miller, Avery Dart & Abby Coleman

SGDSB Trades and Technology Update

Marathon High School Students Take Home the Silver Medal at the Provincial Cardboard Boat Race Competition!!!

By: Stefan Rohner, MRHS Technology Teacher and Shawna Grouette, SGDSB-OYAP System Lead

This year's Skills Ontario Provincial Cardboard Boat Race Competition involved a new twist that was a break from the traditions of the past. Instead of building one boat for the competition, team members had to prepare one design for a speed challenge and one design for a weight capacity challenge with a predetermined amount of supplies. What did not change from previous years however, was the Marathon High School team's ability to rise to the task and compete with the best teams in the province.

This year MRHS qualified two teams at the regional competition in Thunder Bay this past November to compete at the provincial event held in Waterloo in March. Out of the twenty teams who qualified for provincials, our senior team placed 2nd overall and our team made up of junior students placed 12th. Both boats held over 600 lbs. before sinking and our fastest boat crossed the 25 meter race distance in 21 seconds. What really evidenced our students' preparation for the competition was the way in which they adapted to last minute changes in materials and rule technicalities and how they maintained their commitment to the core competencies of safety, teamwork, design-process and construction fundamentals.

In addition to the learning opportunities afforded by the competition, students benefitted from the experience of the trip to southern Ontario. In an action packed two day trip, students visited the Aquarium in Toronto, took in a Raptors game, and rode the subway for the first time. The hotel that we stayed at was also housing Syrian refugees awaiting community settlement. Seeing these newest Canadians really opened student's eyes to a current international crisis. Made possible by dedicated staff members and supportive parents, it is trips like this that help give our students a well-rounded educational experience.

Upcoming Skilled Trade Events:

- Nine SGDSB students to compete in the Skills Canada Qualifying competition held at Confederation College on April 16, 2016, in the areas of Culinary, Welding and Construction.
- SGDSB students to compete at the Ontario Technical Skills Competition held in Waterloo on May 2-4, 2016.
- Grade 7&8 Trade and Technology Day to be held at Marathon High School on May 17, 2016.

Look for more articles and pictures to come in the next newsletter.



Grades 7 & 8 Trades & Technology Career Exploration Day Activities at NRDHS

By: Shawna Grouette, SGDSB-OYAP System Lead

SGDSB in partnership with Skills Canada and SNCDSB organized and implemented a Grade 7&8 Trade and Technology Day at Nipigon Red Rock High School on April 5, 2016. Eighty five senior elementary students from feeder schools in the western part of the region experienced technical workshops that promoted creative thinking, problem solving, communication and math skills needed in careers associated with trades and technology. Students also had the opportunity to meet their future technology teachers and learn about the high school technology programs and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program.

SGDSB's Technology Teachers (Mike Leclair, Stewart McIver, Stefan Rohner, Garry Parkin, J.P. Langlois, Stan Kuczynski, Dave Cain and Erin Langevin) showcased workshops in Construction, Motive Power, Industrial and the Service sectors. Students not only gained knowledge about these sectors, they learned about the safe use of tools and equipment, tested their hand at welding and plasma cutting, were involved in preparing the day's lunch and nutrition snacks, and used their hands-on skills to make a key chain out of metal and a key holder out of wood.

In addition to the workshops, students gained perspective from women working in the trades and took part in the "Skills Work!-What's Out There?" presentation delivered by Skills Canada-Ontario. The presentation included information about apprenticeship training, profiling careers in the skilled trades, and trends in the workplace. Overall, the planned activities were engaging, informative, skills-building, fun and interactive.



New Programming and New Equipment at MRHS = New Skills and Opportunities!!!

By: Stefan Rohner, MRHS Technology Teacher

One of the most exciting projects being built in the shop at MRHS this year was started during the new dual credit transportation course that the high school has run in partnership with Confederation College. The students have been busy rebuilding and customizing a 1936 Chevy pick-up truck. Students in the course began by stripping down a 2002 Chevy S10 frame and preparing it for the 1936 body. This involved scraping down the frame, priming and painting it, removing body mounts and fabricating new ones, and shortening the chassis. Students rotated through different vehicle systems and completed work in rebuilding the brakes, as well as rebuilding the donor engine. The engine is a 454 Chevy big block that will produce more than enough horsepower to propel the hot rod. With motor mounts fabricated and welded in, the engine and transmission were hoisted into the frame and secured. After a few dry fire ups (video on MRHS Facebook page) we were able to treat the whole school to the rumbling evidence of our hard work. A few backfires and flames added dramatic elements to the start up.

Reinvigorated by the first fire up of the engine, we began to lower body parts on to the frame and fabricate ones that needed to be replaced. Since the original pickup box was beyond salvaging, students used skills and knowledge they have accumulated in tech classes to fabricate a new one from scratch. Members of the class not only built the truck, when parts and materials were required, they were responsible for making calls to source what was needed. This has helped us to develop relationships with local businesses and industry and assure our students' potential employers that they can expect graduates of our technology programs to leave our school with a well-rounded technical education. The variety of learning opportunities on this project kept the class interested and motivated and made for a successful first dual credit transportation class for MRHS.

A project like this takes more than a semester to complete however, and so at the end of the class we formed a skills club that meets in the shop for 2 hours a week to continue working on the truck to see the project through to its completion. Our skills club now consists of several students from the original dual credit course as well as other interested members of the student body. We even have two participants from one of our feeder schools, Holy Saviour School. These grade eight students will already have some advanced skills by the time they enter our tech program as grade nines next September.

This project was made possible by the partnership with Confederation College, but is also the direct result of the revitalization of the shop that the board has invested in. As part of this capital project, new equipment was purchased, older equipment was updated, and increased safety systems and machine guarding has taken place. The board's commitment to the revitalization of the skilled trades has not just been happening at MRHS. All secondary schools across the board have seen investment into their programs. Technology teachers have been responding to this recent investment of time, energy and money by providing broader, more technical, and more current learning opportunities to our students. As part of the team delivering these learning opportunities, I have enjoyed watching students engage with their study of technology and develop practical skills. Through projects such as this hot rod, I look forward to continuing to push our students' learning and demonstrate what we are capable of.

Dr. Jean Clinton, Renowned Children's Issues Advocate to Present in Superior-Greenstone DSB and Area Communities



Marathon – “We all learn through play!” As part of a partnership between the Ontario Ministry of Education, Brass Bell Family Resource Centre, Superior-Greenstone District School Board, and the Superior North District Catholic School Board, Dr. Jean Clinton will be presenting to the communities in the Superior Greenstone area during the week of May 9 - 13 on the topic of Learning Through Play.

This Celebration of Our Children event will begin with a video of our most important stars, our local children, showcasing for the audiences how they are truly learning through exploration, investigation, discovery, and problem-solving. Immediately following this celebration, an interactive discussion from Dr. Clinton on relationships, connection, play, and how love builds brains will take place.

Dr. Clinton is renowned locally, provincially, nationally, and more recently internationally as an advocate for children's issues. Her special interest lies in brain development, and the crucial role that relationships and connectedness have in building children's natural competence and capacity for learning through their curiosity and desire to explore and learn about their world. Dr. Clinton's candid and humorous approach to this complex topic will engage all parents, caregivers, adolescents and community leaders!

Join this celebration at 5:30 p.m. at one of the following locations:

May 9, 2016 at Marathon High School in Marathon,

May 10, 2016 at Lake Superior High School in Terrace Bay,

May 11, 2016 at Geraldton Composite High School in Geraldton,

May 12, 2016 at Nipigon Community Centre in Nipigon.

Child care and light refreshments are available. For further information, call (888)260-6382 or visit our webpage at <http://unplugandplay.ca/>

Up Coming Events

- April 18th - Pamela Toulouse Workshop
- Office 365 Training - LSHS
- April 22nd - PD Day
- April 22nd - Earth Day
- April 26 - Parent Involvement Meeting
- **Education Week May 2-6 - Achieving Excellence - Promoting Wellbeing**
- **Jean Clinton event “Celebrating Our Children”**
 - Monday, May 9, - Marathon (including Manitouwadge)
 - Tuesday, May 10 – TB/Schreiber
 - Wednesday, May 11 – Geraldton
 - Thursday, May 12 – Nipigon/Red Rock/Dorion
- Student Trustee Election
- May 9th Special Board Meeting



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