MASS Journal

Fall 2013

The official magazine of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents

Valuing Efficacy, Building Capacity

Canada Post Publications Agreement Number 40609661

Easy. Profitable. Local.

Mom's Pantry

We're Canada's Fundraising Specialists.

Here's why over 5000 Canadian groups use Mom's Pantry for their fundraising needs:

1

Proven Fundraising Formula

Over the last 30 years we've helped thousands of groups raise millions of dollars for their needs. When it comes to fundraising, we know what works and – more importantly – what doesn't.

2

Wholesome Products

Like our name suggests, Mom's Pantry's product selection includes everyday foods, baking supplies, and spices found in most families' kitchens – products that families actually want and need. Additionally, we are proud to introduce two new healthy living product lines: *Naturya Superfoods*, and *Mom's Own Superfoods!*

3

Generous Commissions

Another secret to successful fundraising is to maximize your earnings with each sale. Mom's 40% commission on most items, and 20% to 30% on more expensive items, means that your fundraisers won't have to sell a lot to make a lot.

3241 St. Mary's Road
Winnipeg, MB R2N 4B4

Like us at facebook.com/momspantry
Follow us @MomsPantry

Call now to find out more!

1-800-350-MOMS (6667)

www.momspantry.ca

Epson Brighter FUTURES
reliability. support. savings.

ESSENTIALS FOR THE WELL EQUIPPED CLASSROOM

Epson equips 21st century classrooms for engagement and collaboration. Standardize on Epson and make an investment in your classrooms with products known for their value and the service and savings available through the Epson Brighter Futures program.

Check out Epson's **full lineup of products, request a catalog,** or **contact your rep.**

Visit Epson.ca/K12-EdF

DOCUMENT CAMERAS

ACCESSORIES: CARTS, MOUNTS, SOUND ENHANCEMENT

CLASSROOM PROJECTORS

BrightLink INTERACTIVE SOLUTIONS

LARGE VENUE PROJECTORS

SHORT-THROW PROJECTORS

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

INTRODUCING RECYCLE EVERY WHERE 101

A new program to get Manitoba schools recycling.

Boost your school's beverage container recycling rate with Recycle Everywhere 101. This free, new program will have your school recycling every empty can, carton, juice box and bottle in sight.

Once you register, you'll receive:

- Free Recycle Everywhere bins
- Posters, t-shirts and other Recycle Everywhere gear
- Bin placement tips and promotion ideas

Visit our website to kick-start your school's new Recycle Everywhere 101 program!

Enrol now at **RecycleEverywhere.ca**

A FREE program to improve your school's recycling.

Fall 2013
Volume 14, Number 2

MASS Journal
Published For:
The Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
375 Jefferson Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2V 0N3
Phone: (204) 487-7972
Fax: (204) 487-7974
E-mail: ken.klassen@7oaks.org
Web: www.mass.mb.ca

Published By:
Matrix Group Publishing Inc.
Publication Mail Agreement Number 40609661
Return Undeliverable Addresses to:
309 Youville Street
Winnipeg, MB R2H 2S9
Toll free: (866) 999-1299
Toll free fax: (866) 244-2544

President & CEO
Jack Andress

Chief Operating Officer
Jessica Potter
jpotter@matrixgroupinc.net

Publishers
Peter Schulz, Joe Strazzullo

Editor-In-Chief
Shannon Savory
ssavory@matrixgroupinc.net

Editor
Alexandra Walld
awalld@matrixgroupinc.net

Finance/Accounting & Administration
Shoshana Weinberg, Nathan Redekop, Pat Andress
accounting@matrixgroupinc.net

Director of Marketing & Circulation
Shoshana Weinberg

Sales Manager
Neil Gottfred

Sales Team Leader
Colleen Bell

Matrix Group Publishing Inc. Account Executives
Rick Kuzie, Miles Meagher, Christopher Smith, Rob Choi, Jeff Cash, Jim Hamilton, Bonnie Petrovsky, Matthew Keenan, Frank McLean, Brian MacIntyre, Rob Allan, Declan O'Donovan, Crystal Burke, David Roddie, John Price, Frank Kenyeres

Layout & Design
Cody Chomiak

Advertising Design
James Robinson

For advertising information contact Matrix Group Publishing Inc. at (866) 999-1299.

MASS Journal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Messages

THEME: VALUING EFFICACY, BUILDING CAPACITY

Features

On the Cover:
In Lakeshore School Division the graduation rate has risen from 50 per cent in 2009 to 92 per cent in 2013. How is a 42 per cent jump in less than five years possible? A cultural shift towards valuing efficacy and building capacity topped this school's list of "must dos." And it worked. Read more about how Lakeshore School Division embraced a new way of doing things on page 12 and about how other divisions are changing education as we know it, throughout this entire edition of *The MASS Journal*.

Solution Tree
Education Canada

Events

FALL 2013 & SPRING 2014

At Solution Tree, student achievement is at the root of each event we offer. Whether you attend a 2-day workshop or an institute, on topics like 21st century skills and RTI at Work™, you'll discover essential frameworks for maximizing student performance as revealed by some of education's trailblazers. Under their seasoned guidance, you'll discover the latest techniques to carve improved paths to learning.

Building Better Schools Together Institute

Presenters: Wayne Hulley, Anthony Muhammad, Kenneth C. Williams, Karen Branscombe, Tom Hierck, François Massé, and Ainsley B. Rose

October 17–19 Toronto, ON

21st Century Skills *2-Day* Workshop

Presenters: William M. Ferriter, Garfield Gini-Newman, Cheryl Lemke, and Will Richardson

October 28–29 Ottawa, ON

Redefining Fair *2-Day* Workshop

Presenter: Damian Cooper

November 19–20 Toronto, ON

Pyramid of Behavior Interventions *2-Day* Workshop

Presenter: Tom Hierck

November 21–22 Toronto, ON

Transforming School Culture *2-Day* Workshop

Presenter: Anthony Muhammad

April 14–15 Montreal, QC

RTI at Work™ Institute

Presenters: Austin Buffum, Mike Mattos, Laurie Robinson, and Chris Weber

April 29–May 1 Toronto, ON

Simplifying Response to Intervention *2-Day* Workshop

Presenter: Mike Mattos

May 22–23 Prince George, BC

Register today!

solution-tree.com **800.733.6786**

Reg Klassen
Superintendent, Rolling River School Division

En qualité de président du Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS), je suis fier de vous présenter l'édition d'automne 2013 du *Journal du MASS*, qui a pour thème le renforcement des capacités et la valorisation de l'efficacité. Vous y trouverez de nombreux articles décrivant comment les écoles et les divisions s'efforcent de renforcer leurs capacités et d'améliorer leur efficacité. Si nous insistons tellement sur ces deux aspects de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage, c'est qu'ils peuvent avoir des répercussions profondes et durables sur les élèves au moment de leur passage à la vie adulte dans la collectivité mondiale.

Définies de la façon la plus simple possible, les capacités sont les habiletés, les compétences et les aptitudes permettant à une personne d'accomplir une certaine tâche. Quant à l'efficacité, disons simplement qu'il s'agit d'être en mesure d'obtenir un résultat escompté et du sentiment de réussite qui s'ensuit. Toutefois, dans un contexte d'enseignement et d'apprentissage, ces concepts se complexifient et acquièrent de multiples dimensions.

Comme vous pourrez le constater à la lecture des articles, capacités et efficacité revêtent de nombreuses formes et ont de nombreuses implications dans le domaine de l'éducation. Les éducateurs s'efforcent sans cesse d'améliorer leurs capacités et leur efficacité dans la multitude de situations auxquelles ils font face dans leur travail. Mais cela ne s'arrête pas là; les particuliers, les écoles et les divisions s'efforcent aussi de renforcer les capacités des élèves et de leur instiller un sentiment d'efficacité personnelle.

Ces efforts infatigables axés sur la croissance et l'amélioration visent à aider nos enfants à devenir des citoyens responsables et engagés ayant les compétences, les connaissances et les attitudes qui leur permettront de vivre ensemble dans une société démocratique productive et altruiste. Dans son ouvrage intitulé *Happiness and Education*, Nel Noddings affirme que « pour vivre dans une démocratie libérale, il est primordial d'être en mesure de faire des choix éclairés. L'acquisition d'une telle capacité commence dès l'enfance et se poursuit durant la vie adulte ».

Le contenu de ce journal va bien au-delà de l'enseignement de la littératie et de la numératie et illustre comment notre système d'éducation vise à améliorer nos compétences et nos habiletés pour parvenir au résultat escompté, soit former des citoyens mieux préparés à améliorer non seulement leur propre vie, mais aussi celle des autres.

Bonne lecture!

As President of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS), I am proud to present our Fall 2013 *MASS Journal* on the theme of building capacity and valuing efficacy. Inside you will find numerous articles describing how schools and divisions are working to strengthen capacity and efficacy. We have placed such a significant emphasis on these two aspects of education because these features of teaching and learning can have powerful and lasting effects on students as they become adults in our global community.

Capacity, in its simplest definition, is a person's ability, skill or aptitude to carry out a particular task. The definition of efficacy is simply being and feeling successful in producing an intended result. However, these concepts become very complex and multi-dimensional in the context of teaching and learning.

As you will come to appreciate in reading the articles, capacity and efficacy take on many forms and have numerous implications for education. Educators are constantly striving to improve their capacity and efficacy in the multitude of situations they face in their work. But it does not end there~~-in~~dividuals, schools and divisions are also working to build capacity and a sense of self-efficacy in each and every student.

These tireless efforts for growth and improvement help ensure that our children mature into responsible, contributing citizens, with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that enhance their ability to live together in a productive and caring democracy. Nel Noddings, in *Happiness and Education*, states that "For life in a liberal democracy, the capacity to make well-informed choices is paramount. Developing this capacity must start in childhood and grow into adulthood."

This journal speaks to much more than teaching of literacy and numeracy, and illustrates how our education system works to improve our skills and ability to bring about the intended result of better prepared citizens who can live a life that enhances not only their own, but also the lives of others.

Enjoy our Journal!

TEACH don't BAN

Chocolate fundraisers support the spirit of school food and beverage policies. Here's why...

Teaching works, banning doesn't.

91% of adults agree that teaching about how treats fit into a healthy lifestyle is better than banning chocolate fundraising[1].

Common sense and behavioural science support that treats are part of a healthy active lifestyle.

92% of dieticians say that people are more likely to maintain a balanced lifestyle when they don't deprive themselves of treats[2].

In the world of treats, chocolate is one of the healthier options.

Eaten in moderation, chocolate has many benefits. It's rich in antioxidants, flavenoids, vitamins and minerals, and contains valuable calcium and iron.

Chocolate could lower your risk for heart disease!

British Medical Journal Research: The study, involving more than 114,000 people, showed that higher consumption levels of all types of chocolate, was significantly associated with a reduced risk of cardiometabolic disorders. This beneficial association was significant for cardiovascular disease **(37% reduction)**, diabetes **(31%)** and stroke **(29%)**[3]. Chocolate might be a viable instrument in the prevention of cardiometabolic disorders if consumed in moderation.

The launch of a chocolate fundraiser is an opportunity to teach kids about healthy lifestyles and World's Finest® Chocolate can help:

INTRODUCING THINK BIG EAT SMART

Teaching material to help educate children on the importance of portion control and physical activity. Available with each fundraising campaign.

A chocolate fundraiser supports active lifestyles, not unhealthy eating.

This annual or semi-annual event helps pay for school activities and equipment like playground equipment, sports equipment, bussing and school trips that support healthy, active lifestyles.

For more information call 1.800.461.1957

World's Finest Chocolate

1 September 2010 Ipsos MediaCT poll of 1000+ adults (including 500 parents of children aged 4-11).
2 Survey of Nutritional Professionals. An online survey of 4549 registered dietitians (RD) by the Hershey Centre for Health & Nutrition.
3 "British Medical Journal": chocolate consumption and cardiometabolic disorders, 7 studies, involving 114,009 people, studies up to Oct. 2010.

Nancy Allan
Minister Manitoba Education / ministre Éducation Manitoba

Au nom de la population du Manitoba, nous adressons toutes nos félicitations aux membres de la Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS) pour leur leadership continu et l'engagement dont ils font preuve pour une éducation de qualité et le bien-être des élèves à l'échelle de la province.

Notre système d'éducation évolue au rythme des besoins changeants des élèves, des enseignants et des employeurs. Travaillant ensemble, nous continuons à conjuguer nos efforts pour que nos écoles soient de plus en plus innovatrices, progressistes et adaptées aux besoins du public que nous avons le privilège de servir.

Nous continuons à œuvrer ensemble pour offrir à tous les élèves du Manitoba de meilleures possibilités éducatives avec de meilleurs programmes d'études, plus de formation d'enseignants, une meilleure éducation des Autochtones et de nouveaux laboratoires de sciences à la fine pointe de la technologie. Nous sommes en train de construire de nouvelles installations scolaires et de créer des milieux scolaires plus sûrs grâce à d'importantes initiatives à l'égard des écoles telles que les lois contre l'intimidation. Malgré un contexte économique difficile, nous avons augmenté le financement d'écoles publiques pendant 14 années consécutives, faisant passer l'investissement annuel total dans les écoles à plus de 1,2 milliard de dollars cette année.

De plus, cette année, nous investissons 7 millions de dollars dans le recrutement de nouveaux enseignants et plus de 15 millions de dollars dans la rénovation des salles de classe pour concrétiser notre engagement de réduire l'effectif des classes de la maternelle à la 3e année. Nous savons que les élèves travaillent mieux quand ils ont plus de temps seul à seul avec leurs enseignants. Notre travail d'équipe s'étend aussi au public dans le cadre de notre initiative de partenariat entre les écoles et les collectivités et des bulletins scolaires en langage simple et clair facile à comprendre pour les parents.

En tant qu'un secteur particulièrement important de la fonction publique, l'éducation exige des normes élevées d'excellence afin de satisfaire aux besoins des élèves, des éducateurs, des parents et des employeurs. Au ministère de l'Éducation du Manitoba, nous comptons sur la collaboration soutenue et fructueuse des membres de la MASS pour offrir à tous une éducation d'excellente qualité.

On behalf of the people of our province, I commend the members of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS) for your ongoing leadership and commitment to quality education and the well-being of students across the province.

Our education system is evolving with the changing needs of students, teachers and employers. Working together, we continue to make important progress in ensuring our schools are increasingly innovative, progressive and responsive to the needs of the public we are privileged to serve.

We continue to work together to improve educational opportunities for all Manitoba students through an enhanced curriculum, more teacher training, improved Aboriginal education, and new state-of-the-art science labs. We are building new educational infrastructure and ensuring safer school environments through significant school initiatives, such as anti-bullying legislation. Despite challenging economic times, we have increased funding to public schools for 14 consecutive years, bringing our total annual investment in schools to over $1.2 billion this year.

In addition, this year we are investing $7 million to hire new teachers and over $15 million to renovate classrooms to meet our commitment to reduce class sizes in Kindergarten to Grade 3. We know that students do better when they have more one-on-one time with their teachers. Our team approach also extends to the public through our community schools partnership initiative and parent-friendly, plain language report cards.

As a particularly vital area of public service, education requires high standards of excellence to meet the needs of students, educators, parents and employers. At Manitoba Education, we look forward to a continued, successful collaboration with MASS members to ensure educational excellence for all.

Manitoba

MASS Executive 2013-2014

TABLE OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT
Reg Klassen
Superintendent, Rolling River School Division

PAST PRESIDENT
Robert Chartrand
Superintendent of Schools, South, Winnipeg School Division

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
Barb Isaak
Assistant Superintendent, River East Transcona School Division

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT
Mike Borgfjord
Superintendent, Seine River School Division

TREASURER
Brett Lough
Metro Assistant Superintendent, St. James-Assiniboia School Division

DIRECTORS:

Celia Caetano-Gomes
Metro Superintendent, Winnipeg School Division

Brian O'Leary
Metro Superintendent, Seven Oaks School Division

Duane Brothers
Metro Superintendent, Louis Riel School Division

Cathy Fidierchuk
North Superintendent, Frontier School Division

Cyndy Kutzner
South Central Superintendent, Western School Division

Janet Martell
Southeast Interlake Superintendent, Lakeshore School Division

Tim DeRuyck
Southwest Superintendent, Turtle Mountain School Division

Jane Friesen
At Large Director, Clinical & Extended Support Services, Pembina Trails School Division

Donna Davidson
At Large Assistant Superintendent, Mountain View School Division

Ken Klassen
Executive Director

Amber Samson
Administrative Assistant

Excitement, Energy and Enthusiasm: Lakeshore School Division and the Process of Change

"Hey, look at this! Here's a school that teaches an integrated curriculum."
"This school is totally project-based. Can we do that?"
"For sure, how about our library, it's outdated, wouldn't that make a great learning space?"

By Janet Martell and Leanne Peters

The room was alive with energetic conversation as 55 teachers, representing more than half the teaching staff in the division, worked in collaborative groups to read, research and talk about promising practices to improve learning and teaching. Teachers from all 10 schools in Lakeshore volunteered to work with their colleagues to imagine a different kind of classroom, with different ways to learn and to teach. Teachers generated idea after idea and no idea was rejected. The excitement was palpable as teachers realized that they were in the driver's seat; they had a say over how they could make their dream classrooms a reality.

School teams share ideas about how to transform learning at Lakeshore School Division.

The Challenge

In late December 2012, I laid down a challenge to all of our teachers, "By September 2014 we have to be doing something radically different in each and every one of our classrooms. We are no longer serving the needs of our current student population."

With the challenge before them, the teachers' excitement and enthusiasm grew.

Lakeshore School Division has been on this path to change its culture for the past five years. It began with a fervent effort to understand the strengths and challenges of the school division through the examination of qualitative and quantitative data. Attendance, student behaviour, credit acquisition, graduation rates, literacy levels and student engagement were part of the exploration, along with stories that emerged from focus group conversations with students, parents and teachers. Between 2010 and 2013, Manitoba Education provided some additional supports through the Student Success Initiative (SSI) for credit recovery, transition programs and other supports for at risk students.

A Focus on What is Important

From the data arose a collaboratively developed divisional Learning Vision, including early years, middle years and high school. No longer were teachers expected to implement every educational initiative, fad, or idea. Rather, the focus

was on reading comprehension, assessment and grading, instructional planning, leadership development and supports for Aboriginal learners. Relieved teachers and principals were quick to use the language of the Learning Vision and to build coherence between the divisional direction and their school improvement plans.

Along with the Learning Vision came a deliberate plan to put professional development dollars as close to the classroom as possible. For example, itinerant literacy consultants were hired to provide specific support to teachers based on their needs. With additional access to professional development dollars, schools and teachers had the autonomy to plan professional development sessions that targeted their needs with the only caveat being that all professional development needed a focus on the Learning Vision.

As in many school divisions, certain schools had greater needs than others. A shift from a funding formula to an equity resource model meant that resources were placed in the schools with the greatest needs. This shift required a change in mindset from the needs of the school to the needs of the students.

Schools with greater needs benefitted by using additional staffing to hire success coaches. Although there was an initial fear that some schools would lose out, what emerged was a feeling of "we are all in this together." The schools that really needed the supports got them and no one lost anything in the transition. As one principal remarked, "Equity-resourcing was the difference from thinking about the school's students to thinking about the division's students."

Over these past five years there has been a deliberate move to getting "the right people on the bus…in the right seats" (Collins, 2001, 41). Hiring has been thoughtful and measured, ensuring the right leader is placed in the right school, resulting in a teaching population where 65 per cent of teachers have ten or less years of experience. The energy, enthusiasm and passion of these teachers complements the experience and dedication of teachers with more experience.

According to Pasi Sahlberg (2011), "A typical feature of education in Finland is the encouragement of teachers and students to try new ideas and methods, to learn from innovations, and to cultivate creativity in schools" (127). Surprisingly, encouragement, innovation and creativity is quickly becoming the norm for teachers in Lakeshore School Division.

One of the key components of the Learning Vision has been reading comprehension. In order to make this a reality, all teachers received professional development and support from literacy consultants in teaching reading comprehension strategies to students. The division developed a Standard Reading Assessment (SRA) that is administered to students twice per year to track levels of comprehension and to determine areas for direct teaching. Although this presented considerable challenges, it became instrumental in shifting teachers' thinking from the idea that teaching reading is the job of the language arts teacher to the idea that all teachers who put text in front of students are teachers of reading.

Equity resourcing, a focus on student needs, an insistence that all teachers are reading teachers, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) and deliberate hiring practices have helped to spawn the energy, enthusiasm and excitement held by Lakeshore School Division teachers. Teachers have experienced success and have had opportunities to shape their professional development learning and to hone the craft of teaching in their classrooms.

Reimagine Lakeshore 2014 – A Continuing Shift in Culture

"If you are interested in reimagining education in Lakeshore, you are invited to a meeting on December 17, 2012 after school." With that invitation, 55 per cent of teachers and principals representing all schools in the division arrived at a meeting the week before winter break. The teachers' sense of curiosity was piqued at what would transpire next. Dr. Sheila Giesbrecht, Manitoba Education, laid out a design-based, school improvement process that would culminate in September 2014. Teachers listened with extreme interest as the design process unfolded.

Understand – Phase 1 (December 2012 – January 2013)

During the first phase of this five-step process, teachers worked to better understand their context and students. Teachers came to an understanding of Lakeshore School Division as a system and their schools as organizations. Further divisional data was gathered around graduation rates, credit acquisition, attendance and student behaviour.

Teachers responded to surveys about their abilities to integrate technology into their lessons as well as provided anecdotal data about the types of teaching strategies they employ regularly in their classrooms. Finally, the community responded to a student success survey and helped to further define the "successful student."

Parents, members of the school board and community attended a community meeting where they talked about their hopes and dreams for their childrens' education. The students also had a voice in the process. A representative group of students from Grades 5 to 9 were selected from each school and descended on the Board Room to participate in a PATH process (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope). The students willingly and cheerfully ate pizza and provided the facilitators with all kinds of information about their current school experiences and what they wanted in their ideal school. This data collection and analysis informed the next phases of the Design Process.

Problemate – Phase 2 (February – March 2013)

During the second phase teachers worked to describe the specific challenges faced within their school. Each school team reviewed their own data to explore and analyse. Teams of teachers and principals faced the arduous task of examining their problems and sharing their shortcomings with other school teams.

Teams worked at establishing a "design challenge statement" that would focus the work in their school. For example, the "design challenge" for one school was "to engage all students as we close the gap and raise the bar." In schools with high attendance and high graduation rates, the data did not readily expose a particular challenge, which required them to dig deeper into ways to improve student learning, particularly in relation to the engagement of all students.

During this phase, Lakeshore became part of the Brandon University VOICES Project, overseen by Dr. Karen Rempel. Dr. Rempel, through a SSHERC-CURA grant,

collaborated with Lakeshore School Division through research and financial support.

Ideate – Phase 3 (April – June 2013)

During the third phase teachers worked to develop new ways of approaching the design challenges they developed in the second phase. From the initial meeting in December, action-oriented teachers wanted to leap directly to generating ideas but were encouraged to wait. In this phase, teachers were required to learn and to generate as many ideas as possible to support the schools in overcoming their design challenges.

The ideate phase involved moving into 14 different learning cohorts based around the perceived design challenges in the schools. Cohorts included: technology integration, instructional strategies, holistic view of students, relationships, parents and other partnerships, and facilities. These cohort groups met either online or in person after school to conduct research. Some teachers participated in learning tours and brought back additional learning and information to broaden the knowledge base.

Teachers came prepared to report on their findings to the larger group. Teachers considered the words of Simon Breakspear, who said schools should be "deeply personalized" and learning should be "relevant" and "authentically meaningful to young people." They engaged in a level of research and conversation that was unseen prior to the start of this process. One teacher remarked, "I haven't read so much educational research since I graduated from university years ago."

The cultural shift was deepening.

Experiment – Phase 4 (September 2013 – June 2014)

The fourth phase of the process focuses on experimenting and testing ideas developed in the third phase. The experiment phase began in September 2013 with each school focused on conquering their design challenges.

Schools and teachers have engaged at varying levels in the experiment phase. Some schools, led by the school principals, have planned school-wide approaches to improving teaching practices in literacy and numeracy while other schools have focused on teacher-specific plans that involve small teams of teachers embracing new learning facilities, different instructional practices and integration of technology to improve student learning and engagement.

During the experiment phase, teachers, principals and students will become action researchers. They will collect qualitative and quantitative data to determine whether or not their "experiments" have worked or require adjustments.

Model – Phase 5 (September 2014 and Beyond)

Based on the year of experimentation, there will be a number of prototypes available for adaptation within the division. Teachers will share the results of their prototypes with other teachers and allow teachers to ask questions about the results of the experiment. Data will inform the model(s) that will continue in each school. In September 2014, learning and teaching will look different in each school.

New Culture Embedded

There is a renewed energy in all of the schools in Lakeshore School Division.

Since December 2012, 74 per cent of teaching staff have participated in some part of the process. The levels of conversation about learning and teaching have increased significantly in each school. Teachers can be overheard in hallways and in classrooms quoting research, talking and tweeting about ways to incorporate research about promising practices in their classrooms.

Teachers from across the division, which is geographically the size of Prince Edward Island, have found ways to communicate with each other about learning and teaching strategies and ideas that they have discovered and tried.

Teachers, with the support of principals, have developed plans, classroom-based or school-wide, that will meet the needs of all the learners in the school and engage them in learning. The two larger high schools have repurposed their dated and antiquated libraries and replaced them with "learning commons" or "learning centres," with comfortable, flexible, technology-ready spaces for 21st century students. The graduation rate has risen from 50 per cent in 2009 to 92 per cent in 2013. Teachers are ready to experiment with new types of learning in new kinds of spaces with new technologies. There is currently a culture "where educators believe in their own creative capacities and have licence to fail" (Breakspear).

Conclusion

It is still too early to examine fully the cultural shift that has taken place in Lakeshore School Division. In the words of Fullan (2006), "Collaborative cultures, ones that focus on the capacity for building continuous improvement, are meant to be a new way of working and learning"(6). Changing divisional culture and improving schools is challenging and meaningful work.

Needless to say, teachers have risen to the challenge, they have stepped up, they have set their sights high, they have taken risks and the possibilities are endless. We are hopeful about the work we are engaged with and look forward to the impact of this process on student learning outcomes. ■

Janet Martell is Superintendent of the Lakeshore School Division. Leanne Peters is Assistant Superintendent of the Lakeshore School Division.

References

- Breakspear, S. (2011). *Simon Breakspear.* http://www.simonbreakspear.com/ 13 August, 2013.
- Collins, J. (2001). *Good to great.* Toronto: Harper Collins.
- Fullan, M. (2006). *Change theory: A force for school improvement.* Australia: Centre for Strategic Education.
- Giesbrecht, S. (2012). *Using design principles in school reform.* Paper presentation to International Design Conference (California).
- *Reimagine lakeshore.* (2013). www.reimaginelakeshore.com. 13 August, 2013.
- Sahlberg, P. (2011). *Finnish lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* Teachers College Press: New York.

Frontier School Division – Building Our Own

By Ray Derksen

As the Chief Superintendent of Frontier School Division, I take great pride in and take every opportunity I can to inform as many people about the work our division is doing across Manitoba in the area of community development. In broad terms, I will describe some of the work our division does to develop the leadership capacity of residents in the communities Frontier School Division Serves. To understand our work, it is important to gain some insight into the nature of the Frontier School Division.

A common "Frontier" term used to describe our division is "unique," defined as "being one of, being distinctive and being without a like." This certainly fits Frontier.

While we share similarities with other school divisions, our unique characteristics are clearly apparent. We are geographically the largest school division in North America and mandated to provide educational services to all children wherever they live, no matter how remote.

We encompass 30 communities spread out across Manitoba. Each of the communities we serve has unique characteristics. While most of our communities are populated with peoples of Aboriginal ancestry, there are vast differences between the aspirations, cultural identities and often the languages of each of our communities. For example, our division encompasses the Cree, Dene, Oji-Cree, Saulteaux/Ojibway, Dakota and Métis people.

I can say with some certainty that we are the only division in Manitoba that operates a formal bus route with a snowmobile and sleigh (Stevenson Island). In Disbrowe, Ministic and Stevenson, community residents are hired as boat-bus drivers to transport our students. Frontier is often perceived as a northern division and we do gain a great deal of our identity from the North. What surprises those unfamiliar with our geography is that we have schools as far south-east as Falcon Beach in the Whiteshell and the Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation in south-west Manitoba.

Our 42 schools range in size from five students in Disbrowe (Red Sucker Lake) to 1,100 students in Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre (Norway House). We provide housing in many communities, operating over 300 housing units, as well as water and sewage treatment plants.

Frontier provides educational services to 14 First Nations, with each partnership governed by an Education Agreement reflecting the First Nation's aspirations. Our services require the participation of both the federal and provincial governments because many of our communities include children who fall within both funding jurisdictions. Approximately 54 per cent of the division's revenue comes from the federal government, while school taxes provide around 2.5 per cent. We employ approximately 600 education staff (teachers, principals, vice-principals and consultants) and 900 support staff.

Historically, our division has faced the challenge of attracting the necessary staff to maintain educational services and in some instances, our teacher turnover rate was as high as 25 per cent. For many years we received minimal interest in advertised positions.

Another challenge facing Frontier is building a teaching population that is reflective of the people we serve. Thirty years ago, only a few teachers of Aboriginal

ancestry worked in our division. The people we served demanded more teachers that were reflective of their communities. Responding to this imperative, in cooperation with Brandon University, we pioneered the Program for the Education of Native Teachers (PENT) program.

PENT students worked in divisional schools from September to April, then attended Brandon University from May to July ~~re~~peated in a cycle lasting approximately 6 to 7 years. More than 375 local community members from across Manitoba have graduated as teachers. The PENT program, which is ongoing, has made our teaching population much more reflective of the makeup of the people we serve, significantly reduced teacher turnover and has built leadership capacity within our communities

Our school division also faced the challenge of finding qualified support staff from within our communities for a whole range of positions. It became apparent that if we wanted staff with particular qualifications we would have to take on the responsibility of providing the training.

As the need for counselors grew within our schools we established a counselor training program resulting in the school division now having fully credentialed counselors. We followed a similar model for librarians, bus drivers, and to some extent, educational assistants.

In all of our training programs, our focus has been on identifying community members who have the desire and raw potential to be successful. We support and enhance applicants' initial educational levels and concentrate more on their desire, character and potential to do the job. Critical to the success of our job training model is that once an individual is hired, the division continues to give as much support as possible to ensure their success. Our expectation is that, in a reasonable period of time, candidates will gain the full academic qualifications for the job. We call our approach to hiring "building our own."

Frontier is the main employer in many of our communities. Our division can take a great deal of the credit for training hundreds of people to become certified teachers, counselors, librarians and administrators. We have "shared our wealth," contributing significantly to many other organizations and school divisions that have hired people in whom we have invested. For the most part, we do not begrudge providing this service and sharing with the rest of the province!

Pictured here are the Frontier School Board of Trustees who represent students across the province.

In addition to adding enormously to the training levels of people within our communities, we have had a significant influence on developing the leadership capacity in thousands of individuals throughout the division. To a large extent, this has been the result of our three-tiered model of governance.

Every four years, while divisions hold school board elections for, on average, 10 trustees, Frontier conducts an official election for approximately 229 school committee positions throughout all of our communities.

Respect for the aspirations of each community lies at the heart of our school division. The question for Frontier is: Within our vast geography, how do we ensure the unique voice of each community is heard and the wishes of the people are respected?

The answer lies in the three-tiered governance model established in *The Public School Act* (PSA). Being founded in legislation gives the school committee real authority, real responsibility and a strong voice of local control from the community. It also lies in our continual emphasis on building the leadership capacity of the hundreds of community members elected to provide community leadership for the local education system.

Tier One: The Local School Committee

At the heart of our model of governance is a group of five to seven elected members in each of our communities, called the Local School Committee. Approximately 229 individuals serve on 40 school committees across the division. Their role is established in the PSA, which gives the committee authority and responsibility for their mandate. Each committee operates under an approved constitution, terms of reference and code of conduct.

The elected members of the school committee provide direction and advice to the principal in six main areas. School committees are involved in all staff hiring and evaluation, recommending capital projects and facility improvements, and budgets. Committees also help develop policies, procedures, programs, and activities at the local and divisional levels.

As a school division, we have complete commitment to the local committees and expend significant time and resources strengthening this system. School committees are trained on interviewing, school assessment instruments, record keeping, basic accounting and the legislation that governs the school system. Committees are required to conduct business with formal meeting procedures. We employ four governance support officers (GSOs) to provide necessary training to support committee members in fulfilling their responsibilities effectively. GSOs are an important resource to help school committees resolve internal issues and to support their crucial relationship with school administration.

Through committee participation, thousands have discovered their leadership potential while influencing the education of children and adults within their communities.

Tier Two: The Area Advisory Committee

The Frontier School Division is divided into five regions based largely on

geography. Once a school committee is elected for each school within a region, a member is elected to represent the community on their Area Advisory Committee (AAC). The Division has five AACs made up of 50 members.

Area Advisory Committees meet three or four times yearly, helping to provide communication with the Frontier School Board of Trustees. Similar to school committees, AACs operate under a legislative framework, an approved constitution, terms of reference and code of conduct. AACs play a major role in the development of policies, procedures and programs, and are responsible for regular reports about their local school and community. They are forums for important regional issues to be identified.

Tier 3: The Central School Board of Trustees

Once school committees have elected representatives for the Area Advisory Committees, each AAC elects two members to sit on the Frontier School Board. The Board is comprised of 10 members and operates under the same legislation as all other provincial school boards.

Expectations for the individuals who sit on the Frontier School Board in terms of their personal commitment are very high. In addition to two days of board meetings per month and committee work, trustees actively participate on the AAC and their local school committee. Given the geographic location of many of our trustees, attending a one day meeting often involves two or more days of travel. Participation on the Frontier School Board has been a life-changing experience for many of the trustees who have served our division.

Each February, the Frontier School Division Board hosts a School Committee Conference. Local school committees participate in a range of sessions and professional development activities to support them in their governance responsibilities at the local level. The conference also showcases programs taking place across our division. Here, our hundreds of committee volunteers can meet and be inspired by colleagues doing the same kinds of work throughout the province.

In the many conversations I have had explaining the importance of our governance system, a common comment is, "How do you accomplish anything?" Despite the complexities of carrying out our mandate, our experience has not been of paralysis but one of innovation, community commitment and loyalty to the division.

As a division, we believe the individuals who have the biggest stake in the local schools and communities are the people who reside there. The legislated requirement that the system be responsive to local input, has enabled us to be highly active in community development because that is what the local communities have demanded.

Local communities have wanted training programs for local people. They were not content to see outsiders being brought in to take away jobs when jobs were scarce. The division responded to the demands of the communities by shaping programs reflective of the aspirations of each community. Many of the division's flagship programs, such as our student fiddling program, started because one community wanted something done and their requests were respected.

When ideas come forth, our response as administrators is, "Let's do it and see what happens." Is everything successful? Of course not but we have been successful enough to receive recognition from the United Nations for our gardening program, to have had our student fiddlers play for Her Majesty the Queen of England, to have trained hundreds of teachers of Aboriginal ancestry, to have given thousands of our community members opportunities to realize their leadership capacities, to have enabled communities to develop local community histories used in the school curriculums and most importantly, through our collective engagement with the communities, to have generated hope where hope had been in short supply.

As I lay awake at night, I weigh the challenges our system presents and agonize over mistakes made. I ask myself, is it worth it? Does the system deliver what we promise?

I then have to start putting our many successes on the other side of the scale: I have to put the elders there, who never thought they could have a meaningful role in their school; I have to put the individual there, who left school in tenth grade and is now a qualified teacher; I have to put the single parents there, who became professionally trained counselors.

I have only to remember the look in the eyes of the hundreds of local governance volunteers who have enormous pride in the contributions they are making to their community, and then I can feel at peace with the work we do. Once I weigh all these things, I can sleep ~~at~~ least for a few more hours… until my phone rings again! ■

Ray Derksen is Chief Superintendent of the Frontier School Division.

CATEP graduates.

This teepee, located in Garden City, illustrates the importance of Aboriginal culture on school grounds.

A graduation pow wow celebrates students' success.

Building Efficacy for Aboriginal Teacher Candidates Through the CATEP Program

By Brian O'Leary and Rebecca Chartrand

Sixty or so Seven Oaks School Division administrators stand on a patchwork of blankets assembled loosely in the shape of the map of Canada.

The narrator speaks.

"But the Europeans had altogether different views of land and of treaties. For them, land was a commodity that could be bought and sold and treaties were a means of getting you, the Indigenous peoples, to 'surrender' or 'extinguish' your title to the land.

Over time, your relationship with the settlers deteriorated. With the end of the War of 1812, the newcomers in the East no longer needed you as military allies. In the West, as the fur trade dried up and colonists turned more and more to agriculture, they no longer needed you as trading partners either.

Soon the Europeans began to outnumber you. One reason was diseases the Europeans brought with them, for which you had no immunity. Some experts believe fully half the Indigenous people alive at the time died from these diseases. Many communities were decimated and lost up to 90 per cent of their members."

With that comment a number of participants are asked to sit down. "You are now dead. Step off the blanket."

As the narrator continues to recount the history of First Nations people—the hunting of the Beothuk, the creation of borders, the clashes with settlers, relocation to isolated barren lands, malnutrition, assimilationist policies, the *Indian Act*, reserves, residential schools and a litany of broken promises—more and more participants leave the blankets and the First Nations land the blankets represent is reduced to almost nothing.

This simulation exercise is remarkable in that it is a powerful way to experience the tragic history of First Nations people in Canada. It is also remarkable because the facilitators of this simulation are first and second year Aboriginal teachers in the Seven Oaks School Division. All are graduates of the Community Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (CATEP). They are skilled and passionate, and it is likely that none of them would be teachers without the CATEP program.

Seven Oaks School Division serves a diverse community. Thirty per cent of our students were born outside Canada and 20 per cent are of First Nations descent. There was a time when our teaching staff did not reflect this diverse community and when we tried to hire teachers to better reflect our community, we found a shortage of candidates. To address this, we decided to "grow our own."

We approached Winnipeg School Division, Manitoba Education and the University of Winnipeg to partner with us and a decade ago, the CATEP was born. We followed a model developed by Brandon University, which educated teacher candidates in remote areas. Aboriginal candidates were recruited from the ranks of educational assistants in Winnipeg and hired into educational assistant positions in Seven Oaks. Teacher candidates completed course work towards education degrees on evenings and weekends, and on a full-time basis in May, June and July.

Candidates have been able to complete a five year integrated Bachelor of Education in six or seven years. Seven Oaks School Division has now hired 13 grads and employs another 25 candidates in educational assistant roles. This year there will be another five to seven graduates.

The CATEP program's success has allowed it to grow beyond the original two school divisions to River East Transcona School Division, Lord Selkirk School Division, Sagkeeng First Nation and Southeast Collegiate.

Seven Oaks continues to nuture this initiative by giving the CATEP students space to grow in every way. It is not just a program, our CATEP students are heard, valued and respected. They are developing as teachers through the academic portion of the program and as teacher leaders in the area of Aboriginal education because

we are nurturing that. We are not only supporting them but we are ready and willing to receive and support their contributions as leaders.

For example, over the past two years we offered professional development to our CATEP students so they can grow as teacher leaders in the area of Aboriginal education. These professional development sessions allow them to network, collaborate, contribute and engage in reflective practice as they discuss their experiences, challenges, insights and aspirations.

Within these sessions we discuss the challenges of wearing a number of hats (educational assistant, teacher-in-training, student, community member, etc.). This helps them understand what they face and leads to suggestions for improvements in the program, in what they learn and want to learn about in their teacher-training, and how they might contribute and give back.

These discussions are not limited to an education context; we also explore their challenges within Aboriginal-settler relations or challenges that come with affirmative action types of programs. From one perspective, we realize that some challenges come from unresolved historical issues, which continue to play out in our schools. They see that they play a role in bridging the gap between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community. This, in turn, helps them consider where they might want to position themselves as teacher leaders in their school and our division.

These sessions are rich with discussion, which leads to new initiatives. They begin to see the possibilities they each bring with their presence in a school. They start seeing themselves as part of the present landscape of Aboriginal education. They not only connect with community resources, they are our community resources.

For example, some are starting Aboriginal Education Committees in their schools. A number of them are helping organize the MTS SAGE CAEM (Special Area Groups of Educators Council for Aboriginal Education in Manitoba Conference). At SAGE, CATEP students are accepting registrations, stepping into executive positions and leading workshop sessions. In fact, some of our CATEP students will be offering a train-the-trainer session for the Simulation Blanket Activity. This activity has been requested at a number of our schools and now other school divisions have been requesting us to share this activity with them. To support this, we are offering the train-the-trainer session at our CAEM conference.

CATEP has changed many things in our schools. Aboriginal students now see themselves represented in the school's teaching staff and can know in their heart that teaching and other professional occupations are realistic goals. We have a cadre of Aboriginal teachers to support one another and to support non-Aboriginal teachers in representing Aboriginal perspectives in their classrooms. Aboriginal parents know that our schools understand and support them.

While CATEP is a substantial response to the needs of our First Nations students it is not our only response. We have an Elder-in-Residence, after school language and cultural programs, parent engagement programs and increased Aboriginal content in curriculums. We have family feasts and what has become a huge graduation Pow Wow that celebrates our success at the end of each school year.

And each year we have more and more success to celebrate. Our graduation rate has increased from a bare 70 per cent a decade ago to about 90 per cent today. Much of that increase is due to the improved success of our Aboriginal learners.

The "blanket exercise" concluded with the Prime Minister's apology to First Nations for residential schools and these words:

"In order for these good words and positive developments to be meaningful first steps towards genuine reconciliation and justice—and not simply more broken promises—they must be followed by tangible action from the Government of Canada and Canadians."

We believe our success in Seven Oaks is the result of such tangible action and of the incredible resilience and capacity of our Aboriginal people. ■

Brian O'Leary is Superintendent of the Seven Oaks School Division. Rebecca Chartrand is Aboriginal Education Teacher Team Leader for Seven Oaks.

Who is in Charge

Building Shared Capacity and Self-efficacy in Students and Teacher Leaders

The team of students and teachers who put together Project Hanover: Students With a Purpose.

Attendees at the event learned how they can make a difference locally and around the world.

By Rick Ardies

What would you get if you attempted to combine the leadership efforts of a group of high school students with that of a group of teacher-leaders, in an attempt to plan a major one-day event involving almost 1,000 participants? How broadly can leadership be shared and still result in successful realization of important goals? Over the past two years, Hanover School Division (HSD) leaders attempted to find some answers to these questions.

On April 5, 2013, over 700 Hanover School Division Grades 5 to 12 students attended Project Hanover: Students With a Purpose. This full-day event, modeled on We Day, was designed to celebrate social justice initiatives already being engaged in by Hanover students and to inspire further involvement in our communities, our region and our world.

Significantly, this division-wide event was inspired by student leaders from our four Hanover high schools and was planned and presented by these students in partnership with divisional teacher-leaders. The shared leadership between student and teacher leaders, which raised awareness for hundreds of young people about important social justice issues, resulted in an exceptional event that promoted ongoing capacity-building for everyone involved. It also brought together two important groups of leaders from Hanover School Division.

Developing Future School Leaders

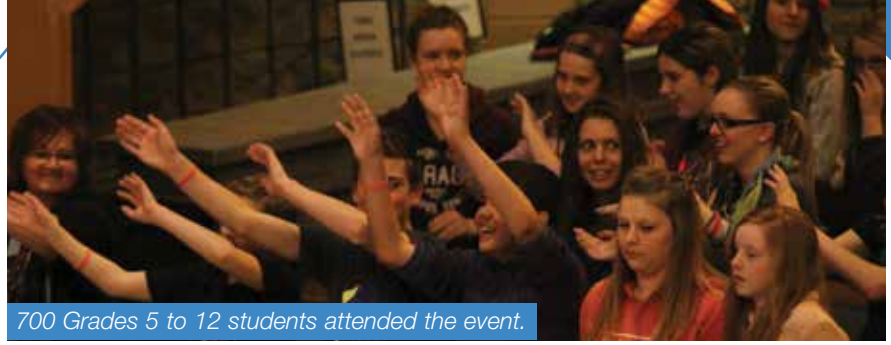
Over the past six years, the superintendents of HSD developed two new

programs designed to build broad-based leadership capacity and increase efficacy throughout the division. In 2009, the former superintendent of HSD was looking for a vehicle through which to develop future administrators for the division's schools. A program was required to purposefully build leadership capacity for promising school leaders and to equip these teachers with the vision and skills for leadership. The Hanover Educational Leadership Program (HELP) was born of this idea and three cohorts of teacher-leaders have now graduated from this program.

The HELP program is built on a framework that borrows from Sergiovanni's concepts of "lifeworld" and "systemsworld" of leadership. The two-year program includes six leadership institutes that focus on lifeworld concepts, such as moral leadership, shared leadership, instructional leadership, leadership "at the edge" and sustainable leadership. There are eight systemsworld management sessions that include topics such as school planning, personnel issues, evaluation and supervision of staff, educational finance, communications and contemporary issues in school leadership.

Participants shadow divisional principals for half-day sessions, attend provincial conferences, read extensively and, through this process, develop great connections with other school-leaders. All graduates receive 60 contact hours towards their Level 1 School Administrators Certificate or Level 2 Principal's certificate.

Many of the school administrators hired by HSD in the past several years are graduates of HELP. Additionally, many other graduates have assumed positions as curriculum support teachers, resource teachers, guidance counselors, or have taken on other leadership roles in their schools. Our graduates have consistently voiced deep appreciation for the understanding of leadership they have gained through the program. Several have voiced a desire for an action-research component to the program that would provide opportunities to put their new skills and knowledge into authentic practice. In 2013, this need would result in the HELP group's participation in the planning of Project Hanover: Students With a Purpose.



700 Grades 5 to 12 students attended the event.

Engaging Students, Building Future Leaders

In 2009, the HSD superintendents introduced the Superintendents' Student Advisory Council (SSAC), a group of students representing each high school in the division that would meet directly with the superintendents on a monthly basis. These students serve as a sounding board and student advisory, providing divisional leaders with student perspectives on issues, challenges and opportunities that arise each year.

The SSAC is composed of three students from each of the four HSD high schools, with representatives from Grades 10, 11 and 12. Each student serves a three-year term. The students meet six times per year for half-day forums, during which they tour divisional schools, share a meal together and then participate in discussions of relevant topics. Recent forums have addressed issues such as the purpose of education, bullying, social responsibility, technology in schools, Bill 18 and student engagement.

Additionally, these students attend provincial conferences, such as last year's MASS: Sustainability in Action conference and Manitoba Education's Safe Schools Anti-Bullying Forum. At the end of each school year, these students spend a half-day interacting with the HSD Board of Trustees, ensuring that school board members hear student perspectives directly from the students themselves

The SSAC.has effectively given voice to these student leaders in Hanover School Division. They have informed our discussion on many issues and even helped shape divisional procedures on others. Emerging policy on bring your own device (BYOD) technology usage was shaped by one of these discussions and our developing Respect For Diversity policy has been informed by another.

Many of the SSAC students have expressed their amazement at how seriously they have been taken. "You really

Modelled after We Day, Project Hanover featured local speakers, artists and community leaders.

listen to us," one student said. "You make me feel like what we think really matters." We received a picture of how empowered these student leaders feel at a recent HSD Trustees/Parent Council liaison forum. A discussion on the implementation of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in local schools was in the process of growing somewhat intense and it was a Grade 12 girl who joined into the conversation between parents and Trustees. "I think we need to think of the needs of those students who require support," she pleaded. "Let's just do whatever we can to help those who need it the most." Her voice of reason was a turning point in the evening's proceedings.

One ongoing theme that SSAC students have engaged with is social justice. They have become informed through attending provincial conferences and hearing speakers as diverse as Hannah Taylor, Romeo Dallaiere, Stephen Lewis, Thomas King, and many others. They have attended We Day events and been inspired by Craig and Marc Kielburger and the many stories heard there. They have also become involved in helping develop many social justice initiatives within their own schools. These students have been instrumental in developing programs that have provided food for local food banks, clothing for Manitoba's homeless and funding for digging wells in drought-ravaged central Africa. They have become convinced that they are able to make a difference in their

world and that they do not have to wait to do so. It has been inspiring to see them develop such a sense of self-efficacy as they develop these exciting initiatives.

A We Day of Their Own

After attending the 2011 We Day event at the MTS Centre in Winnipeg, the SSAC students were reflecting on the day and how much they had loved it. "Inspirational!" they said. "Awesome!" they agreed. "Why can't we do our own?" another asked. "We could show all the great things already happening in our schools and we could highlight speakers who are running local organizations." With that, the seeds for Project Hanover: Students With a Purpose were sown.

The idea of a divisionally-based large-scale celebration of social justice resonated deeply with students, teachers and administrators throughout HSD. Our goal was to let the project remain student-initiated and student-driven, yet to provide these students with the supports they required to successfully pull off such an ambitious event. It was decided that once the SSAC students had developed a preliminary vision for Project Hanover, that they would link with the teacher-leaders of HELP. This joint group then became the planning and organizing team for the event.

The Project Hanover Team divided themselves into several organizational teams, looking after areas such as program, publicity, hospitality, hosting and entertainment. The teams were composed of equal numbers of students and teachers, and each team designated a student and a teacher co-chairperson. Over the course of a year, these teams worked closely together, carried out complex agendas of responsibilities and completed all necessary arrangements to host the event on April 5, 2013.

Project Hanover: Students With a Purpose turned out to be a spectacular success. Local entertainers, politicians, activists and educators combined to present an exceptional program that inspired the 700 students who attended. Video montages throughout the day highlighted great initiatives HSD students were already involved in. The reality of the event proved to be even better than the vision that inspired it. However, it was in the process of visioning and planning that we experienced some of our greatest successes and challenges.

Each planning team brought students and teachers leaders together to work side by side on a real world initiative. SSAC students brought ideas and developed action plans. They brought passion and enthusiasm to a vision that they believed in. They helped sell this vision to the teachers working alongside them.

The HELP leaders were faced with their own complex leadership task. They needed to bring an experienced, skillful focus to the process and at the same time, leave room for the students to exercise their own leadership. This exercise of distributed leadership provided opportunity for both groups to develop capacity. Teachers saw the gains made by sharing leadership. They experienced what it felt like to "finesse" a gradual release of responsibility that both empowered students and ensured the successful completion of a challenging task.

Students were able to experience actual voice and responsibility. Their efforts brought the event to fruition. Together, they were able to produce an event that they could all be proud of.

Overcoming Obstacles

For both teachers and students, this was a process of overcoming obstacles. Several students were overwhelmed by the time and effort that is required to pull off an event of this magnitude. They found it difficult to combine these responsibilities with schoolwork, jobs and other commitments. Planning teams had to learn to cope with the reality that some members were available and able to contribute more than others and that it was sometimes necessary to compensate for the lesser contributions of some teammates.

A main challenge for teachers was to avoid dominating the students. It would have been easy to shut down the participation of many students simply by treating them as less than equals. By being invitational, teachers were able to empower these students to a wonderful extent. A great reminder of the need for this sensitivity occurred during one team planning meeting, as two teachers engaged in an intense debate over suitable entertainment. As the teachers got louder and louder, the students on the team gradually grew quieter and quieter, then started to edge their chairs further and further from the table. Only when the teachers realized the impact of their behavior were they able to invite the students back into the dialogue.

One moment during Project Hanover captures the manner in which the shared leadership model functioned. Towards the end of the event, proceedings began to get behind schedule. As organizers began to get concerned about looming departure times for school busses, the administrator event coordinator decided to remove some student video presentations from the program in order to get back on schedule.

Upon hearing that, the Grade 12 student serving as assistant coordinator immediately came up with an alternate plan. "Student videos are far too important to omit." she said. "We have to celebrate student achievement. I'll ask two speakers to condense their presentations and I'll have you back on schedule before we finish." The event coordinator took the student's advice, the right decision was made and Project Hanover finished on time. It was gratifying to see such a great example of student voice and empowerment, a demonstration of how broad-based leadership capacity had become.

Project Hanover proved to be an ideal authentic application of leadership skills for both of our target groups. By taking theory into practice, our students and teachers learned many practical lessons and both the SSAC and HELP programs benefitted greatly. Importantly, both teachers and students walked away with renewed belief in their own ability to realize worthy and challenging goals. We found that broad-based leadership capacity is worth developing. When staff and students are well equipped for the challenges of leadership, great things are bound to result. ■

Rick Ardies is an Assistant Superintendent in the Hanover School Division.

The Journey of Three Divisions: A Writing Adventure

By Celia Caetano-Gomes, Jason Drysdale and Tanis Pshebniski

All aboard! Winnipeg School Division, River East Transcona School Division and St. James-Assiniboia School Division are working together to explore what is possible for schools working with challenging community factors. All three school divisions have identified literacy as a common priority.

In 2010, school teams were invited to hear Regie Routman speak. She did not simply agree to present but she required each school division identify a team comprised of classroom teachers, a resource teacher, a reading recovery teacher and the school administrator. There needed to be a commitment to raising the expectations for student writing, which resulted in schools establishing Professional Learning Communities that met regularly to work through the Reading/Writing Connections videos and the accompanying Professional Notebook.

As schools worked through the activities and developed a deeper understanding of the writing process, there were new opportunities for students to engage in meaningful and authentic writing activities. Schools were challenged to articulate their belief statements around the development of writing skills. Belief statements were identified, reviewed regularly and rewritten as staff engaged in honest and critical conversations about the principles of learning.

With the commitment and excitement in the schools, these divisions set off on an adventure to discover what was possible. Together, they were involved in three week-long school residencies with Routman and two of her residents, over a three year period. The professional learning model was unique as it demonstrated the "Optimal Learning Model" (Routman, 2005), a supportive approach that involves the teacher, who first models for the students, facilitates group practice and then ensures students have an opportunity to practice the skills independently. Moreover, schools used regular walk-throughs to collect evidence that their practice matched the belief statements and the literacy priority to move student learning forward.

Nancy McLean, resident of the Regie Routman initiative, is modeling for teachers how to engage students in reflecting on their writing to hook the reader.

Impact on Student Learning

"We simply cannot advocate for needed change and make wise instructional decisions-long term, day by day, and moment to moment—without an unshakable, solid foundation of informed beliefs and practices about teaching learning, assessing and leading. We won't know the important questions to ask, the best practices to apply, the resources that will best support us." *~ Regie Routman (2012), Literacy and Learning Lessons From a Longtime Teacher (p. 14)*

In the Winnipeg School Division, three hub schools were identified to participate in the writing initiative: David Livingstone, Prairie Rose and River Elm Schools. Each hub school received a video kit, met regularly, set writing goals for students, collected student samples and monitored student growth. David Livingstone School, nursery to Grade 8, received the residency. The other two schools participated in the residency by sending teams of teachers to the week-long learning opportunity.

Teachers structured their lessons around the Optimal Learning Model to explore student voice and the power of the word. Students were guided to reflect on the purpose of their writing and they learned the value of sharing their message. This led to an understanding of the role of the audience or reader. As the students developed a deeper appreciation for the reader, their writing became richer and they began to write about real-world issues that impact their school, community and/or the greater world.

As we reviewed the student writing samples, we noticed there was more evidence of student voice, clearer messages, stronger content and an appreciation for the reader. There was a shift from safe short sentences, to a rich piece of writing that was engaging, purposeful and reflective of the student's individual personality.

The voices of the students became the most important criteria for the teachers and the students.

The work in the Regie Routman residency initiative has reinforced the importance of challenging our expectations for student achievement. Learning targets need to be well articulated, modeled and practiced. All students can reach these expectations with direct instruction and a gradual release of responsibility.

The Regie Routman residency initiative has also helped to inform the direction of the Winnipeg School Division's Literacy Plan, currently being developed, which includes clear writing expectations. The writing initiative complements and builds on our division's work in student engagement, inquiry and assessment for learning. The celebration of students as writers will contribute to the students' confidence and risk-taking as writers.

Professional Learning

"More than any other factor in schoolwide achievement, the way people in a school relate to each other determines the success of the students, teachers and the principal." *~ Regie Routman (2012), Literacy and Learning Lessons From a Longtime Teacher (p. 5)*

In St. James-Assiniboia School Division the interest in working with Regie Routman has been nothing short of contagious. It has been so exciting to see teachers deepening their understanding of what it means for students to be writers. Over the past three years, not only have the residencies at Heritage and Strathmillan Schools proven to be positive experiences, it has been equally as satisfying to see the number of schools who have pursued their own individual Regie Routman professional development by using the videos and books at their staff meetings or in individual school professional learning communities.

This experience has really been about building staff capacity by opening up the opportunity to visit one another's classrooms to dialogue about their instructional practices on writing. Administrators and teachers work together to examine their individual and collective beliefs and practices about student writing.

During the residency, the time spent with Routman was a critical part of the process as it gave teachers an opportunity to engage in candid conversations about what had transpired during the lessons. The feedback she gave teachers enabled them to reflect upon the practices they had observed and also on their own instruction. Teachers were clearly motivated by this process.

While the work with Routman and the residency has been an impetus for change, the most powerful part of this experience is what happens beyond the residency, books and videos. Teachers took the work of Routman and applied, refined and adapted how to teach students to write based on what they observed their students doing in the classroom. From a divisional perspective, it is rewarding to see teachers being introspective about their practices and making changes that help students think and develop confidence about their roles as writers. Administrators have found that their work as instructional leaders has also grown. School and classroom walkthroughs are deeper, more purposeful and pertain specifically to the achievement of curricular outcomes. Administrators are also directly involved in data collection, analysis of the evidence, growth of professional learning communities and the development of literacy plans. As a result, administrators have gained a greater understanding of their students as readers and writers.

Growing the Project

"…the drive towards excellence requires that we take measure of where we are and contrast that assessment with where we want to be. Recognizing the gap offers a choice point; remain static or grow." *~ Bruce Wellman and Laura Lipton (2204), Data-Driven Dialogue (p. xiv)*

River East Transcona School Division (RETSD) has made significant investments in time and effort in the work of Regie Routman. The journey began four years ago with a single session that blossomed into a division-wide "transformative" professional learning experience. We have been focused for the last year and a half on the work of Routman in all 27 of our early years schools.

Part of this learning has been a study of Routman's latest book, Literacy and Learning Lessons from a Lifelong Teacher (Routman, 2012). This, paired with a visit to John De Graff school to see the work "in action," has created a division-wide early years focus. As we continue, we hope to be able to further expand and embed this work.

Of special interest is the establishment of a literacy leadership committee, comprised of the assistant superintendents of early and middle years, along with the four curriculum consultants at early and middle years. The committee has had the opportunity to think about how to expand the work that was started in early years and extend it to middle years. The passion for division wide Kindergarten to Grade 8 programming focusing on Regie's work grew out of the experiences at early years as well as our committee's recent attendance at the Urgency and School Change Conference in Seattle with Routman and her team.

This dedicated block of time affirmed our commitment to further developing student writing through this powerful and "transformative" professional learning model. It is important to note that while Routman's model has its root in early years, the middle years' administrators in RETSD see it as being applicable to their grade levels too.

Looking Forward

Our experience has been the focus on transforming professional learning into student results. The work with Routman, as well as the residency experience, has focused on the use of data and the analysis of student work while engaging students in the process. This has been in keeping with the direction of the three school divisions in the area of assessment and evaluation. Teachers and administrators have a more critical eye about instructional practices and the expectations we have of all students.

One of the advantages of this

experience over the past three years has been the opportunity to connect and share in a professional learning experience across other divisions. This tri-divisional model has afforded each school division an opportunity that might not have occurred without the structured planning and implementation. In addition, this experience is being maximized by teachers and administrators participating in an intra-divisional professional learning community.

In the spring of 2013, teachers met with their divisional and metro school division colleagues to work on establishing writing benchmarks with the support and leadership of Allyson Matczuk, Reading Recovery Trainer/Early Literacy Consultant, Department of Education. The benchmarks will assist us with objective tools for assessing students and identifying next steps for learning.

Feedback from teachers indicated they appreciated the opportunity to reflect on the writing samples they had collected and identified strengths in both content and conventions at each of the grade levels across the different school divisions. The conversations that teachers were able to have were enriched by the fact that this included teachers from multiple divisions.

The tri-divisional residency and network model has been invaluable in enhancing classroom pedagogy across our three school divisions, raising expectations and establishing common writing benchmarks for all students. The schools involved in the project have demonstrated strong leadership and commitment to literacy and student learning. Their advocacy and sense of adventure are commendable. The project's success would not have been possible without the drive of the school administrators, teachers, division consultants and the early years consultant from the Department of Education who articulated a vision for becoming writing schools through the assistance of Regie Routman and her colleagues Sandy Figueroa and Nancy McLean.

We look forward to the next adventure across school divisions as we continue to challenge our beliefs and practices to improve student learning. ■

A special thank you to the schools in the tri-division writing initiative:

River East Transcona School Division
John De Graff School
Polson School
Prince Edward School
Salisbury Morse Place School

St. James-Assiniboia School Division
Heritage School
Strathmillan School

Winnipeg School Division
David Livingstone School
Prairie Rose School
River Elm School

Celia Caetano-Gomes is Superintendent of the Central District of the Winnipeg School Division. Jason Drysdale is an Assistant Superintendent in the River East Transcona School Division. Tanis Pshebniski is an Assistant Superintendent in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

References

- Routman, R. (2005), *Writing Essentials; Raising Expectations and Results While Simplifying Teaching,* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Routman, R. (2008), *Transforming our Teaching Through Reading/Writing Connections Professional Development,* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Routman, R. (2012), *Literacy and Learning Lessons From a Longtime Teacher,* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Wellman, B., Lipton, L. (2004), *Data Driven Dialogue; A Facilitator's Guide to Collaborative Inquiry,* Sherman, CT: Mira Via, LLC.
- Wellman, B., Lipton, L. (2003), *Mentoring Matters; A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships*, Sherman, CT: Mira Via, LLC.

Inquiry Into Social Studies Education: Growing Capacity and Self-Efficacy

By Gary Babiuk, Linda Connor and Linda Mlodzinski

In the winter of 2013, a group of Manitoba educators met to discuss the idea of research and professional development related to Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability. The common denominator for this group was an interest in transforming social studies pedagogy and their belief that: Students need to be engaged in education; educators need to prepare students to be active, responsible citizens who contribute to a sustainable world; inquiry learning, critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making that lead to planned action are key to a sustainable future; and the new Grade 12 Global Issues course is a model of curriculum and pedagogy that provides opportunities for students and teachers to develop self-efficacy and a capacity to take responsible action.

Fertile Ground: The Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum

Manitoba social studies curriculum renewal began in 1997, when work started on the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education (WNCP) Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 9. That document was released in 2002 and was followed in 2003 with the publishing of Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes. Both documents defined citizenship as the core concept, supported inquiry learning for social studies at all grades and were the basis for the provincial "foundation" documents that followed. The grade level foundation documents were created by teams of Manitoba teachers who engaged in collaborative research and discussion to design teaching, learning and assessment strategies for the new curriculum.

At the same time, Manitoba Education was developing an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) focus for all grades and subjects. These two foci came together as Deputy Minister Gerald Farthing, a passionate supporter of ESD, saw an opportunity to embed sustainability in the new Grade 12 course.

In 2010, Linda Connor, Renée Gillis and Linda Mlodzinski (Manitoba Education Social Studies consultants) gathered a group of exemplary educators to renew the World Issues course. The team also included Greg Pruden, Manitoba Education consultant for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives, and education professors Gary Babiuk (University of Manitoba) and Lloyd Kornelson (University of Winnipeg). The team met regularly over a two-year period, engaging in a collaborative process to determine the philosophical direction of the new course, as well as its approach to pedagogy and assessment. This process created an esprit de corps that valued the ideas of all members, created individual and group efficacy, and developed professional capacity.

The curriculum that resulted from this process was Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability and 25 teachers were selected to pilot the course during the 2011-12 school year. They attended professional development meetings throughout that year and the feedback they provided helped to fine-tune the course. Students also provided their perspectives. It was made available province-wide in the fall of 2012 and is now an accredited (but still optional) Grade 12 social studies course.

Global Issues is not a traditional course. It has neither learning outcomes nor a textbook, and is based on inquiry learning. The course is framed around 10 Enduring Understandings and corresponding Student Citizenship Actions (see Table 1, page 32), and suggests 10 study areas (see Chart 1, page 33). Comprehensive backgrounders are provided for each study area and are intended as starting points for student inquiry. The course is flexibly designed to allow teacher and student autonomy to explore issues that are of local interest and importance. Sustainability issues are embedded in the Enduring Understandings and other aspects of the course. The

course also provides opportunities to explore emerging issues.

The course competencies are based on UNESCO's four pillars of learning:

1. **Learning to know:** Acquire knowledge and understanding, and think critically about our complex and changing world.
2. **Learning to do:** Participate effectively in local, national, and global communities.
3. **Learning to be:** Build self-knowledge and be conscious of connections to nature and society.
4. **Learning to live together:** Live peacefully with others and to care for our common homeland.

The course supports student self-efficacy through a Take Action component, which comprises 20 per cent of course time and the final grade. In consultation with their teachers, students research issues of their choice and develop and implement action plans to address their issues. Students develop the skills of active responsible citizenship as they learn to question and think more critically, as they engage in discussions, and as they take action for the common good that is based on sound research. The process develops self-efficacy and builds capacity for students to take responsibility for their behavior, a form of social-justice oriented citizenship (Westheimer, 2008).

(See www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/global_issues/course_overview.pdf)

From Fertile Ground: Gathering the Seed

Gary Babiuk, assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, was one of the original members of the Global Issues curriculum development team. He believed the course was ground-breaking in its pedagogical approach to inquiry and its inclusion of sustainability, and knew that teacher success with this course would require professional support beyond that typically offered by the Department of Education. In the fall of 2012, Babiuk approached Heather Hunter, Director of the Manitoba Education Research Network (MERN), with an idea for a research project. She encouraged him to write a proposal and organized an informal group of potential research partners.

The proposal built on work that Babiuk completed with Thomas Falkenberg in 2010 and outlined in their research report, Sustainable Development and Living through Changing Teacher Education and Teaching in Manitoba. They recommended:

- "School-based educators move toward inquiry-based teaching and learning, based on an integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum;
- Engaging students in cross-grade projects in order to create a school-wide community of learning and student action; and
- Providing students opportunities to do relevant and authentic research and present their findings to authentic audiences from the communities, in and out of the school…" (p.223).

The goal of the proposed research project was to inquire into these recommendations, with Global Issues as the focal point. The research would include an action research project with two phases: baseline data-gathering, followed by teacher professional development and action research. After a meeting with Lesley Weisshaar, Executive Director of the Manitoba School Improvement Program (MSIP), Hunter gathered a team that then met in the winter of 2013 to transform social studies pedagogy.

Planting, Germination and Sprouting of the Seed

Invitations were sent to Linda Connor and Linda Mlodzinski, Manitoba Education Social Studies Consultants; Lloyd Kornelsen, University of Winnipeg Professor; and Gareth Neufeld, MSIP Consultant.

One of the first steps we took in the Grade Twelve Inquiry Project (GTIP) was to assemble 25 Global Issues teachers for an all-day conversation about their experiences with the course. Neufeld facilitated that meeting in March 2013. Feedback from the participating teachers provided us with important information:

- The shift from theoretical to experiential learning requires teachers to be fully engaged in informed reflective practice.
- Individual and collective support will help social studies teachers make a difference in the lives of students and communities.
- Effective course implementation should be connected to appropriate professional development that supports teachers' work.
- The GTIP represents an opportunity for teachers to "take action" on issues of practice specific to course content.

We then looked at possible actions to take as a research team to support the implementation of the Global Issues course.

Cultivating and Tending the Seed

With teacher feedback in hand and the addition of two team members (Renée Gillis, Conseillère pédagogique en sciences humaines Bureau de l'éducation française and Carolee Buckler, Sustainable Development Coordinator Manitoba Education), we developed a vision for the next stage. We agreed to establish the GTIP as a research collective to support critical pedagogy province-wide, giving opportunities to teachers to pursue individual or group inquiry for improved practice. We proposed that the research team:

- Form a MERN Schools and University Partnership to mobilize critical pedagogy by implementing GTIP;
- Use a multifaceted approach to integrate different research perspectives;
- Include pre- and in-service learning collectives to allow field, faculty and department collaboration;
- Facilitate professional development and provide resources to better ensure teacher and student success with the course, particularly related to inquiry-based learning; and
- Create a GTIP Development Team, with partners from:
  - » Manitoba School Improvement Program.
  - » Manitoba Education.
  - » University of Manitoba.
  - » University of Winnipeg.
  - » School divisions (those with teachers involved with the GTIP, and others as projects unfold).

We also agreed that the project research process would mirror the collaborative, inquiry, action-oriented design of the Global Issues course. The following are the key objectives of the GTIP:

- Establish an investigative partnership between schools and universities to support reflective practices;

Table 1

Enduring Understandings	Student Citizenship Actions
Our profit-driven, continuous growth economy is unsustainable. Unfettered consumerism depletes the Earth's resources, damages natural systems, and compromises social justice and quality of life.	Live mindfully with respect to nature, self, and others, limit our consumption, and build communities that are guided by ecological and ethical principles.
Economic development and technological progress have contributed to society, but at significant costs to people and the environment.	Assess the relative value and sustainability of economic and technological advances in order to make informed decisions.
Political systems distribute power, privilege, and wealth in different ways, some more justly than others.	Support democratic citizenship and be vigilant about government decisions that affect social, economic, and environmental conditions.
Mass media are not neutral, do not simply reflect reality, and influence our decisions and actions.	Evaluate the purposes of media, critically question information sources and our response to media.
Traditional and indigenous knowledge offers a vital critique of our dominant Western assumptions about how to live with one another and the environment.	Explore alternative perspectives, extend the boundaries of the familiar, and integrate indigenous ecological principles into our actions in order to confront global issues.
All humans have inherent dignity and are entitled to equal and inalienable rights without distinction of any kind.	Be committed to universal human rights, regardless of gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, political belief, ethnicity, national or social origin, or property, birth, economic or other status.
There is no *them* or *over there:* we all belong to the human species and our concerns are interdependent.	Uphold the value of every person, and act in ways that acknowledge human solidarity and the complexity and interrelatedness of all life.
Individuals, groups, governments and corporations have the power to effect change and the responsibility to contribute to a sustainable future.	Be ethical decision-makers, take a stand to support quality of life for all, and challenge the unethical and the unsustainable.
Our decisions and actions matter; they have social, environmental, economic, and political consequences.	Recognize the consequences of our decisions and take action as citizens for a sustainable future.

- Develop a critical mass of inquiry-based educators within the province; and
- Implement the GTIP as a systems approach for taking action using the process of inquiry as the means for professional development and personal growth.

Within this project design, curriculum development, classroom teaching and learning, and the project research process itself will mirror each other in the development of efficacy for all participants, and build capacity for further learning and action research.

Harvesting the Fruit

The GTIP team envisioned short and long-term projects, including research and professional development components as well as data collection. The following are some planned activities:

- Conduct inquiry-driven, face to face and online moderated sessions (September 2013 to June 2014).
- Hold a MERN Special Forum on Social Studies Education (March 2014).
- Publish a MERN Journal - Special Volume on GTP Teacher Research (August 2014).
- Hold a MERN Special Forum on Mobilization of Critical Pedagogy (March 2015).
- Conduct other research, such as a case study of the implementation of Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability, in the early stages, a critical participatory study of an emergent teacher research collective, and others

In keeping with a course design that goes beyond the simple delivery of content, the GTIP will go beyond typical research. The curriculum development process, led by Linda Connor, Renée Gillis and Linda Mlodzinski, used a collaborative inquiry process that resulted in a curriculum that allows for relatively autonomous and flexible course content and implementation. It also provides fertile ground for teachers and students to experience self-efficacy as they explore their own interests.

Similarly, the GTIP research team will use a collaborative inquiry process to develop its research. All project participants will have opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and values needed to take informed, responsible action as part of the collaborative inquiry process.

We are confident this process will contribute to self-efficacy and will build capacity for all project participants, whom we hope will be inspired to take action as socially responsible citizens for a more socially just and sustainable future for all. ■

Chart 1
Study Areas

- Media
- Consumerism
- Environment
- Poverty, Wealth, and Power
- Indigenous Peoples
- Peace and Conflict
- Oppression and Genocide
- Health and Biotechnology
- Gender Politics
- Social Justice and Human Rights

Gary Babiuk is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba, Linda Connor is Social Studies Curriculum Consultant, Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch, Manitoba Education and Linda Mlodzinski is Social Studies Consultant, Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch, Manitoba Education.

References

- Babiuk, G. & Falkenberg, T. (2010). *Sustainable development and living through changing teacher education and teaching in Manitoba. Manitoba Education and Canadian Council on Learning.* Winnipeg, MB. and Ottawa, ON. 241 pages.
- Manitoba Education (2000). *Education for a sustainable future. A resource for curriculum developers, teachers, and administrators.* Winnipeg: Manitoba Education and Training.
- Manitoba Education (2012). Webpage for Education for Sustainable Development. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/index.html
- Manitoba Education (2012). Webpage for the Social Studies Grade 12 Global Issues – Citizenship and Sustainability Course. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/global_issues/index.html
- Westheimer, J. & Kahne, J. (2004). *What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy.* American Educational Research Journal, 41(2), 237-269.

Building Capacity and Self-Efficacy for Struggling Students

By Pamela Reichert

Personalizing School for Success to Age 18

Despite the fact that many youth disengage from school long before Grade 12, the *Preparing Students for Success Act* was passed in 2011 in Manitoba, raising the compulsory school age (csa) to 18. Throughout Canada, the age at which students can leave school has been raised to 18 only in Ontario, New Brunswick and Manitoba. Research and literature outline positive economic benefits of mandatory schooling to at least age 16 in three main areas: future job profiles, overall pro-social benefits and a better understanding of our youth.

The enforcement and effective use of such policies remains a huge challenge. According to the literature, the most effective approach to longer student success is to increase student engagement by building connections to self, school and work.

Rationale for Increasing the Compulsory School Age

According to the Manitoba legislation: "… young people are better prepared to succeed if they remain engaged in school until they graduate or turn 18… innovative programs and strong partnerships are needed to help keep students engaged in learning… Manitoba's education system needs to recognize that young people have different learning styles, and that some of these learning styles can best be addressed outside the traditional classroom or through alternative programming…" (Manitoba Education, 2011).

Ontario Education (2007) passed a *Learning to Age 18* law that is very similar to Manitoba's, "in order to encourage more students to graduate and fewer to leave school without being adequately prepared for work or further learning" (p. 1). The success of practical applications needs exploration and the lack of definitive data has had negative results.

When summing up her review of literature for consideration of an increased csa, Burkhauser (2002) said: "The costs of failing to complete high school are heavy for both society and the individual. If policy increasing the CSA age to 18 actually improved completion rates, the benefits would indeed be great. This policy, however, has been shown to be completely unsuccessful in increasing completion rates and only slightly successful in decreasing dropout rates" (p. 6).

Despite the opinion of Burkhauser (2002), most authors correlated later csa with positive results.

Future Job Profile and Earning Potential is Increased

The Canadian Council on Learning (2007) reported that, "since 2000, the unemployment rate for high-school graduates has been about half of that for people with less than high school" (p. 31). According to Davison and Hawe (2012): "In the Northwest Territories, where the majority of the population is Aboriginal, rates of educational disengagement are reported to be as high as 75 per cent... People with more education have higher levels of self-reported overall health and are able to achieve higher socioeconomic status. They have lower levels of morbidity, disability and early mortality" (p. 65).

Henry (2011) found: "Higher socioeconomic status is associated with greater perceived parental investment and greater perceived parental investment is associated with a higher expectation to graduate from high school" (p. 1173). The Council of the European Union (2011) stated: "There is an urgent need to ensure that the number of young people dropping out of school is reduced, that all young people acquire the basic skills needed for further learning and that there are more opportunities to learn later in life."

The Council of the EU also

suggested that, "Tackling the problem calls for preventive and compensatory measures, such as 'second chance' education," which implies a pressing international need for longer schooling.

Prosocial Impacts of Education Can Mitigate Anti-social Behaviors and Lifestyles.

Carlo, Crockett, Wilkinson and Beal (2010) found differences in urban and rural youth, but both responded to positive behaviors, like further schooling, by reducing substance use (p. 1197). Alysha Sloane, Director of The Peaceful Village Program and a consultant with the Manitoba School Improvement Program, wrote philosophically about the value of developing pro-social tendencies in students (2008): "[W]hen we pay such little attention to the content of what students learn in order to train independent, voracious consumers of new information, we strip young people of the opportunity to be critical of the status quo in relation to their personal and collective histories. …schools must play a role in the engagement of future generations of wise community leaders who will seek to improve the human and environmental condition" (p. 30).

Henry (2007) also explored the positive relationship between attending school and prosocial adolescent development. Henry, Cavanagh and Oetting (2010) found that decreased school achievement correlated to increased drug use. (See Henry, Cavanagh, and Oetting, 2010; Henry, Knight and Thornberry, 2012).

Henry, Knight and Thornberry (2012) saw, "…the consequences associated with school dropout, [as] the culmination of the longer process of school disengagement" (p. 156), and found a strong link between Grade 8 and 9 school results and future dropout status. They noted the efficacy of a "school disengagement warning index based entirely on basic indicators—standardized test scores, attendance, grades, suspensions and grade retention—that are almost universally found in official school records" (Henry, 2012, p. 165). This gives school districts the ability to identify potential dropouts with low effort and expense.

Indicators of School Disengagement Can Help Support and Better Understand our Youth

Current indicators of disengagement can identify students as off-track or in need of greater support. A 2009 study of Ontario students noted that one failed course in Grade 9 reduces by more than 20 per cent an Ontario student's chance of graduation within five years (Auditor General of Ontario, 2011, p. 276), indicating a need to assess students and respond, as also noted by Emmett and McGee (2012), and Norbury et al. (2012).

In an Irish conference report (National Education Welfare Board, 2008) it was noted that disengagement is often developed in the primary grades and for this reason, Doug Willms, Director of the Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy at the University of New Brunswick, developed the Tell them From Me survey on school climate and engagement.

This tool is currently in use in Manitoba. There was also a Manitoba provincial initiative reporting on Grade 7 student engagement (Nickerson, 2008), which has potential and could be re-considered now, in light of recommended practices for longer csa.

Potential Negatives are Seen in Some Contexts

Negative impacts of longer csa include culture and workload. The Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut had information on their websites about traditional practices and the alienation of their youth by compulsory attendance policies. Teachers are sometimes concerned by new initiatives, which can increase the stress of schools as work places. Carey (2011), a Manitoba Association of School Superintendents journal author, noted problems with exemptions to csa, cultural sensitivity issues, enforcement issues, ideas of alienating students and funding concerns.

Hutterian colonies can no longer allow 15 to 18 year olds, seen as adults, to leave school. High-risk students, farm families, children who have left

home and youth in penal institutions must focus on schooling at a time when it may not be their first priority.

Finally, legislating a return to school for disengaged students is definitely symbolic. What will legislation do that programming alone would not? We should use this as an opportunity to encourage a democratic educative system that builds self-efficacy and confidence.

History of Canadian Approaches to Compulsory Schooling Age Legislation

School has been mandatory to at least age 15 in all Canadian provinces since 1963 (P. Oreopoulos, 2005, p.11). Now, in 2013, all have a csa of at least age 16. While compulsory school attendance has been in place for a century, enforcement has continued to be an obstacle. Oreopoulos (2005) noted that, "mandating education substantially increased adult income and substantially decreased the likelihood of being below the low income cut-off, unemployed and in a manual occupation" (p. 4). Oreopoulos (2005) offered "results [that] reinforce similar estimates of the benefits from compulsory schooling found in the United States and United Kingdom. Taken together, they suggest compelling early school leavers to stay on longer generated real gains" (p. 21).

Recommendations for Successful Implementation

Combining recommendations from New Brunswick's csa legislation (New Brunswick Education, 1998, p. 13), Manitoban strategies and the literature led to three areas of focus.

Student centered strategies: Intensive programs designed to increase school connections and school engagement were most effective. For example, Jones (2008) had suggestions that valued the role of educators in crafting student engagement. Similarly, researchers Kwan Ning and Downing (2010) led a longitudinal study and found that connecting students to their schoolwork is necessary to increase academic achievement (p. 682). Both Ludden (2011), and Witherspoon and Ennett (2010) linked schooling to positive youth development, as did the literature overall.

School centered strategies: The literature supported academies to prepare students for the change from middle school to high school, and again from high school to post-secondary. (For example, see Edmunds, et al., 2012; Emmett and McGee, 2012; and Nova Scotia Education, 2011). The Auditor General of Ontario (2011) reported positive outcomes when students personalized their education (p. 269). Overall, successful school centered strategies led to individualization and self-efficacy.

Career centered strategies: The New Brunswick Department of Education (1998) noted that learning disabilities (LD) affect outcomes, as "one third of students with LD drop out of high school" (p. 10) and "50 per cent of juvenile offenders, when tested, had previously undetected LD" (p. 10). SY schools often reduced supports for students, to their detriment, and thus their report recommended success with increased connections to the world of work.

Challenges and Limitations

In dealing with an increased csa, the theory of cumulative disadvantages is helpful (Blomberg, Bales and Piquero 2012, p. 203), as disadvantages can be overcome by advantages, or added to with other disadvantages, such as funding, race or gender. In addition, a Nova Scotia Education (2011) report discussed strategies to avoid, as inefficient or ineffective, such as modifying the manner in which we structure divisions and evaluate educators, or addressing content rather than the manner in which we teach (p. 6).

In Manitoba

From Manitoba's 37 school divisions, strategies employed by 11 of the 37 divisions were considered and grouped into increasing student engagement and connection, increasing academic options and developing greater career connections. The most reported strategy, the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) program, began in one division and now there are eight school divisions involved.

Summary

Now that students in Manitoba are required to attend school until age 18, the tensions and challenges experienced within school systems must be re-considered. School districts in Manitoba have, so far, responded to this new challenge by increasing their focus on student engagement. Research and literature support this but the enforcement and effective use of such policies remains a huge challenge. Increasing the democratic aspects of student schooling would address these items and lead to greater engagement. Should we not always personalize schooling as a matter of good teaching? ■

Pam Reichert is a Manitoba educator and researcher.

A complete list of references for this article is available at www.mass.mb.ca.

Accessing Efficacy:

Self-Assessing our Way to Success

"We find that people's beliefs about their efficacy affect the sorts of choices they make in very significant ways. In particular, it affects their levels of motivation and perseverance in the face of obstacles. Most success requires persistent effort, so low self-efficacy becomes a self-limiting process. In order to succeed, people need a sense of self-efficacy, strung together with resilience to meet the inevitable obstacles and inequities of life.
~Albert Bandura

By Sandra Herbst

In two very similar communities, there are two very similar schools. Both serve children who are predominantly newcomers to Canada and whose parents or guardians are working hard to secure entry-level employment positions. Financial resourcing of the programs and the teachers' years of experience is comparable. They follow the same mandated provincial curriculum.

Yet, as you walk their hallways and eavesdrop on their conversations, there is a conspicuous difference. The teachers in School A seem highly frustrated and stressed. They speak of parents who are not supportive and students who are not motivated. School B's teachers seem buoyant. They speak positively of the diversity of the student population, seem confident and talk about the ways that they are engaging students in their learning.

The differences between the two groups of teachers can be attributed to many factors, however it may be that teachers in School B have a greater sense of efficacy.

Costa and Garmston (2002) define efficacy as an, "…internally held sense that one has the knowledge and skills to impact the learning processes in the school to attain the desired results" (p. 44). Teachers with a high degree of efficacy believe that their actions will positively affect student learning. Efficacious teachers:

- Have internal resourcefulness;
- Initiate responsibility;
- Know that they have choices;
- Are problem solvers; and
- Take action.

In fact, research (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001) reveals that teachers with efficacy do not tend to despair, hopelessness, rigidity and blame.

Efficacy of the teachers in School B can be further characterized by and result from several factors including, but certainly not limited to, effective professional development and the creation of collaborative learning communities. However, an additional and critical attribute stems from the teachers' ability to engage in self-assessment of their teaching skills. Linda Darling-Hammond et al.'s (2005) research connects to the body of research in efficacy by reporting that the "adaptive expert" is one who investigates and assesses the impact of his or her teaching and views that act as essential to improvement, while the "routine expert" regards the act of reflecting on and assessing one's teaching as undermining one's inherent professionalism.

Leaders work each day to increase their efficacy and that of the teachers in their organizations. They value and deeply understand that, as Michael Fullan (2007) believes, efficacy is a vital factor in the successful implementation of change. With this in mind, schools and systems across Canada and beyond have found that the model and stance of coaching is

a significant way to positively impact on teachers' feelings of efficacy (Costa and Garmston, 2002). The bodies of research in coaching and efficacy both hold that the practitioner has an internal focus and locus of control.

Take for instance Jared's (not his real name) account. Jared is a Grade 7 teacher with over 15 years of experience at the same rural school. He is well known and has been active in community-based sports. He teaches mathematics and was part of the divisional team that provided advice and support to his fellow Grade 7 teachers regarding the provincial assessment. He has been noticing that his students are not as flexible in selecting an appropriate strategy to solve problems, particularly in mental mathematics. As this is an area of the provincial assessment, his students have been struggling to meet the mid-Grade 7 level of performance. He wants to learn more about what he might do differently.

As a result, Jared has been engaging in professional learning both inside and outside of the school division. He has been doing a bit of reading on this topic and has, in his opinion, adjusted some of his teaching. Since there is no PLC structure at the school, inquiry into his practice has been self-directed.

At the same time, Jared's school division has had a focus on quality classroom assessment for several years. As an external support, I have provided professional learning at the system, school and classroom levels. Jared's principal contacted me to see if I would work with Jared.

I travelled to meet with Jared and some other members of his staff. Middle years mathematics is not an area of expertise for me but we had negotiated that I would engage Jared in a coaching cycle—a cycle of planning, classroom lesson and observation, reflection and self-assessment. The role was not one of expert but of coach. And as a coach, I could hold up a mirror to Jared, his practice and his recent learning. In a coaching relationship, the coach illuminates the thinking of the teacher. She offers no advice or expertise, but uses the skills of paraphrase, pausing and mediational questioning to assist the teacher in uncovering recollections, insights and applications.

Jared and I met and quickly moved into a planning conversation (Costa and Garmston, 2010). The goal here was to support Jared as he:

- *Clarified his goals*: What did he hope to accomplish in the lesson? What were the students going to be able to know, do and say as a result of the lesson? What was Jared going to learn more about as he taught the lesson?
- *Specified success indicators:* In what ways would Jared know that he had met the goals of his lesson, for both the students and himself?
- *Anticipated approaches, strategies, decisions:* What might Jared do in the lesson to meet his goals?
- *Established personal learning focus and processes for self-assessment:* What areas would Jared like me to focus on during the lesson and in what ways would he like me to collect evidence on his behalf?

These questions send a strong message. This cycle of learning is about the teacher, for the teacher and directed by the teacher. As a coach, one takes the lead from the person who is being coached; the focus is not about the coach's agenda but rather is meant to allow the coachee to access his internal resources, a key element in efficacy.

We were now ready to move to the classroom. Jared had asked me to collect data for three different reasons and in three different ways:

1. Script all of the questions that he asked the students, both as a large group and when he interacted with individual students. In the planning conversation, Jared had identified that he wanted to make sure to ask questions that moved up Bloom's Taxonomy. He saw this as an indicator of students' flexible thinking.
2. Mark the time that he spent in talking metacognitively; that is, the time that he spent speaking about his own thinking as he solved mental math problems. In the planning conversation, Jared had spoken of the importance of the "I do" stage of gradual release of responsibility.
3. Mark the time that he paused before asking students to respond to his questions. Jared had stated in the planning conversation that "wait time" is important in students' ability to process.

This provided me with specific expectations of my time during the 45-minute lesson. The data that I gathered was directly related to what Jared had asked me to collect ~~th~~here was no room for analysis, judgment or the assignment of value to his words and actions.

After the lesson, Jared and I met once more. The focus of this conversation was reflection (Costa and Garmston, 2010) and it centred around the following five phases:

1. *Summarize impressions and recall supporting information:* As Jared reflected on the lesson, what were his impressions?
2. *Analyze causal factors:* As Jared thought about how the lesson went, what might account for the ways that the lesson unfolded? As Jared referred to the evidence that was collected, what was he noticing?
3. *Construct new learnings:* Given this experience, what might Jared consider next time?
4. *Commit to application:* What insights was Jared gaining?
5. *Reflect on the coaching process and explore refinements:* In what ways had this conversation been helpful?

Let us return to these questions regarding the evidence that was collected. During this time, Jared was again "in the driver's seat." I showed him the data and then sat alongside him and posed questions that caused him to interact with the data. For example, "What was he noticing?", "What was surprising to him?", and "What patterns were emerging for him?" The task was not to raise my interpretations of the data; I offered no hypotheses, nor did I put forward my opinions. This is a critical phase—the phase of self-assessment wherein Jared identifies where he is (based on his analysis of the data) in relation to what he had expected. This ability to look in the mirror—to self-assess—and discern what the data was telling him was crucial; this is, as has been highlighted earlier, an indicator of efficacy.

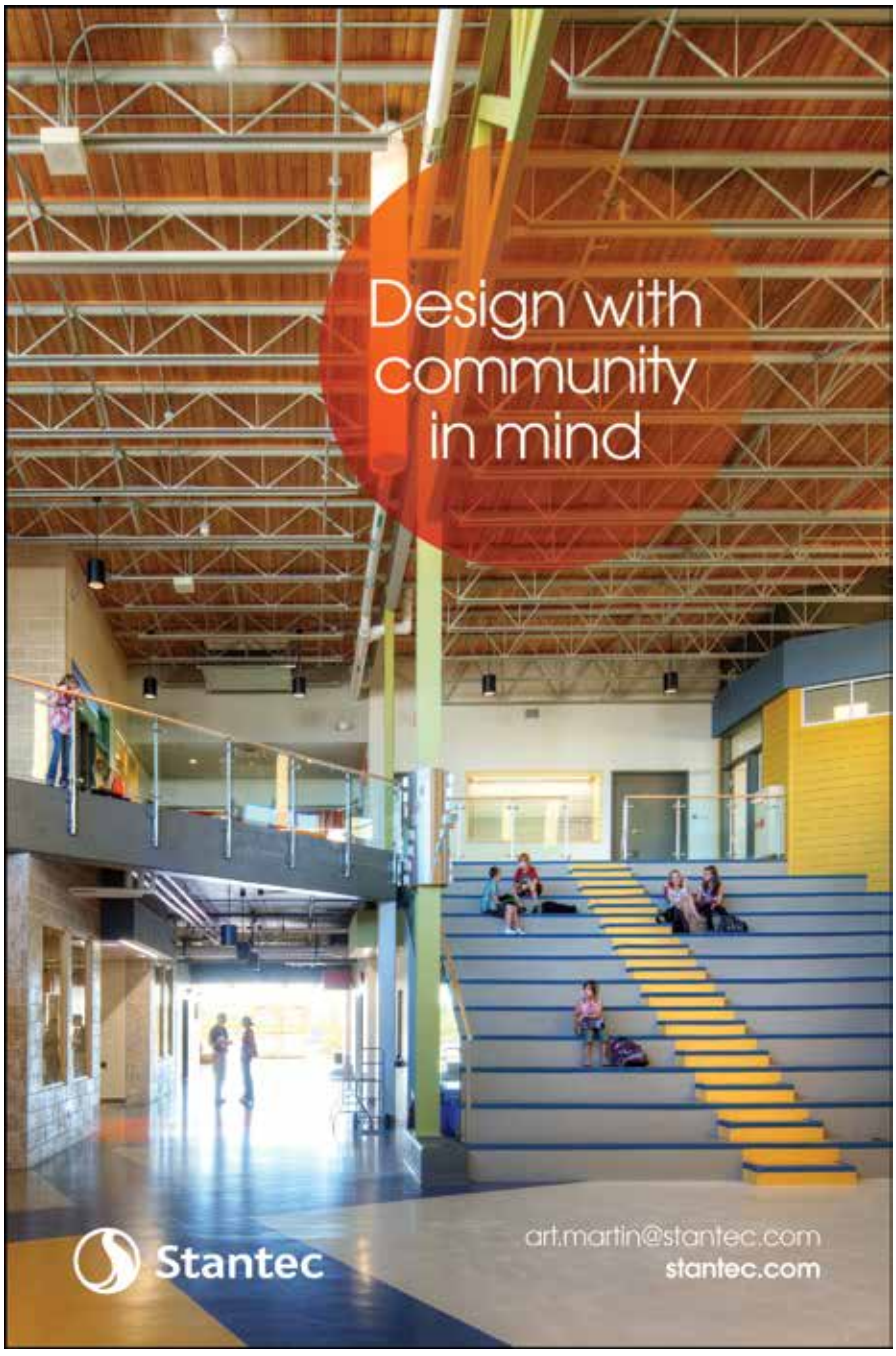
As this account suggests, to value efficacy is to value the professional and his ability to access his internal resourcefulness. Though there may be other structures and processes that require professionals to engage in self-assessment and reflection, the coaching cycle certainly assists in fine-tuning one's ability to do both.

What might happen in School A if despair changed to hope, if rigidity was converted into flexibility of thought and action, and if blame was transformed into the ability to envision possibilities? As the

research into efficacy and school effectiveness suggests, teacher efficacy may be the single most consistent variable related to school success (Goodard, Hoy, and Woolfolk-Hoy, 2000). And perhaps the stance of coaching, as opposed to a default stance of evaluator or expert, serves as a strategy of promise and possibility. ■

Sandra Herbst is a former Assistant Superintendent of River East Transcona School Division, a former President of MASS and currently travels broadly in her role as educational consultant and author and CEO of Connect2Learning.

A complete list of references for this article is available at www.mass.mb.ca.



MMSM
Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba
INDUSTRY FUNDING RECYCLING
PRESENTS

TARGET ZERO ECO KIDS TOUR

Bring your class to The Forks for an interactive and inspiring tour of the Target Zero initiative. The one and a half hour walking tour invites kids to explore what we have done at The Forks while encouraging them to think 'green' and reduce their own carbon footprint.

TOURS RUN ALL YEAR*
Suitable for all ages

Contact Leigh Hayward, Education Programs Coordinator
ph: 204.987.4359 **email:** education@theforks.com

Are you recycling all you can? **simplyrecycle.ca**

*subject to availability


MY KNOWLEDGE is limitless
IT MIGHT teach a child
OR MAYBE care for someone
MY KNOWLEDGE will do many things
With an education from UCN, you will have endless opportunities to do work where you want, in a career you enjoy. Programs range from a Bachelor of Arts degree to a diploma in Practical Nursing to a certificate in Industrial Welding. Where will your knowledge take you?
MY KNOWLEDGE. EARNED AT UCN.
For more information, visit www.ucn.ca and call 866-627-8500 or 866-677-6450
KNOWLEDGE IS rewarding
WWW.UCN.CA
OWN YOUR FUTURE
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE NORTH
UCN