



David Tamblyn  
Director of Education

## Together We Can Make a Difference; Inspiring our Students to be Agents of Change

This week is Bullying Awareness Week. The campaign serves as a reminder of an issue we need to be cognisant of not only during the third week of November but throughout the year. This has become all the more evident in the wake of the racially charged election campaign in the US which has emboldened ultra-right groups to ramp up their messages of hate. Sadly this has spilled over the border in the last couple of weeks. Following a number of disturbing incidences of racism in Toronto and Ottawa the Director of the Toronto District School Board, John Malloy issued a statement condemning the acts and warning of zero tolerance in dealing with such incidents.

Although I would like to think we are immune from acts of hate in our remote rural communities I am not naïve. Racism, bigotry and hate are issues that concern us all – staff, parents, students and members of the community. We share a responsibility to promote acceptance and respect, and to identify and report acts of hate. As a school system, we also have the opportunity to engage young people in a broader conversation about the importance of building a more inclusive society.

On November 9<sup>th</sup> a group of 30 students and staff from SGDSB attended We Day in Ottawa. We Day brings together world-renowned speakers and award-winning performers with millions of young people to celebrate and inspire change. It is hosted by a group called Free the Children which was founded by brothers Craig and Marc Kielburger with an original purpose to bring an end to child slavery. It has since grown into a movement that has inspired millions of young people to make the world a better place. I was very pleased to have students from SGDSB take part in this event. I look forward to seeing the positive change they will bring about in our schools and in our communities.

Unfortunately not all of our students were able to attend the We Day event in Ottawa but that does not mean they cannot be agents of change. As educators we are in a unique position to empower our students to challenge bias, and promote and celebrate diversity. As the recent incidents in Ottawa, Toronto and Thunder Bay demonstrate, we cannot afford to remain silent on issues of equity. We must come together and continue working to bring about real change in our classrooms, schools and communities.



On November 9th a group of 30 SGDSB students from across the District took part in We Day in Ottawa. Among the presenters, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addressed the assembled youth.



NRHS student and Minister's Student Advisory Council member, Maresa Gauvin pictured with Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter.



SGDSB  
November 22th 2016  
"Small Schools Make a Difference"  
**Director's Newsletter**





Nicole Morden-Cormier,  
Superintendent of Education



# Our Board Learning Plan: Promoting Success for ALL Learners

OUR URGENT NEED: IMPROVED  
**PERSISTENCE, ENGAGEMENT, MOTIVATION AND BELONGING**

“...studies consistently reveal that students who experience a sense of belonging in educational environments are more motivated, more engaged in school and classroom activities, and more dedicated to school (Osterman, 2000). Moreover, existing research suggests that students who feel that they belong to learning environments report higher enjoyment, enthusiasm, happiness, interest, and more confidence in engaging in learning activities, whereas those who feel isolated report greater anxiety, boredom, frustration, and sadness during the academic engagement that directly affects academic performance (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Satisfying the need for belongingness in educational environments takes on a greater importance during early adolescence. Students within that developmental period start going to peers and adults outside their family for guidance (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998) and their “sense of personal ‘place’ is still largely malleable and susceptible to influence in both positive and negative directions” (Goodenow, 1993b, p. 81)(Goodenow, 1993a, p. 81). If this need is not adequately satisfied in educational environments, students will look for other ways and people to get that satisfaction. For example, a link has been found between a lack of sense of belonging and delinquency (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).”

(Goodenow, 1993b) described sense of belonging in educational environments as the following: Students’ sense of being accepted, valued, included, and encouraged by others (teacher and peers) in the academic classroom setting and of feeling oneself to be an important part of the life and activity of the class. More than simple perceived liking or warmth, it also involves support and respect for personal autonomy and for the student as an individual. (p. 25).

<https://www.google.ca/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=literature%20review%20sense%20of%20bel>



## BLPSA Overall Focus: Well-Being and Achievement



### SGDSB Theory of Action

(this theory connects and supports all goals by focusing on the learning environment and pedagogy - WELL-BEING)

### Mathematics Theory of Action

(this theory connects the math focused goals for all work plans and thus supports the ACHIEVEMENT for all learners)

If we foster learner centered environments and pedagogy, then learners will possess an increased sense of belonging and be motivated (persist) to learn.

- Learner centered environments and pedagogy are:
- \*Responsive,
  - \*Inclusive,
  - \*Promotes the academic, behavioural, cognitive and psychological engagement of all learners, and,
  - \*Reflects learners’ strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives

If we foster effective communication in our classrooms, then our students will be able to organize and consolidate their mathematical thinking AND analyze the mathematical thinking and strategies of others.

### SGDSB Theory of Action Success Criteria

We know that we are successful when we have achieved the conditions outlined by our Theory of Action Success Criteria in the following areas:

- Examples of Observable Actions for:
- ❖ Foundational Principles to be Developed in the Learner and Environment: Learning Mindsets for All
  - ❖ Conditions for Learning
  - ❖ Formal and Informal Leadership
  - ❖ Assessment for/as Learning Culture

### SGDSB Theory of Action Success Criteria

Students will be successful at organizing and consolidating their mathematical thinking if they:

- Can use multiple forms of representations to make sense of and understand mathematics
- Make choices about which forms of representations to use as tools for problems
- Contextualize mathematical ideas by connecting them to real-world problems
- Can explain, justify and defend their thinking, presenting thinking in a logical and organized manner
- Respond clearly with sufficient detail so that thinking can be understood

Students will be successful at analyzing the mathematical thinking and strategies of others:

- Present and explain ideas, reasoning, and representations to one another in pair, small-group, and whole class discourse
- Listen carefully to and critique the reasoning of peers, using examples to support or counterexamples to refute arguments
- Seek to understand the approaches used by peers by asking clarifying questions, trying out each other’s strategies, and describing the approaches used by others.
- Identify how approaches to solving a task are the same and how they are different.
- Demonstrate flexible use of strategies and methods while reflecting on which procedures seem to work best for problems
- Determine whether specific approaches generalize to a broad class of problems

# 2015-2019 Well-Being Goal: Student Centered Pedagogy



## SGDSB Theory of Action:

If we foster learner centered environments and pedagogy, then learners will possess an increased sense of belonging and be motivated to learn.

### 2016-2017 Short Term System Goals

By June 2017, 100% of schools will demonstrate an increase of at least one stage of implementation (awareness, beginning, partial, full) in an area of focus in their overall rating of the self-assessment of the SGDSB Student Centered Learning and Pedagogy Success Criteria, as they work towards full implementation by June 2019.

**OUR URGENT NEED: IMPROVED  
PERSISTENCE, ENGAGEMENT, MOTIVATION AND BELONGING**

## Rationale:

“Well-being is that positive sense of self, spirit and belonging that we feel when our cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs are being met” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). We believe that by creating fully student centered learning environments and pedagogy, student wellbeing will improve as they will be increasingly engaged in their learning, achieve greater success and thus, feel an increased sense of belonging both to the school and to their learning. A student centered learning environment and pedagogy is defined by shifting the focus from teaching to a focus on learning. In this instructional approach, students are active participants in the learning, they influence the content, activities, materials and the pace of the learning, and they engage in deep, open-ended problem solving that require both critical and creative thinking. Students have a voice in their learning, within the context of the curriculum. Research has shown that this type of environment can positively impact student engagement and motivation. *“Motivation, engagement and student voice are critical elements of student-centred learning. Without motivation, there is no push to learn, without engagement there is no way to learn and without voice, there is no authenticity in the learning. For students to create new knowledge, succeed academically, and develop into healthy adults, they require each of these experiences”* (School Effectiveness Framework, 2013, pg. 22). To achieve this very lofty goal, we have created criteria that will guide our work in four key areas including:

- *Formal and Informal Leadership*
- *Foundational Principles to be Developed in the Learner and the Environment: Learner Mindsets for All*
- *Conditions for Learning: Risk Taking, Collaboration, Relationships, Responsive Instruction*
- *Assessment for/as Learning Culture: Learning Goals, Success Criteria, Feedback, Peer and Self-Assessment, Individual Goal Setting*

In June 2016, most schools engaged in a processes whereby they self-assessed their achievement of the success criteria that underlies this Theory of Action, using student observations, products and conversations as their evidence of impact. Overall, our schools identified that they were at the Beginning Implementation or Partial Implementation stage of this work. All schools will continue to self-assess this year, as we move towards full implementation of our criteria. These criteria have been and will continue to be monitored closely both at the school level and at the system level.

# 2015 - 2019 Achievement Goal: Fostering Effective Communication

## Why is Mathematical Communication Important?

COMMUNICATION  
Math Talk  
Discussion  
Discourse

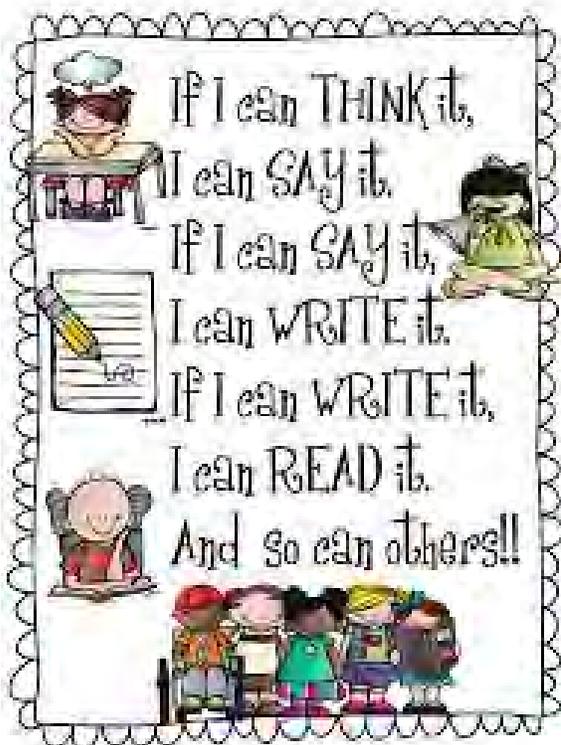
"Communication is an essential process in learning mathematics. Through communication, students are able to reflect upon and clarify their ideas, their understanding of mathematical relationships, and their mathematical arguments" (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 17).

The terms communication, math talk, discussion and discourse are used interchangeably. These terms are used to refer to any use of verbal or written mathematical vocabulary **facilitated** through peer-to-peer or student-to-educator **interactions** and **reflective activities** as a way for students to portray their understandings of mathematical content.

- Through communication, ideas become objects of reflection, refinement, discussion, and amendment. When students are challenged to think and reason about mathematics and to communicate the results of their thinking to others orally or in writing, they learn to be clear and convincing. Listening to others' explanations gives students opportunities to develop their own understandings (NCTM, 2000, p. 59).
- Students who are involved in discussions in which they justify solutions—especially in the face of disagreement—will gain better mathematical understanding as they work to convince their peers about differing points of view (Hatano and Inagaki, 1991).
- Because mathematics is so often conveyed in symbols, oral and written communication about mathematical ideas is not always recognized as an important part of mathematics education. Students do not necessarily talk about mathematics naturally; educators need to help them learn how to do so (Cobb, Wood, and Yackel, 1994).

It's true that the one doing most of the talking is also doing most of the learning. Students have a lot to say, and the skilled educator creates conditions for students to process what they are learning through conversations.

What strategies are you using to engage all learners with authentic talk in meaningful conversations that lead to deep thinking, comprehension, and expression?



Who is doing the talking and thinking in your class? And then, can they write about it or represent it?

# Math Matters @ SGDSB



*Submitted By Leslie Blackwood, Numeracy Facilitator*

The Ministry of Education's Renewed Math Strategy is committed to helping students gain knowledge and skills in mathematics that will prepare them for the future. It calls on all of us to leverage our collective knowledge and skills from shared past successes to focus on improving student achievement in math. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016)

**At Superior Greenstone the focus is math and the call is for "All Hands on Deck."**

As a Numeracy Facilitator I have had the opportunity to start the year collaborating with Teachers, School Teams, Board Leads and Senior Administrators. We have been working together to better align our work with an emphasis on mathematics. Through this integrated approach we aim to meet the four key objectives of the Renewed Math Strategy:

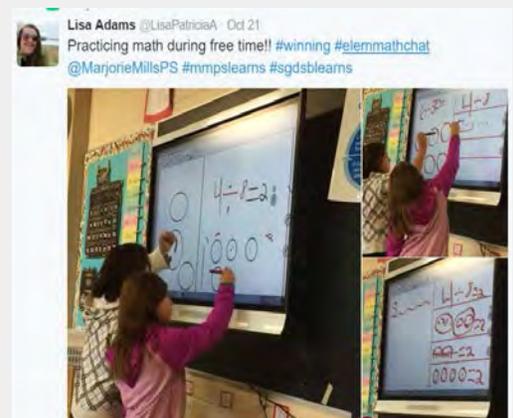
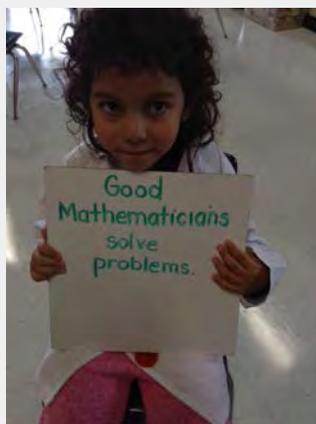
- Increased Student achievement, well-being and engagement in mathematics
- Increased educator math knowledge and pedagogical expertise
- Increased leader use of knowledge of effective mathematics pedagogy to provide the necessary supports and conditions for school and system improvement
- **Increased parental engagement in their children's mathematics learning.**

I am looking forward to my work this year as a Numeracy Facilitator and am committed strengthening numeracy networks that will foster and support student learning in math. **Together we can make a difference!**

## Volume 1

As educators we know that **parent engagement** matters. The research shows us that student achievement improves when parents play an active role in their children's educations so this seemed like a great place to begin my work this year. Using a variety of resources I have created a folder for elementary administrators to share numeracy tips at monthly parent council meetings. Through these conversations we hope that parents will recognize that they have the skills and knowledge to support their child in math. As a follow up, I will be working with then TBPS Parent Council and Principal Sara Curtis to plan and implement a Parent Math Night.

In the Grade 1 / 2 class Teacher Ms. Clarkson and I have been working to build Math Activity Bags for students to take home. Our goal is to purposefully choose math activities that will support student learning but also help to inspire children to see that math is everywhere and can be fun.



Lisa Adams @LisaPatriciaA · Oct 21  
Practicing math during free time!! #winning #elemmathchat  
@MarjorieMillsPS #mmpsearns #sgdsblearns

# Our Collective Work for 2016-2017:

**Together, We Are Making a Difference...in Our Schools,  
in Our Communities and in the World!**



## Remembrance Day at GOPS

Making a difference in the lives of others can take many different forms. It can take the form of unselfish acts, raising money towards an important cause, volunteering for an organization, or as the students of GOPS showed, it can be sharing your learning and passion towards something with others. It was a sea of red at GOPS on Friday November 11<sup>th</sup> as the students, staff, and the community came together to honour the importance of Remembrance Day. Every class prepared a short presentation to showcase what Remembrance Day means to them. The school choir and the Gr. 5-8 classes moved everyone in the gym to tears with their renditions of Highway of Heroes and Imagine. Our boys drumming group paid tribute to our Veterans through a powerful drumming presentation. Through all of the presentations, everyone left the ceremony with an understanding of just how important Remembrance Day is! Thank you to the students for sharing your learning with us all, you truly had an impact and made a difference for all of us that day.



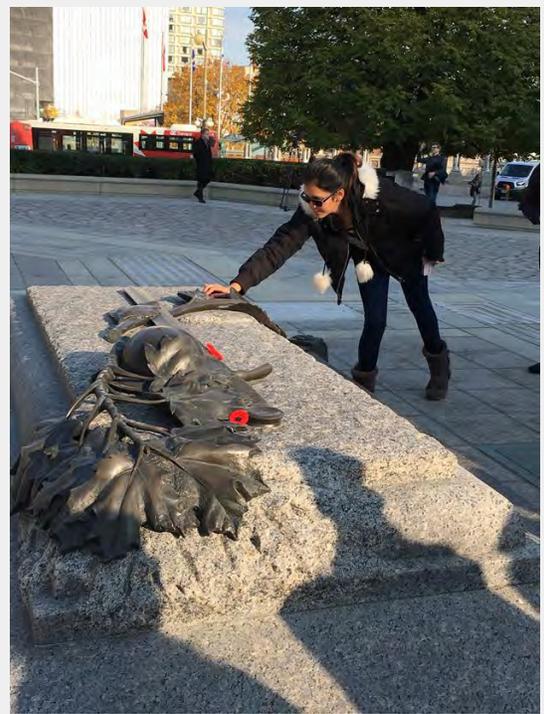
## Manitouwadge Public School Newsflash!

Our students and staff were honored to be part of the Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11<sup>th</sup>. As in years past, they took part by showing their respect to the many fallen soldiers who so selflessly gave up their lives for us, as well as to all those who serve and have served our country. Students expressed their thanks by constructing a very impressive poster depicting what Remembrance Day brings to their mind. One of our classes proudly made a wreath that was presented on the school's front lawn on November 11<sup>th</sup> and is now displayed in our hallway. The memory and importance of this significant event from our past will never be lost in the minds of our young people here at MPS. Another job well done at Manitouwadge Public School.

**RRPS MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

**ENVIRONMENT**  
\* POLLUTION in our WATER  
\* COMPOSTING with WORMS

Eco Superior spent the morning at RRPS teaching us about how the things that we throw away or pour down drains can pollute Lake Superior. Our drinking water comes from Lake Superior and we need to do more to protect it. We also learned about worms and we now have worm composting at our school!



On Monday, November 7th, 27 students and 4 educators from SGDSB embarked on our Nation's capital for a quick but memorable trip to celebrate the social action volunteer work being done at our schools. Student Senators from Manitouwadge, Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Dorion, George O'Neill, and B.A. Parker elementary schools, Marathon, Nip-Rock, and Lake Superior High Schools joined members of the LSHS Social Innovators Club, in addition to Mrs. Kristan McMahon, Mr. Gregory Speziale, Ms. Heidi Patterson and Mrs. Lindsay Costa on the trip. Their travels would lead them to valuable experiential learning at MP Patty Hajdu's office, the National War Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Museum of History, Parliament Building, its Peace Tower and the Memorial Chamber. The student engagement that occurred during our visit helps to support and continue the learning that has taken place in our classrooms and the conversations that will take place in the future - this experience cannot be replicated in our classrooms and for this we are thankful for allowing this trip to happen.

On Wednesday, November 9th, students awoke to the news of the newly elected President of the USA; however, within a few short hours, the wind was put back in their sails as students were embraced by We Day and the celebration of 1.8 million Ontario student volunteer hours with 20,000 other students. Jon Mayry said he was impressed with Prime Minister Trudeau in his message that our students are not leaders of tomorrow, rather, they are leaders of today and that they can be entrusted with social action items that can have positive long-lasting influence. Calli Borutski was left with a lasting impression from Syrian refugee Hani al Moulia who spoke of his past life and regardless of the many obstacles put in his way he has managed to persevere and is now a member of the Prime Minister's Youth Council. McKenna Figliomeni was touched after listening to Spencer West. Spencer lost both his legs when he was young and instead of listening to doctors explain the limitations and disabilities that he would face, he was determined to lead an active and social life and he recently climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. Alex Halonen said that this trip was a trip of a lifetime and it represented the success from last 3 years since the Social Innovators Club started at LSHS. In grade 10, Alex said that he felt like he was the only who wanted to change the world - 3 years, 2 We Days and 1 trip to Kenya later, this couldn't be further from the truth. His passion for changing the world has been passed on to other students, who now have the power, passion, courage and voice to continue to do great things in our small communities and across the globe by being social innovators. The vision of believing students have the influence to change the world has been sparked in many other students.

The opportunity to attend We Day in Ottawa and to tour some of the more poignant sites in our Nation's capital will be remembered by students for a long time; however, it's the opportunity to support student learning beyond the classroom and celebrate the local and global actions to change the world led by our student leaders of today that matters most. Join them and #changetheworld!



Recently, two students, Thomas Houston (grade 10) and Luke Zechner (grade 11), attended the OPHEA: Campaign Messenger Training conference in Orillia, Ontario. This conference focused on sexual violence prevention and brought together both educators and students from across the province.

### It's the little things that count! *Submitted by Annick Brewster, Principal Manitouwadge High School*

Focussing on the 'little things' that our students are doing goes a long way to promoting a positive and welcoming environment.

Many students can be seen on a daily basis giving a helping hand, whether it's from helping at Breakfast Club to carrying groceries. They are helping not because they are asked to, but because it's the right thing to do. At Manitouwadge High School we are dedicated to creating a positive, welcoming and respectful environment for all students. When adults model such actions it rubs off on our students. Observing the simple courtesies within our school overflows into not only our community but into the larger global context.

Examples of how our students represent these actions are:

- Mrs. O's Grade 9 Applied English Class went beyond their comfort zone during our Community's Remembrance Day celebration this past Friday. They read *The Eyes*, by Margot Leolyn Hedden. Students also put together components of the slideshow which was presented at the service.
- The MNHS Band, played the music for the Remembrance Day Service. They played O'Canada, God Save the Queen, as well as the Last Post and Rouse.
- Students are making their own knitted and crocheted items (socks, hats, mitts) which will be donated to individuals in Pikangikum First Nation.
- We have a student who regularly helps out with Breakfast Club. She comes in 30 min early every day to help prepare food that will be shared with students.
- As well as showing team spirit and sportsmanship on the court, our athletes regularly show their support for each other off the court.

It is important to remember and to celebrate the strengths and actions of students and to focus on what they are doing that's good, even if it's as simple as getting to class on time.

Celebrate the positives when they happen, no matter how small. Students don't need a big celebration when they do something positive, but a small recognition like "you did a good job" goes a long way to show that you care and you are noticing their efforts. Positive behaviours then will grow as we continue to encourage it.



The students at Schreiber Public School just got word that the money raised from our Books With No Bounds fundraiser last year will be put towards a shipment of books to a remote community in Nunavut; a community that hasn't received new books in 8 years! The Grade 3/4/5 students were so proud to organize and hold this fundraiser and are thrilled to know that the money raised will be going to such good use. Schreiber Public School students are making a difference in our world!



### Making a Difference at TBPS

We must never underestimate that the hearts and minds of our littlest people can make a difference in the world. During our Thanksgiving Feast, former Librarian Ms. Ross handed Mrs. Dicaire \$15.00 to spend on the class. When discussing our gift with the Kindergarten students, we realize that the gift was very kind and we each may get a small treat. When one of our friends headed off for a holiday in India, there was a conversation that started as we looked at the globe as to how far he was traveling and they became interested in other countries in various parts of the world. We decided to use our money to help another child who did not have as much as we do. The idea emerged of children helping children. We challenged the other classes in the school. Our school collected enough to help many children that ranged in ages from 3-12. Our \$15.00 gift was re-gifted. The power of a love starts with our youngest learners at TBPS.



### Treaty Recognition Week at GOPS

*Submitted by Shyanne Bartlett*

November 7-11 was Treaty Recognition Week. Treaties are agreements made between 2 groups of people. First Nations peoples and the government made Treaty agreements for land use, education, health and much more. You know what that means? We are all treaty people! The students at GOPS created their own agreements with the school during a Color-Cup assembly. Each group created a section of a wampum that showed their agreement in a picture. Traditional wampums were made from purple and white sea shells. Students used purple and white pieces of paper to represent the shells. once each group completed their wampum section they were all joined together to create a large school agreement wampum. the following agreements were made:

- Students agree to work together to solve problems
- Students agree to be inclusive and stand together
- Students agree to show kindness and friendship to all
- Students agree to have good sportsmanship
- Students agree to volunteer to help the school run smooth
- Students agree to try to listen in class so class doesn't get chaotic
- Students agree to stop bullying



Older students agree to help younger students in need  
 Students agree to lend a helping hand to staff, and students when needed.  
 The school wampum is proudly displayed in the stairwell at GOPS.

# Experiential Learning



## The Wilderness Classroom

*Submitted by: Michelle Ferring*

**Have you ever skinned a marten? Learned to use a compass or GPS? Started a fire for survival?**

9 lucky students from Marjorie Mills Public School in Longlac got a taste of trapping last weekend 30 miles East of Longlac in a remote trappers cabin. Ed and Deanna Hoffman opened their camp and shared their knowledge as professional foresters and trappers, giving the students hands on experience in an incredible setting. 5 girls, chaperoned by Mrs. Ferring, and 4 boys, chaperoned by Mr. Thompson, set out in 2 separate excursions to this wilderness classroom!

After a long journey by truck and 4 wheeler, we were on the Hoffman's trapline. Having been shown safe procedures for handling traps, we headed out to check several land and water sets. With marten, weasel, and otter in hand, we headed further into the wilderness to reach camp.

Our learning included basic survival techniques such as hypothermia prevention, constructing fires for warmth with forest materials, and what to do if lost in the bush.

After a hearty meal, Mr. Hoffman, a certified trapping instructor, showed the students how to properly skin, flesh, and stretch the marten and weasel skins. It was fascinating to see first hand the amount of labour and skill required to process fur.



**Title: Back to the Basics**

Written by: Mr. Jay Johnson

This semester has been an interesting adventure for GCHS's Native Studies class. The students have embarked on the collection of raw materials in order to provide the class with the basic necessities to create traditional artifacts. So far this year they have gathered willow to begin weaving dream catcher rings. Birch bark has been harvested in order to make traditional birch baskets and containers. Finally, students have been working on skinning moosehide to provide each other with rawhide for drum skin and to experience the processes of braining and tanning animal hide.



Jarome Meshake hard at work cleaning our moose hide.



Grey Echum Showcasing a beautiful slice of fresh birch bark.

The driving force behind providing these opportunities was to get students out of the classroom and give them a chance to have a little freedom and fun when at school. Not all learning has to be from a book while sitting in a classroom. It can be in the form of the teamwork needed to cure any animal hide from start to finish. Interacting and conversing with one another while collecting raw materials has given birth to new friendships, strengthened old ones, and has helped develop a positive rapport between students and teacher. Most importantly, students are engaged in traditional knowledge that they have heard about in their communities, but have yet to immerse themselves in.

From a curriculum perspective, students are beginning to develop a sense of respect towards the labor intense practices of traditional First Nations people. Learning about what the land can provide us, whether it be bark, animals, willows and pines cones; all of these materials hold traditional values, beliefs, and cultural significance. Gathering and storing these materials is a work of art in itself. The final products created from our efforts will reflect the culmination of a variety of practices that hold artistic merit with regards to traditional First Nations beliefs, values, and cultural practices.



Ceder Gagnon skinning hide alongside our visitors from Aroland.

Nipigon-Red Rock DHS and 1 other Retweeted  
Kim Crawford @kcrawford\_teach · Nov 4  
Learning #traditionalteachings at #fwhp with students from @NipRockHigh  
#sgdsb #indigenousknowledge #nac10



WeAreTeachers @WeA... 2h  
Big collection of articles, videos, & #printables to help kids deal w/ divorce, #bullying & abuse  
goo.gl/VM8gA6 #edchat #profdev





## **MINING SHSM AT MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL**

*By Stefan Rohner*

Marathon High School's Mining SHSM is up and running this year. The realization of this program has come after the groundwork laid by Board office members as well as our in school SHSM team. After many staff discussions at the school, we decided that a Specialist High Skills Major in mining best reflected our community's needs and interests. Consultation with the Barrick Hemlo mine also revealed that we had a willing and interested partner to help deliver this unique program to our students. A special nod of thanks should be extended to the staff members who prepared our application for this program. Not only was the application successful, it was also praised by the Ministry for its comprehensive attention to detail. Our SHSM represents one of only two new mining SHSM programs in the province and joins only nine others being offered province wide. The students graduating from this program will certainly be approaching post secondary education or workplace placements with a unique preparation that will give them a competitive advantage.

Speaking of unique opportunities, SHSM students have just returned from our first visit to the Hemlo mine site. Students toured the underground and pit operations, as well as the mill, and visited and learned about the reclamation efforts being undertaken to close the Golden Giant and David Bell sites. This day was quite literally full of eye opening experiences. As we emerged from the underground portal after what felt like a Jurassic Park exploration in our toyota 4x4 and blinked and squinted into the sunshine of the day, (we had been underground since pre-dawn) I realized that students were seeing for the first time what opportunities the mining industry could hold for them. An address by Mine Manager Andrew Bauman and Human Resources Director Debbi Boucher outlined what some of these opportunities are. Students genuinely felt valued and the sense that the mine is waiting for skilled young workers to join their operations and help build their future as well as the future of our town.

Opportunities in the trades, human resources, geology, operations, security, the environment, and many others are waiting for our students. Marathon High School's new SHSM program will help prepare these future members of the mining industry for these exciting opportunities. From operating underground equipment from a gamer's dream set up to participating in mine rescue, every one of the 11 students that visited the mine this week was abuzz about the exciting future that awaits them. In the next few years it will be equally as exciting for the staff at MRHS to help prepare them for this future. This program would not be possible without the cooperation of our industry partners and Confederation College. In particular, Ken McIntyre has been instrumental in bringing incredible experience and community interest to our students. Thanks also need to be made to those Barrick employees mentioned above as well as Andrew Constantine, Shane Hayes, Jeremy Dart, Jim Harrison, Tony Scro and other departments within the corporation for their hospitality and for giving students this valuable insight.



## Skills Ontario Cardboard Boat Race - An Experiential Learning Opportunity

*By: Teri Burgess, Margaret Twomey Public School Teacher*

Ms. Burgess's grade eight students at Margaret Twomey Public School (MTPS) participated in an exciting, hands-on project this fall. The students were asked to design and build a boat out of two large sheets of cardboard. They were to design a boat that could carry as much weight as possible as well as be paddled quickly across the Porthole Pool.

Through the cardboard boat project, the students have been studying: proportional relationships, two dimensional nets of three dimensional objects, linear measurement, surface area, properties of fluids, density, and buoyancy.

Initially, the students experimented with small sheets of cardboard that were one quarter of the size of the boat that would carry them across the pool. Once they had a design they thought would be effective, they created a written plan. Using their models and their plan, the students then needed to determine what the dimensions would need to be on the larger scale boat. Finally, the students built the large-scale boats.

Through it all, it was interesting to see which students had the building, planning, and interpersonal skills that helped them to stand out as leaders in their groups.

Results in the building, planning and testing stages determined which students were chosen to compete at the Skills Ontario Regional Elementary Cardboard Boat Race Competition on Thursday, October 27th. One hundred and six students from all across the region participated in the event; 100 in the cardboard boat race and six in a video challenge. Each team had to bring written plans and build a cardboard boat in the Marathon High School gym within a strict, two-hour time limit. The teams then proceeded to go to the Port Hole Pool where they tested their boats in a speed and weight challenge.

When asked to respond to the experience, Olivia Twance said, "It was a really fun experience, but it was also intense to be competing against other schools". Nolan Heath replied, "It was a way to meet new people and show off your skills while trying to win". Teri Burgess commented, "Shawna Grouette was amazingly supportive of my professional learning throughout the whole process. Without her help, it would have felt too daunting to take all of this on." Judging by the excitement at both the construction and pool sites, students were engaged and had a great time.

In the end, teams from Margaret Twomey won the gold medal and safety award and George O'Neill Public School won the bronze medal. Medal winners in the event will get the opportunity to do this all again at the provincial competition in March. None of this would have been possible without Skills Ontario, Shawna Grouette, Barrick Hemlo and the support and patience of the Porthole Pool staff. Thank you!



MTPS won the Gold Medal



GOPS won the Bronze Medal



MTPS won Safety Award



## **Skills Work! ® For Women Career Exploration Event – Trades are not just for the Boys**

***By: Shawna Grouette, OYAP System Lead***

Skills Ontario is proud to present a number of unique opportunities for girls in grades 7 through 12 to learn about careers in the skilled trades and technologies. One of our most popular programs is the networking events which are specifically tailored to young women. This year the event was hosted at the Airline Hotel in Thunder Bay on November 3, 2016, and was well attended with 30 students and staff from Superior-Greenstone (Marathon HS, Lake Superior HS, Nipigon Red Rock HS and Geraldton Composite HS).

Skills Work!® for Women Career Exploration Events provide secondary school females the opportunity to meet, network and be inspired by tradeswomen who are eager to share their stories and experiences. In addition, students get the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities involving the skilled trades through a team building activity and a skilled trades and technology relay. When asked to reflect on the event, students responded as follows:

“I really enjoyed the experience of it all. While I knew a fair bit about the trades, it was really informative and interesting”. Christina McCarthy

“It encouraged me to think more about a profession in the skilled trades”. Julia Loftus

“It was fun and I learned that you don’t need a college degree to work in a trade”. Hailey Finlayson

“I learnt that being a woman in the trades or any field shouldn’t affect your goals and I found it very interesting and knowledgeable to hear everyone’s experience as a woman in the trades”. Jolene Rolf von den Baumen

Overall, the event was informative, interactive, and entertaining!!!



## **Treaty Recognition Week at Nakina Public School**

Last week our students had the opportunity to learn about the importance of treaties and how Wampum was used to signify important events including agreements between indigenous groups as well as early settlers. We took this idea to make our own agreements in the classrooms and then connected them together to make a school Wampum. The agreements included ideas such as appreciating how people do things differently, getting along better, supporting each other as friends and make things right when there is conflict. It was sometimes challenging to frame our ideas using symbols, but we persisted and accomplished our task! We placed our Wampum in our common room so that our whole school community can enjoy this beautiful visual reminder of our agreements and will do our best to honour and learn from them!



*The O-gi-chii-ta singers, Waylon Sault, Aydin Robbins-Modin, Chase Wrigley, Austin Pelletier, Kyle Labelle, Wyatt Robbins-Modin, Nathan Robbins-Modin, Marcus Hardy, and Kohen Blair-Thompson.*



Students from the school watch on as the O-gi-chii-ta singers perform their newest song.

## **George O'Neill Boys Drumming Group Drum Blessing**

On Thursday October 20<sup>th</sup>, the boys drumming group from George O'Neill invited members of the school community to join them in blessing their newly named drum. After much discussion the boys decided that the name of their group would be the O-gi-chii-ta Singers which means Warriors of Many Colours. Together with the students of the school the O-gi-chii-ta singers introduced their newly named drum, O-gi-chii-ta, to our community of learners. Prior to performing a drum song they have been learning the boys smudged the drum and gave thanks. The beautiful sounds of drumming and children dancing could be heard and seen on this beautiful fall day throughout the community. We couldn't be prouder of our boys, their interest in the First Nations culture and traditions, their passion for drumming, and their leadership within the school community!



## **Behaviour Management Systems/Restorative Practices/Trauma Informed (BRT)**

*By Melissa Bianco, Behaviour Specialist*

### ***An Integrated Framework to Foster Learner Centered Environments and Pedagogy that Enhance Student Persistence, Engagement, Motivation and Belonging***

The 2016/17 school year has kicked off to an amazing start with the implementation of an integrated framework of support to address student discipline practices that will enhance student persistence, engagement, and belonging for all of our students. Supported by senior administration, system leads, administrators, school initiative leads (BMST/RP) and educators, our work with Behaviour Management Systems (BMS), Restorative Practices (RP) and Trauma Informed is establishing the direction and foundation of how we will move forward and operate as a board to continue to meet the needs of ALL of our students.

Our focus within this continued work is to provide educators with the skills, tools and supports necessary to enhance our inclusive, responsive and instructionally effective learning environments. Our priority, which is grounded in our theory of action and one that we are ALL on about at SGDSB, is to teach our students the skills necessary to flourish not only within their everyday environments, but also within the next steps of their individual journeys; whether it is transitioning to kindergarten or to post-secondary pathways. What are referred to as “soft skills” are not only necessary for the mental health and well-being of our students, but also academic achievement. Problem-solving, responsibility, risk-taking, collaboration, empathy, self-regulation, self-advocacy are all skills that are necessary to be successful from the early years through to grade 12 and beyond. Student mistakes that occur either academically or behaviourally offer a teaching/learning opportunity and a chance for student reflection, and problem-solving. While consequences are important, it is essential they serve as an opportunity to learn and change future behaviour. It is through this framework that our continued learning with BRT focuses on teaching positive behaviour just as we would teach academic skills. Each is needed to compliment the success of the other.

Relationships remain a strong priority within our board; relationships with and among students, parents and our communities. Some comments received through the BMS PD were that educators wanted more input and feedback from parents in order to help them delve deeper into student strengths and areas of need. At times, educators feel at a loss without this support. Parents and guardians are truly the experts on their children and we have multiple examples of experienced successes when school and home environments come together to support our students. We want this to continue to spread consistently throughout our schools. At SGDSB, we believe that if our kids are successful, we are successful. It is because of the daily passion and dedication of our educators that we continue to engage in this learning, invite student voice and ownership within discipline and instruction, and encourage strong partnerships with parents and community. With these components needed for strong implementation, we are confident that we will see the framework of BMST/Restorative Practices/Trauma Informed (BRT) come alive and become a strong force that spreads throughout our schools and communities to support the success of all of our kids.

### **BMST PD- Marjorie Mills Public School**

*By, Laura Gerard*

Marjorie Mills PS engaged in a personal space activity in the school lobby to discuss the importance of body language and safe supportive stance when approaching students. The activity went very well and staff truly began to understand how important it is to create a calm, non-threatening learning environment for our trauma sensitive students. Our activity turned into an informal circle where each person was able to share feelings of what is going well and what we need to work on as a team, the circle was encouraging and plans for more circles as a staff are in the works.

## BMST Attendance Project at Manitowadge High School - Giant Steps to Success!

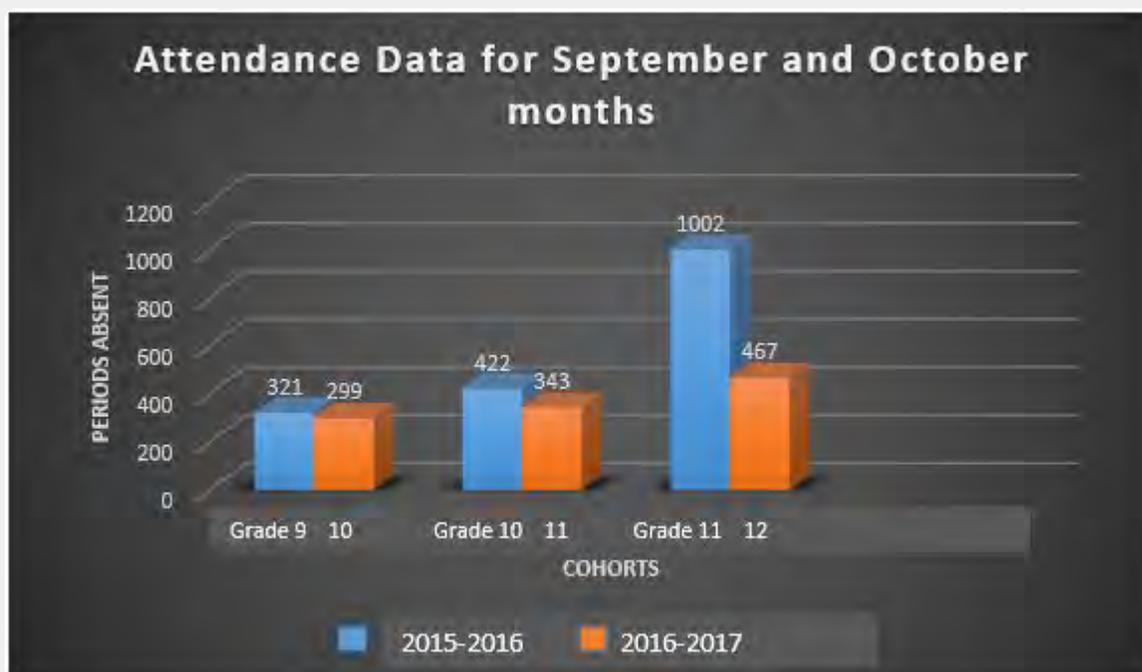
*By Annick Brewster, Principal at MNHS*

Last spring the BMST Attendance Project began at MNHS. Its focus was to address the issue of persistent absenteeism that has been identified by Superior-Greenstone District School Board. We (group members include staff from MNHS, as well as George Drazenovich - Mental Health Lead and Melissa Bianco- Positive Behaviour Support Lead) began by collecting data around persistent absenteeism. What our initial data showed was that 66% of our students were persistently absent (more than 10% school days missed in one school year). To dig deeper into this, we then categorized the reasons for absences. These categories allowed us to filter the reasons why students were absent and to discuss the absences in relation to student engagement. For example, although some students were counted in the persistent absentee rate, they had been absent for a field trip or sports trip. This accounts for nearly 20% of the total absences. We also determined that although students were out of class, they were still engaged in school. We also noted that almost 10% of the absences were due to students being out of school for illness related reasons. In this category, we also found that students had to go out of town to seek medical attention for appointments such as dentist, optometrist, or specialist appointments. Sometimes one medical appointment could mean that a student was out of school for 3 days. What we narrowed our focus on was the 'no reason' category. This category included absences for which we had no supporting documentation for the absence, whether it was because no home contact could be made, or no reason was given. This category accounted for more than 57% of our total absences.

2015-2016 school year was also the first year in which MNHS had made the commitment to not give out detentions for absences. Inquiry into the effects of detentions on attendance had shown that for students with persistent absenteeism a consequence entailing a detention did not improve their attendance. In some cases, it actually increased the rate of absence. Looking back at our data through this lens, we have shown that absences have decreased since detentions were not given as a consequence for an unexcused absence. What we also noted was that students were now going to class, although late, rather than not going at all for fear of receiving a detention.

Fast forward to the 2016-2017 school year. We recently met with our BMST Attendance Project group to discuss what has been going on since the start of the year and to take a look at our data. We compared cohorts of students in order to review the effects of strategies on the same groups of students. We compared grade 9 students from 2015-2016 to grade 10 students in 2016-2017 for the months of September and October. We did the same for students in grade 10 in 2015-2016, and grade 11 in 2015-2016. What we found was amazing!

We found that there had been a 30% decrease in the amount of absences from September to October of 2016-2017 as compared to the same months in 2015-2016.



Why had there been such a decrease? What had we done differently that affected the attendance of our students? Here are the following strategies that we put in place in order to improve relationships with students, which had an effect on attendance:

- Classroom environments were modified to be more 'student friendly'
- Staff ensured to pull students aside when addressing a personal issue, and offering a referral to different supports in the school (whether it was meeting with the Guidance Counsellor, the Student Success Teacher, or a meeting with the Student Success Team.
- In an effort to get to the bottom of the absences, our Attendance Counsellor has engaged in focused, and positive outreach with "at-risk" students to find out what might be happening and how staff might be able to help. This is an important step in being able to address the behaviour because we can now dig into the reasons why the student is absent, which will enable us to provide timely supports.

Our work does not end here. Although we have begun to see a reduction in our absentee rate, we are continuing to look at other changes we can make at the school in order to continue to address the "why's" behind unexplained absenteeism. This will include enhanced classroom strategies that will complement current practices and further develop problem-solving with students that will provide consistency throughout our students' daily timetables and scheduled classes. Enhancing partnerships with parents and our community supports will also be explored to develop our practices in order to be able to understand and to better support our 'at risk' students. As part of creating those partnerships, will be the consistent access to mental health support through contact with agency professionals within our school to support some of our students.

Our next steps will be to continue monitoring our strategies by comparing attendance on a month by month basis. We will also monitor to determine whether time of year also has a factor in the high rate of absenteeism and how we can make plans to address patterns and areas of need during specific times during the year.

We are confident moving forward as a staff that we will continue to have a positive effect on improved student attendance.

We would like to thank all staff members who have made a commitment to improving student achievement and well-being. Our continued collaboration and cooperation is an essential component to improving our students' experiences at school.

ONTSpecialNeeds retweeted

 **PHE Canada** @PHECanada Nov 9

Have your say in @OntarioEDU's strategy to promote #ONWellbeing in the educ system [bit.ly/2ekBFFa](https://bit.ly/2ekBFFa)  
[#HealthySchoolsMatter](#)



Decreased discipline problems and improved attendance  
Improved Physical Health  
Reduced disparities

**THE 5 ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES:**  
• Taking a whole school approach to improve health and wellness  
• Strong partnerships and synergy between health and education sectors

**THE 5 CORE COMPONENTS:**  
• Teaching and Learning

OntarioEDU retweeted

 **Ministry of Finance** @... 4d

How can we help students reach their full potential?  
[#BudgetTalks](#)  
[cards.twitter.com/cards/18ce53un...](https://cards.twitter.com/cards/18ce53un...)



## Mental Health Promotion as Suicide Prevention

*By George Drazenovich, Mental Health Lead*

An important part of the work of the mental health strategy is the development and implementation of a suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention guideline as a resource for staff to address these kinds of issues. We have had a revised guide for the last two years and it is located in public folders as well as in Onenote. I am happy to send it to any staff who wish.

As many of you recall, all staff have had Safe Talk Training. Safetalk is a suicide prevention/intervention program created by Living Works and provides staff with the tools to screen and ask questions to students who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts or impulses. We also have specialized services such as mental health nurses and partnerships with our mental health agencies to facilitate seamless access for those students who may require such assistance.

Another component of our guideline is “postvention”. Postvention refers to a strategy for schools to implement following a suicide or any tragic event that impacts the school community of a student. While this is not always the most pleasant area to think about, it is an essential reality for us to be prepared for and consider in order to be safe places for students. Our postvention protocol is also called our “tragic events process”.

Postvention processes are implemented following a suicide (or any tragic death) and are intended to help staff and students process all of the various emotions that arises following a student who completes suicide or sudden and tragic death. In this, we engage our board team, community partners, all with a view to help vulnerable students, reduce possibility of contagion, as well as promote healing.

A big part of our mental strategy is suicide prevention. Given the complexity of suicide, particularly in terms of causality, the evidence tells us that one the best way to think about suicide prevention is mental health promotion.

Positive mental health promotion focuses on areas that as a board and school we are already doing. Among these strategies are facilitating a sense of belonging through encouraging students to becoming involved in teams, clubs, and bands, or by being present in classes and assemblies; being welcoming through greeting each other by name; engaging in restorative practices; supporting student achievement; and implementing proactive strategies to reduce anxious behaviour such as BMST training. All of these can be enhanced, fine tuned, and sharpened.

Our mental health strategy is largely, therefore, focussed on finding ways to build positive mental health and well-being in our students. It is gratifying to see, often first hand, the evidence of how that is working. We see evidence of the impact of these practices in student in videos, hearing them speak at student senate, through surveys, and through educators sharing the impact that their classroom practices are having for their students, to name just a few.

Among the goals for the mental health strategy this year participation at one of the school staff meetings to discuss our suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention guidelines so that staff are aware, feel prepared, and supported. I hope to see you all at some point during the school year to discuss this further. If any of you have any ideas or experiences to share, please call, e-mail, or connect with me and I am happy to dialogue further.

NSPCC @NSPCC

To mark the start of #AntiBullyingWeek we're pledging to use our #PowerForGood to help tackle bullying. RT to pledge your support.

More than 16,000 young people are absent from school due to bullying.



Youth Mental Health @YMHEActionG... 1d

Inclusive, accessible and individualized education are the guiding principles of excellence in education.

[fb.me/306gU3zXU](https://fb.me/306gU3zXU)



Our Technology Champions using Twitter to share the learning going on in their schools. Connecting and communicating are essential 21st Century competencies and we all get to learn from one another!

Stacey Wallwin  
Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contact (TELTC)  
[@WallwinS](https://twitter.com/WallwinS)



### Virtual PD Sessions

I am offering 30 min virtual PD sessions on a variety of topics relating to how we can support student achievement and well-being with technology. Sessions are open to everyone! Grab a tea and a laptop and join us!

Upcoming Virtual PD Events:

**Monday Nov. 21: 2:45-3:15** Google Read & Write

**Monday Nov 21 3:30-4:00**-Google Read & Write

**Thursday Dec 1:** Interactive Slides (creating choose your own adventure slides!)

[Past Recordings](#)

### Session Resources

**#SGDSBReads- Let's Share Our Love of Reading!**

Connecting ALL our learners across SGDSB is an easy way to model collaboration and communication. Let's build a community of learners and readers. Not only will you get to connect with all learners across the Board, but you may get some fabulous reading recommendations!

Staff: Not just for professional readings! Share all your readings interests here!

<https://goo.gl/DI0iJF>

Elementary Readers: <https://goo.gl/dkS3yz>

Secondary Readers: <https://goo.gl/B8SMq9>

# SGDSB CODES CHALLENGE!

**SGDSB CODES Challenge Begins Monday Nov 21**

## WHY CODING?

Coding is not about the technology! It is about the learning. We want our students to develop:

- computational thinking skills
- 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies (critical thinking/problem solving skills, creativity, self-directed learning collaboration, communication and global citizenship)
- grit and resiliency

**Each weekly challenge could win you a prize! Complete all 5 challenges to have a chance to win the grand prize!**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nov 21	<b>BEFORE THE CODE WEEK #1 CHALLENGE</b>			
	Nov 22	Nov 23	Nov 24	Nov 25
	Procedural Writing/Algorithm			
Nov.28	<b>BEFORE THE CODE WEEK #2 CHALLENGE</b>			
	Nov. 29	Nov.30	Dec. 1	Dec.2
	Unplugged Challenge			
Dec. 5	<b>Hour of CODE Week#3 Challenge</b>			
	Dec.6	Dec. 7	Dec. 8	Dec. 9
	Hour of CODE			
Dec 12	<b>BEYOND THE HOUR OF CODE Week #4 Challenge</b>			
	Dec 13	Dec 14	Dec 15	Dec. 16
	CODE a Shape Using SPARK+/Sphero			
Jan. 9	<b>BEYOND THE HOUR OF CODE WEEK #5</b>			
	Jan. 10	Jan.11	Jan. 12	Jan.13
	Create/design SPARK+/Sphero Obstacle Course			

[Register](#) with the SGDSB CODES Challenge

[Register](#) with the Hour of CODE

## Upcoming Events

- November 22nd - Parent Involvement Committee 7 p.m.
- November 23 - MoE Regional Wellness Session
- December 5 Inaugural Board Meeting
- December 21st Christmas Break
- January 4 - Return from break
- January 27th - First Day of Exams
- February 2nd - Last Day of Exams
- February 3rd = PD Day
- February 20th - Family Day



**A huge CONGRATULATIONS goes to SGDSB employees, Lisa Zeleny, Sara Park, Brandy Robbins & Connie Chouinard who completed a half marathon in Niagara Falls!**

ONTSpecialNeeds retweeted

**Jo Boaler @joboaler** Oct 22

How to create a Mathematical Mindset classroom! Ideas for opening tasks and asking rich questions, now on youcubed: [youcubed.org/category/teach...](http://youcubed.org/category/teach...)



**Peter DeWitt, Ed.D. @Pet...**  
Do educators need media literacy as much as students do? [buff.ly/2gd7Vdm](http://buff.ly/2gd7Vdm)  
#media #edchat #satchat

