



SGDSB  
**Director's Newsletter**  
**February 5th, 2018**  
*"Small Schools Make a Difference"*

♥ happy ♥  
*Valentine's*  
♥ day ♥



Nicole Morden-Cormier, David Tamblyn and Charlie Bishop attended an awards dinner February 1st after successfully completing the Ontario Supervisory Officer Executive Leadership Program. The 10 day program was divided into 4 modules spread over six months and was offered through the University of Toronto Rotman School of Management in affiliation with the Learning Partnership. Congratulations to our three graduates!

## 2018-2023 Board Strategic Plan - Defining the Future of SGDSB!

On January 22, 1984 Apple launched their "Think Different" campaign with the introduction of the Macintosh computer. In his seminal book, *"Start With Why"*, author Simon Sinek describes how the "Think Different" campaign would go on to define WHY Apple exists. According to Sinek, "All Apple's advertising and communications, their products, partnerships, their packaging, their store design, they are all WHAT's to Apple's WHY, proof that they actively challenge status quo thinking to empower the individual." Apple has revolutionized the world of technology with their products.

In 2012 SGDSB introduced the motto *"Small Schools Make a Difference"* with the launch of the board strategic plan. *Making a Difference* defines WHY SGDSB exists. Student centered learning, extracurricular activities and leadership opportunities are the WHAT's to SGDSB's WHY, proof of how we make a difference.

In the last 5 years we have introduced programming to support our indigenous students, we have expanded the Specialist High Skills Major program to offer a wider range of programming and we have introduced the Hockey Academy as an incentive to improve student attendance. These are just a few of the programs we have introduced to support how we are making a difference. While we have introduced new programs we have unfortunately lost several programs as well. Music is now only offered at our two smallest high schools and drama has been drastically reduced. The impact has been a loss of students to schools in Thunder Bay. Declining enrollment leads to a reduction in staff and could eventually lead to school closures. If we are to remain competitive we need to continue to demonstrate how we are making a difference. SGDSB needs to set ourselves apart from what other district school boards are offering in the region.

We are in the process of developing the 2018-23 strategic plan which will provide a blueprint for the direction the school board needs to take over the next five years. Share your innovative ideas at:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZBSLEn3c\\_Gnx-5zJWvWh2f0aOF5kgWZb54cv0zdH6sqhEew/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZBSLEn3c_Gnx-5zJWvWh2f0aOF5kgWZb54cv0zdH6sqhEew/viewform?usp=sf_link)



Nicole Morden-Cormier,  
Superintendent of Education

## Elementary Professional Learning Structures: A Culture of Learning Promotes Collective Efficacy



**Collective efficacy** is defined as the “collective self-perception that teachers in a given school make an educational difference to their students over and above the education impact of their homes and communities (Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004, in Donohoo, 2017, pg 1). To achieve collective efficacy and experience the positive results that this culture can bring, **effective professional learning is the key**. Our district celebrated the many professional learning opportunities that are provided to staff, each of which support the achievement of the goals outlined in our Board Learning Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being. These opportunities are available so please speak with your principal if you are interested in joining the learning.

### Leadership Learning Team: Supporting Formal and Informal Leadership from Our Board Learning Plan

*We know we are successful if collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning.*  
*We know we are successful if job-embedded and inquiry based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.*

This year, we have revived the Leadership Learning Team structure in our elementary system. This learning structure is designed to bring educators and leadership together as co-learners and leaders, around topics that span both the instructional and leadership areas. The focus of our inquiry this year is *How to make every student a 21st Century thinker? And How we create a thinking environment where we are all engaged?* As we learn together, we also are focused on developing the leadership of each of the participants, specifically helping everyone to see themselves as a leader, as reflected by our Board Learning Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being Success Criteria. Will Goodman, Kellie Wrigley and Nicole Morden Cormier are the leads on this project, and the participants include Special Education Teachers, Grade 6,7,8 Teachers, our Leadership Development candidate, and elementary principals and vice-principals. To date, we have engaged in learning about Backward Planning as we think about engaging all learners, we have dug deeply into the notion of what “thinking” truly is through the support of the **Critical Thinking Consortium**, and we are honing our understanding of knowing each of our learners through the lens of learning disabilities.

The end result of this collaborative inquiry project will be to produce units of study for educators to use in their classrooms that are increasingly engaging and that respond to the needs of all learners, and to increasingly foster informal leadership and collective efficacy in each one of our elementary schools.

**Inquiry is guided by the questions and tasks we present to students.**

What makes a question a critical inquiry question?

- They prompt students to make thoughtful judgements.

*Ex. Who is your favourite character vs. Who are the two most powerful characters*

- They promote the use of clearly identified criteria.

*Ex. Consider what it means to be “powerful”*

- They require reasoning based on evidence.

*Students use the evidence to make and justify their selections*

### Building Capacity and Pedagogy Through our Math PLCs

Collective efficacy continues to be a focus through our math PLCs. Often, in our small schools, it can be difficult to connect with other educators teaching similar grades. Our webinar sessions allow for us to highlight certain content and pedagogy, which then allows for the educators to further make connections through the work of their School Learning Plans. It is our intent to enhance this professional learning by ensuring it is: ongoing, reinforces meaningful collaboration, is grounded in educator’s practice, involves reflection based on evidence of student outcomes, increases teacher influence, builds capacity for leadership, and taps into sources of efficacy.

We are working through enhancing our work in all areas of the pedagogical system, but are spotlighting our work within ‘worthwhile math tasks’. This strongly connects with developing the principles in our environment as well as our assessment as/for learning culture. The work we are engaging in supports our work around ‘creating THINKING classrooms’.

*“Effective teaching of mathematics begins with teachers clarifying and understanding the mathematics that students need to learn and how it develops along learning progressions. The establishment of clear goals supports the selection of tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving while developing conceptual understanding and procedural fluency” (NCTM Principles to Action, pg. 57).*

Collaboratively we are working to align the work in all divisions with school learning plans in order to build teacher efficacy and support student success in mathematics.



**Foundational Principles to be Developed in the Environment**

Safe, inclusive, welcoming, co-created, materials available, strength based, high academic expectations, grounded in inquiry, innovative and curious, clear vision, values and goals,

Clarifying and sharing intentions and criteria for success.

Engineering effective discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of learners’ understanding.

Providing feedback that moves learning forward.

Activating learners as instructional resources for one another.

Activating learners as the owners of their own learning.

**Assessment as/for Learning Culture**



## Our Conditions for Learning At Work: Thinking About Our Libraries



The Library Technicians of SGDSB participated in a face-to-face L4U training and networking session on November 30th at the Red Rock Learning Center. L4U is the online management system that our librarians use to catalogue and track library resources. As a group, we participated in a day of new new learning, questioning, and reflection, facilitated by Mark Force, L4U Implementation Specialist.

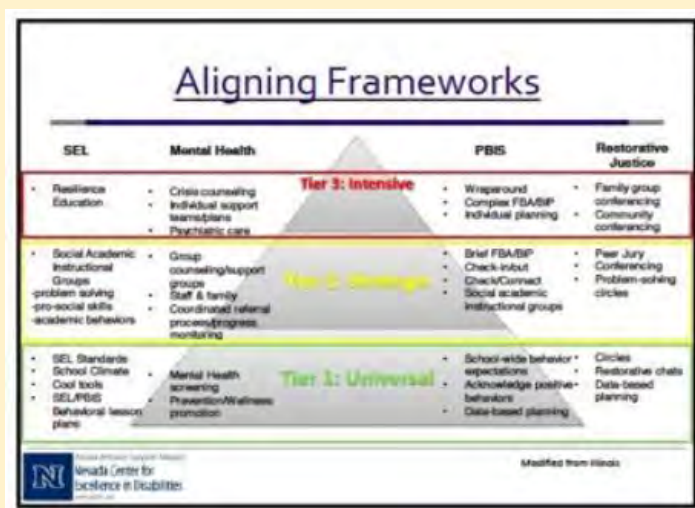
<b>Risk Taking:</b> I know that I am taking risks when I engage in tasks with the desire/intention to further my learning; seeing errors as opportunities and taking initiative to investigate new topics and ideas.	<b>Responsive Instruction:</b> I know I am providing responsive instruction if I am collecting a continuum of data (to show progression) towards an identified goal and my responses are reflective of the learner's strengths/needs.	<b>Relationship Building:</b> I know I am building relationships if I engage in communication (active listening and responding) to build trust and respect and provide others with the opportunity to share and reflect.	<b>Collaboration (vs. Cooperation):</b> I know I am collaborating if I work interdependently, engage others, actively listen, constructively contribute, respectfully challenge ideas, and share knowledge to build on others' thinking to arrive at a desired goal.
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Throughout the day, we could clearly see our Conditions for Learning at work. Our Library Technicians took risks by putting their ideas forward and not being afraid to ask questions. We had some great questions and wonderings generated prior to our session. We are grateful that we were able to be responsive and tailor our learning to suit our individual needs. The collaboration in the room was fantastic, as we helped each other by sharing our prior knowledge of L4U. Lastly, having the opportunity to build relationships with each other will help our future learning and remind us that we are not alone in our work. Our group is eagerly looking forward to getting back together virtually on the February PA day. The focus of this session will be discussions on what best practice looks like in our libraries.

## Behaviour Management Systems (BMS)

*Supporting an Integrated Framework to Foster Learner Centered Environments and Pedagogy that Enhance Student Persistence, Engagement, Motivation and Belonging.*

One focus of the positive behavior support portfolio is to engage our school BMST Leads in supporting school well-being teams by providing educators with the skills, tools and supports necessary to enhance our safe, inclusive, responsive and instructionally effective learning environments. We built our BMST framework on the values of interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation. One way we did this was through the certification of 16 staff from both the elementary and secondary panels that included teachers, guidance, EAs, and child and youth workers. 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 thrive 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 is referred to as social emotional learning is 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. It is through this continued, focused work with school teams that we are able to effectively align BMST, Restorative Practices, Trauma Informed, and Strength-Based Resilience initiatives that are all aimed at the development of social emotional learning of our students. Each is needed to compliment the success of the other in supporting the needs of all of our students.

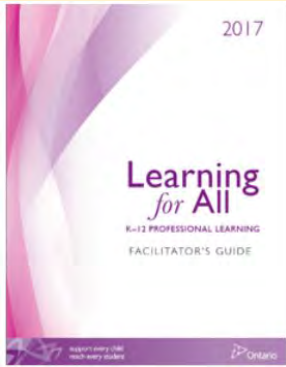
## Enacting Our Conditions for Learning: Mental Health Supports for Educators

**Relationship Building:** I know I am building relationships if I engage in communication (active listening and responding) to build trust and respect and provide others with the opportunity to share and reflect.

**Collaboration (vs. Cooperation):** I know I am collaborating if I work interdependently, engage others, actively listen, constructively contribute, respectfully challenge ideas, and share knowledge to build on others' thinking to arrive at a desired goal.

Two key blocks of the conditions for learning in our Theory of Action involve relationship building and collaboration. We know that we are, in fact, collaborating and building relationships if we engage in communication that includes active listening, that provides spaces and opportunities for us to reflect and constructively contribute to ideas and practices that advance the mental health and well-being of our entire school community. It is not necessary for us to agree on every point, but it is necessary for us to build on those areas of shared consensus that help us to arrive at a desired goal. To this end, this year different schools have taken one day out of their schedules to find the time to engineer those discussions that will help us to be able to build our learning culture; to see how our own well-being and mental health influences the environment. Being mindful of these dynamics helps to liberate us in such a way that we can be more fully present with our learners as they develop the skills and work habits to see how, through their effort, they can change, succeed, grow, and appreciate the value and purpose of their academic studies. Supported by board leads, including the mental health lead, staff and principals have been engaging in thoughtful reflection and taking concrete steps in professional learning to support the well-being of the entire school. As we move ahead, there will be increased continuity and sustainability through alignment with the work of the BMS teams next year.

## Knowing Thy Learning: BAPS and NRHS



Beginning in June 2016, the Special Education/Success for All Branch (SESAB) of the Ministry of Education began collaboration with The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC<sup>2</sup>) to develop a professional learning facilitators' guide to support a deeper implementation of Learning for All, K-12 (2013). The Facilitator's Guide supports educators in thinking deeply about innovative practices that support all learners with attention to students with special education needs. It seeks to nurture educators' mindsets, specifically rethinking what constitutes an evidence-based, collaborative decision making process in developing and implementing, monitor the effectiveness of equitable and inclusive practice. An iterative process was taken to develop a series of four learning modules to scaffold professional learning about a cyclical process of learning and teaching.

Draft "Module One: Knowing our learners" has been piloted at Nip-Rock High School and B.A. Parker Public School. Although we are early in the process of this innovative approach, our emergent findings indicate that professional learning that invites educators and leaders to position themselves as critical thinkers and takes a systematic and scaffolded approach to nurture and enhance educators' thinking abilities, increases the likelihood of authentic transfer into classroom practice.



This structure of learning has developed a greater understanding of how the students learn based on cognitive processes as well as allows each educator to be more responsive to the learner needs. Our first cycle has seen our participants develop a process for understanding students but also an observation tool and a learner profile template that supports each of their own particular students. We will continue to unpack this learning throughout the district in the coming months.

## Elementary Leaders Engage in Ongoing Professional Learning: Structures to Facilitate Communication

### SCHOOL-LEVEL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organization's vision and goals.

Setting Directions

Building Relationships and Developing People

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices

Improving the Instructional Program

Securing Accountability

Elementary School Leaders meet regularly to engage in learning, sharing of practice, collaboration and to engage in ongoing monitoring of progress; each of which is a key part of our "exercise of influence...toward the identification and achievement" of our goals. This year, the Elementary Leaders are focused on **AFFIRMING** the work occurring in our schools that advance the BLPSA goals, **REFINING** practice to bring greater coherence, and **ASPIRING** to tackle the more substantive enhancements that may take years to nurture (Creating Thinking Classrooms, pg. 24). To this end, we have 5 goals that we are working towards achieving:

1. Reflective Practice/moderation which answers the questions "What is the learning and the impact of the learning? What is the thinking (not the doing) that we see apparent in student evidence?"
2. How to nurture Collective Efficacy by fostering Educator Learning and Development (ES = 0.84) through the PLC Cycle.
3. To support our staff in understanding Well-Being; the conditions necessary to foster well-being (which are based in positive relationships, positive emotions, accomplishment, engagement and meaning), how these conditions are embedded in our SGDSB Student Centered, Well-Being Theory of Action, and thus, how Well-Being and Achievement are inseparable.
4. To develop our pedagogical content knowledge through a number sense lens (using the Pedagogical System for Mathematics tool) as we support our students in their ability to communicate their thinking.
5. To practice the Assessment For Learning (for, as, of) strategies by modelling them in our leadership work.

These learning meetings include our weekly Thursday Morning Meeting (7:50 am-8:30 am), our monthly Monday Morning Catch Up Meeting, (every second month from 9:15 am- 11:30 am), our School Learning Plan Moderation Meetings (every second month from 9:15 am- 11:30 am), and our School Learning Plan Feedback Meetings (3 times per year with each School Leader). Our leaders are learners.



### 6 Enabling Conditions for Collective Teacher Efficacy (Donohoo, 2017)

1. Advanced teacher influence
2. Goal consensus
3. Teachers' knowledge about one another's work
4. Cohesive staff
5. Responsiveness of leadership
6. Effective system of intervention

### Seven Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning (Donohoo, 2017, pg. 53)

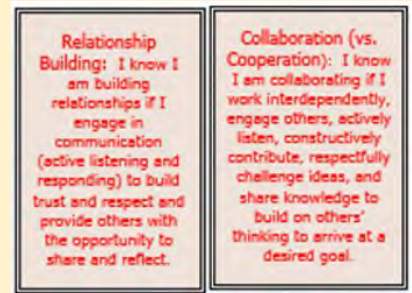
1. Ongoing
2. Reinforces meaningful collaboration
3. Grounded in educator's practice
4. Involves reflection based on evidence of student outcomes
5. Increases teacher influence
6. Builds capacity for leadership
7. Taps into sources of efficacy (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion/beliefs, and emotional reactions to tasks)



### Shared Spaces at SGDSB Schools:

*"Ontario's children and families are well supported by a system of responsive, high quality, accessible and increasingly integrated early years programs and services that contribute to healthy child development today and a stronger future tomorrow." (Ontario Early Years Policy Framework, 2013)*

At SGDSB we strive ourselves on the community that we create in our schools to support children and families as they transition into our formal Kindergarten programs. The relationships that we establish with our shared spaces partners in the Best Start/Early On hubs as well as our Child Care Centres are critical in ensuring that we provide seamless, high quality programs for children throughout the day. Open communication and opportunities to co-create and collaborate on learning opportunities has strengthened these relationships and is moving us further toward integration. To continue on our journey in developing these relationships we will be having a Shared Spaces Building Mtg on February 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:15 – 4:00. This will be an opportunity for ALL staff from the school (educators, support staff, plant, admin) and the staff from Best Start/Early On or the Child Care to meet and discuss, celebrate and discuss future goals for each school community. Everyone is encouraged to attend – your voice is important and valued. Remember, these are ongoing conversations as we work together to achieve full integration and our buildings become centres that support learning from 0 to adulthood!



**"LET US PUT OUR MINDS TOGETHER TO SEE WHAT WE CAN BUILD FOR OUR CHILDREN."**

**– Chief Sitting Bull**



**Students and Staff!**



### Collaboratively Responding to the Occasional Teacher Shortage

Artie Cooper, Jim Hendricksen, Colleen Lemieux, Val Nakani, Cathy Tsubouchi, Charlie Bishop and Nicole Morden Cormier met on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 to formalize the numerous discussions that have been occurring regarding the challenges that we are facing due to the lack of occasional teachers. As this was the first meeting of the committee, the team generated a list of the many concerns that have resulted from this shortage; foundational to these discussions was the impact on the well-being of our staff as we struggle to replace absences. In addition, the group brainstormed possible solutions to this challenge and discussed enhancements to recruitment practices. We have a team attending both the Lakehead University and Nipissing University recruitment fairs, and we will be conducting interviews immediately following the Lakehead University fair. It is our hope to increasingly attract new graduates by promoting our schools and communities, and to support candidates with obtaining accommodations in our communities. The committee identified many action items to support our recruitment practices and will be meeting once again in April, as we continue to explore new and different ideas to address this shortage. If you have ideas, please speak with one of the committee members.



If you would like to learn more about innovation in Ontario follow our Twitter hashtag #innovateON21c.

If you want to share an innovation from your school use our hashtag #innovateON21c.



## **CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES: EDUCATORS EXPLORING THE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Learning for a Sustainable Future** presents this 2-day focused PD experience, where we will facilitate collaborative knowledge-building and help educators to pursue the knowledge and skills that will position them to be effective facilitators of climate change learning. Throughout the two days, we will walk the talk and model inquiry methodology.

### **Who should attend?**

- Teachers of **grades 7-12** who wish to explore climate change challenges and opportunities and learn how authentic inquiry is being applied to address expectations in social studies, science, language and other subjects
- School administrators and system leaders who wish to support transformative inquiry-based learning for engaged citizenship.

### **Outcomes—through their participation, educators will:**

- Receive a copy of *Connecting the Dots* ([www.lsf-lst.ca/dots](http://www.lsf-lst.ca/dots)) and gain perspectives on applying inquiry.
- Identify and begin to address their individual questions, issues and challenges relevant to applying inquiry in their professional practice
- Experience professional inquiry methods that can in turn be applied with students
- Investigate collaborative knowledge building principles and methods
- Gain confidence in planning authentic inquiry learning experiences and applying appropriate assessment methodology
- Explore how inquiry and other strategies maximize student engagement.

**When Thursday, April 12, 2018 at 9:30 AM EDT -to- Friday, April 13, 2018 at 3:30 PM EDT**  
**Where Red Rock Learning Centre**

**To Register:** <http://bit.ly/SGDSBPD> **by Friday, February 9, 2018!** **\*Space is Limited! \***

**Contact Nicole Morden Cormier with Questions**



# Positive Behaviour Support

*Melissa Bianco, Positive Behaviour Support Lead*

Hi All. Ever since the BMST (Behaviour Management Systems Training) training sessions early this year I have been excited to put what I have learned into practice at Terrace Bay Public. BMST trainer (the very capable) Stephen Johnson emphasized that the Review/Debriefing Phase is particularly important to educators in reducing critical incidents and supporting positive behaviour, but it is the phase that is often the most difficult to implement within education.

There are two types of staff debriefing within the BMST framework: regular and critical. Our goal this year within our board-wide BMST group is to work with our administrators and school teams in developing and supporting 'regular' debriefing opportunities for staff. This debriefing process allows staff to reflect on a range of preventative, de-escalation, skill-building, and responsive practices in an effort to reduce behaviour before it becomes critical.

Each individual teacher will respond differently to escalated incidents based on past experience and the severity of the situation, but as educators, it's important to remember that we are half of every interaction with students. We have the power to escalate or de-escalate any given situation. When we are mindful of our own responses, and what we are projecting through our words, tone and body language, we will be more successful at bringing students back to a place of calm.

All behavior incidents cause stress on students and educators so it essential that we are part of a team that is able to support us and our students during and after an incident. Recently, I have used this debriefing process at my school and supported a colleague. I was able to demonstrate some de-escalation techniques I have found to be particularly helpful to me. What we found is that if we responded consistently, calmly, and in a timely manner the likelihood of that student finding success for the rest of the day increased.

If you would like to know more about Debriefing, consult the BMS Lead in your school.

Cheers,

Downey LeBar

1/2 Educator and BMS lead at Terrace Bay Public School.

## BMST PD for Casual Educational Assistants

On February 2, 2018 casual Eas from the Greenstone, Manitouwadge, Dorion, Red Rock and Npigon areas engaged in BMST PD with our BMST Leads in those areas. We would like to thank Rachelle Horner, Kim Koroscil, Jennifer Johnson and Vanessa Schaff-Nichols for making this opportunity possible. (Shown in photo - Rachelle Horner and our Manitouwadge group).







**Student Success Lead**  
**Heidi Patterson**

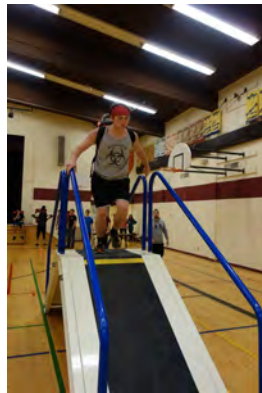


### ***Experiential Learning***

In the coming months you are going to hear about the expansion of Community-Connected Experiential Learning:K-12 and Adult Learners

### ***What Does this mean for our schools?***

Time focussed staffing for Experiential Learning;  
Enhancements to experiential learning experiences;  
Expansion of the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs;  
Supporting Outdoor Education;  
Promoting Multiple Career Pathways, Skills and Competencies;  
Supporting Transitions to Postsecondary for students with developmental disabilities.



Thanks to GCHS - Rob Haslam and  
MNHS - Gord Martin for the photos !!





# Mental Health

George Drazenovich - Mental Health Lead

## *Listening and Learning - Student Engagement Circles and TTFM*

The theme of this month is the value of listening and learning. The value of listening and learning was captured by a student from Nipigon-Red Rock District High School, Jernie. Jernie was involved in one of the student engagement circles. With permission, she is sharing her insight on the value of student engagement circles to help build community through the process of listening and learning. Jernie writes:

*It was very positive for us to be part of the student engagement circle. We each got to share our thoughts and ideas with one another without feeling judged. It felt very good to know that our voices and opinions are being heard and used to create a better learning environment and school community for us all. I think I can say for all of us that it was a very helpful and overall positive experience. It helped me get to know my peers, made me feel more welcome and showed me that the worries I had about attending a new school was a mutual feeling between us all. I think it's very important to get students involved and heard so their schools can be the best it possibly can be, and the student engagement circle is a very effective and great way of doing that.*

In the next few months, we will, through the TTFM (Our SCHOOL) surveys, be listening to the voices of our teachers, EA's as well as parents. The OurSCHOOL Teacher Survey is an effective tool to gather reliable insights from teachers and further increase school effectiveness. The survey includes eight measures: leadership, collaboration, learning culture, data informing practice, teaching strategies, technology, inclusive school, and community involvement. These measures assess the traditional aspects of classroom and school effectiveness for which there is strong evidence of their effects on student achievement. This survey is a good way for us to build on our strengths and look at what areas are opportunities for continued growth.

The OurSCHOOL Parent Survey helps to clarify and strengthen the important relationship between parent and school. This survey provides feedback on parents' perceptions of the school's support for learning, positive behaviours, and the promotion of safety and inclusion. The survey collects information on parents feeling welcome, support for learning, support for positive behaviour, inclusion, support for learning, and feeling safe at schools.

All are encouraged to participate in order to make their voice heard.





## Our SGDSB Learners Connecting with Technology to Challenge Their Thinking & Build Relationships at Our Virtual PD

Schreiber Public School

Marjorie Mills Public School

BA Parker Public School



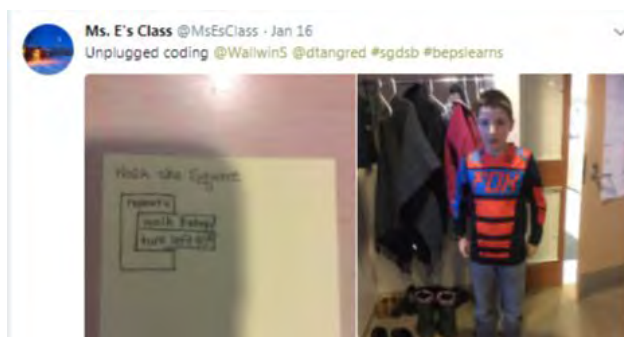
Terrace Bay Public School

Nakina Public School

Manitouwadge Public School



Beardmore Public School

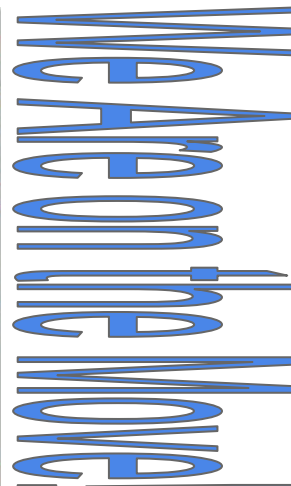


On Jan. 16, 2018, Students from across SGDSB had the opportunity to connect virtually and further their learning with computational thinking and coding with Derek Tangredi (@dtangred) from Fair Chance Learning. The students got to connect, share ideas, challenge their thinking and most importantly co-learn with their peers and educators from across the Board. Students and staff learning alongside each other-awesome!

Our next virtual PD session for students and **Technology Champions** is **February 13, 2018**. Thank-you to all who supported the students and continue to take these learning risks!

Our next Beyond the Hour of CODE challenge is a Scratch activity that can be done with the school tech club, a classroom or throughout the entire school. This coding shapes challenge is meant to be a collaborative experience among various students in which student leadership is supported, and collaboration and relationship building is front and centre. Click [here](#) for details! Have fun!





Human Resources Coordinator Valerie Nakani and Early Years Lead Hillary Freeburn attended a job fair at Lakehead University in an effort to recruit occasional teachers to address the shortage of supply teachers in the district. Over 30 teachers were interviewed following the job fair. Val also attended a job fair at the University of Nipissing in hopes of recruiting FSL teachers.

## GCHS Students Take Home Gold in Provincial OSSTF Student Achievement Awards

Becker Gagnon and Marcus Luomala won first place for their video entitled "Bannock Dogs" at the Provincial OSSTF Student Achievement Awards. The achievement marks the third time students from media arts teacher Rob Haslam's class have won provincially in this prestigious award. According to Haslam, "They have placed regionally (top five) in almost every year since 1999."

The theme for the provincial competition was "What is your superpower?" Becker's superpower is feeding people, which he does a good job of showing in his video. Here is the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e700cM-gCl&t=84s> Congratulations to both the students and Rob Haslam!

## Appointments



**Kevin Fitzgerald** was appointed the Vice Principal for Nakina Public School. Fitzgerald began his teaching career in Marten Falls, Ontario area working as a teacher in the grade 5/6 classroom. He then moved on to supply teach at Superior-Greenstone District School Board and the Superior North Catholic District School Board for a year before his career then took him to Aroland First Nation to teach for several years. In 2014 he joined the Superior-Greenstone District School Board team once again as Grade 2/3/4 classroom teacher at Nakina Public School.



**Nancy O'Donnell** was Indigenous Education Lead. O'Donnell holds a Bachelor of Education Degree from Nipissing University and an Honours Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Guelph. Certified to teach in 1994, Nancy has held teaching positions with Huron Superior Catholic District School Board, Nipissing First Nation, the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, Algoma District School Board and Pic River First Nation. Nancy has completed Ojibwe Immersion Courses at Sault College and in Pic River First Nation. She has developed and written indigenous curriculum for Sault College, TV Ontario and Huron Superior Catholic District School Board. She is a member of the Red Rock Indian Band.



**Cameron Craig** was appointed to the position of Principal for Margaret Twomey Public School. Cameron has taught at the Marathon High School since 1998 and in this capacity has taught a wide variety of courses. He began his career teaching English as a Second Language to elementary school children in Guagzhou, China. He also served as Interim Principal at Margaret Twomey Public School during the last school year. Cameron holds a Bachelor of Education degree from Mount Allison University and a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Geography and Minor in Law and Politics from Lakehead University. Upon his appointment Craig said, "I am thrilled to be returning Margaret Twomey Public School once again. It is my absolute honour to be able to work with our dedicated staff, students, parents and school community. I value the many relationships I have within the school community and look forward to working closely with everyone."



# Trades & Tech Update

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

## Skills Ontario Career Exploration & Networking Event

Skills Ontario Career Exploration and Networking Events provide secondary school young women the opportunity to meet, network and be inspired by tradeswomen who are eager to share their stories and experiences. Through this event, students were engaged in hands-on activities and learned about a variety of careers in the skilled trades and technologies. In addition, students gained clarity and confidence that skilled trades can offer women high pay, good benefits, flexibility, and rewarding work with unlimited opportunity. This year's event was held at the Carpenters Union in Thunder Bay on November 2, 2017, and was attended by 25 students and staff from Superior-Greenstone.





## ***The Science of Well-Being***

### **Happiness... It Matters to All of Us (taken from Actionforhappiness.org)**

“Happiness is about our lives as a whole: it includes the fluctuating feelings we experience everyday but also our overall satisfaction with life. It is influenced by our genes, upbringing and our external circumstances - such as our health, our work and our financial situation. But crucially it is also heavily influenced by our choices - our inner attitudes, how we approach our relationships, our personal values and our sense of purpose.

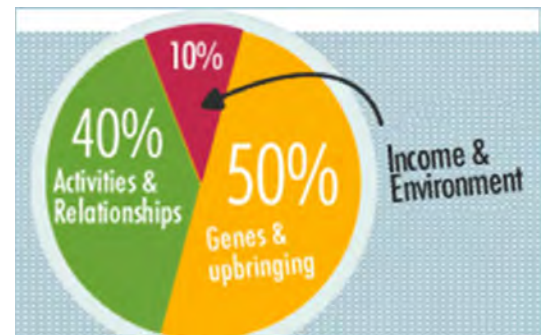
There are many things in life that matter to us - including health, freedom, autonomy and achievement. But if we ask why they matter we can generally give further answers - for example, that they make people feel better or more able to enjoy their lives. But if we ask why it matters if people feel better, we can give no further answer. It is self-evidently desirable. Our overall happiness - how we feel about our lives - is what matters to us most.

The research shows that we need a change of priorities, both at the societal level and as individuals. Happiness and fulfilment come less from material wealth and more from relationships; less from focussing on ourselves and more from helping others; less from external factors outside our control and more from the way in which we choose to react to what happens to us.”

#### **12 Ways to Improve Your Well-Being**

1. Physical Activity
2. Gratitude
3. Writing
4. Meditation
5. Creativity
6. Animals
7. Social Connectivity
8. Laughter
9. Spending More Time Outside
10. Quality Sleep
11. Nutrition
12. Stop Stressing About Health

Interested? Read the entire article at  
<http://www.activebeat.co/diet-nutrition/12-free-ways-to-enhance-your-well-being/?streamview=all>



#### **Our happiness is not set in stone**

Although our genes influence about 50% of the variation in our personal happiness, our circumstances (like income and environment) affect only about 10%.

As much as 40% is accounted for by our daily activities and the conscious choices we make. So the good news is that our actions really can make a difference.

#### **Calendar of Events**

February 1st - Exam Day 5  
February 2nd - Professional Activity Day  
February 14th - Valentine's Day  
February 19th - Family Day  
March 12 - 16th - March Break  
March 17th - St. Patrick's Day  
March 24th - Earth Hour  
March 30th - Good Friday

