

Checkmark

A report on the work of The Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division Vol. 13, No. 1



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Message from the Board Chair

The Saskatchewan Rivers School Division is a member of the Public Section of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association. The motto of the Public Schools of Saskatchewan is "Where Everyone Can Grow". This growth does not only refer to a student's academic progress; it includes the development of a sense of personal, social and community responsibility in our students. Public schools in Saskatchewan promote values that shape our view of self, others and the community. These values include fairness, respect, responsibility and leadership. Our Board views the value of responsibility as a cornerstone of a healthy society.

This issue of Checkmark focuses on the civic and social responsibility of our students. The pages highlight their volunteer and charitable activities. The students of our Saskatchewan Rivers Public Schools have raised money for international, national and local causes and they have volunteered their time to brighten the lives of many citizens in our communities. WE Day, the Terry Fox runs, donations to the Food Bank, visiting and entertaining seniors and countless

other initiatives indicate that our students are well on their way to becoming caring and responsible citizens. We are very proud of them!



Barry Hollick, Board Chair

Legal Eagles Compete in the Mckercher Cup

St. Louis Community Public School students are gearing up to participate in the McKercher Cup for the second year. The McKercher Cup is a mock legal trial competition that is held in Saskatoon. The event is hosted by the Canadian Bar Association - Saskatchewan Branch. The CBA graciously covers the cost of this activity. The students must argue the case twice – once as Defence Counsel and once as the Crown. If they are deemed a finalist, they must argue the case again in the finals. A group of judges determines the winner of the competition.

This year's team includes Grade 12's - Hilary Gaudet, Colbi Kuppenbender, and Maria Mitchell; Grade 11 - Thomas Ryall; and Grade 9's - Kiara Nicolas and Sydney Ryall. The students work very hard from November to April to prepare their case with their teacher supervisor, Mrs. Kostyniuk and with a volunteer lawyer, Randi Arnot of Arnot Heffernan Law Office in Prince Albert. This year, we also have a student-at-law, helping out - James Milne.

Each of four students on the team develops a persona of one of the four witnesses and also

participates as a lawyer. Two students are the main lawyers for the Defence and the Crown. They play the opposite role for the second round. Last year's team worked on an impaired driving charge and this year's team is working on a possession and trafficking charge.

Students use a wide variety of skills in order to be successful at this competition. It requires organizational, speaking, questioning, preparation, and research skills. At the same time, they learn about court proceedings, due process, professional codes of conduct and dress. Perhaps lawyers in the making!





Student Civic and Social Responsibility

Locally:

Canwood Community Public School students really are making a difference in our community and globally.

In 2001, Canwood Community Public School began a partnership with our local Whispering Pine Place Nursing Home in support of a *Youth Volunteer Program*. Students ages 13 and up are scheduled to visit the nursing home on a weekly basis. Here they read to the residents, go on walks together, play games, make puzzles, spend time visiting or help to make crafts in preparation for special occasions. There are a total of 17 students signed up for the volunteer for the 2013-2014 school year.

Our partnership extends further than the volunteer program. For the past 13 years our school and the nursing home



have been partnering to host the Terry Fox Run and raise money (over \$35,000.) for cancer research. The program has seen changes over the years but the purpose and the joint effort still remains the same. Some participants, students and community members, walk, jog or run to our local Regional Park and back while others meet the residents at the nursing home and help maneuver the wheel chairs on their journey of hope. By participating in the run together we remember and support those people living in our community with cancer and those who have lost their battle. The program helps to build school spirit and community and it is a positive step towards finding the cure that we need!

The month of May is the SRC students turn to organize and run the monthly "Birthday Party" at the nursing home. They make birthday cakes, purchase gifts, and entertain the residents with their singing, dancing and musical talents for the afternoon.

It is not only our high school students that have a special connection with the nursing home but our elementary students as well. Several times a year

the Kindergarten – Grade 5 students and their teachers, visit the nursing home to sing Halloween songs, regale them with Christmas choruses, make Valentine's Day cards and color Easter eggs.

All of these interactions are extremely rewarding and beneficial for both the students and the residents.

Globally:

Just this last year, in the fall of 2013 a group of students decided to form a team called *Youth Taking Action*. Spear headed by one of our Grade 11 students, Joelle Hoeflicher, this group has joined forces with Free the Children to "Adopt a Village" in Totoras, Chimborazo Ecuador. This area is home to the largest number of indigenous communities who suffer from some of the highest rates of poverty in the country. They have limited access to water, education, economic opportunities, health care and the resources needed to maintain a nutritious food supply. Our students and their fundraising efforts are helping to bring this under privileged community a clean and safe water supply. The money raised will help to build hand washing stations, clean water systems, and latrines. It will also be used to educate



the people about the importance of water sanitation. Water is vital for maintenance of proper family health and hygiene. To complete this project the students need to raise a total of \$5000. To date *Youth Taking Action* has raised \$3,000 through donations, a poinsetta sale and a mom's pantry fund raising. This project will not only change the lives of the people in Ecuador but the lives of those students who have seen what their gift of giving can do.



The Power of WE at T.D. Michel

A personal account from Natalie Wideen, Grade 6 teacher at T.D. Michel Community Public School.

To say that *We Day Saskatchewan* was a great experience for my students is an understatement; life-changing would be more accurate. It is hard to explain how electrifying it is when close to 15 000 students from across the province come together for a common purpose; to make the world a better place. I knew that *We Day* would be a great experience for my grade six students. What I didn't know was how deeply they would be affected by what they had heard and seen that day.

When we arrived back in Big River, we quickly started planning our first action project. *We Scare Hunger at T.D.M.* came together quickly and easily. I was surprised at the initiative and enthusiasm that a group of 11 and 12 year olds displayed. When discussing the issue of hunger and the fact that there were people living right in our town that didn't know where their next meal was coming from, I could see the disappointment and empathy in their eyes. Our class set to work decorating donation boxes to set up in the elementary school, the high school, and they also set up a table to collect donations at the family Halloween dance in town. They even challenged our superintendent, Rob Clarke to fill a bucket of food and return it to our school - and he did! When all was said, done and weighed, we were able to donate 440 pounds of food to our local food bank. My students were impressed and I was extremely proud.



Choosing a global action project took a little more time to process. Not because we weren't ready to start, but because we wanted to do some research to choose the right issue to donate our time and efforts towards. In the end, we all agreed that clean water was where we wanted to focus our efforts. This project is a work in progress. So far we have raised just over \$300 to donate to *Free the Children and Ryan's Well*. Our goal is to raise even more before the end of the school year.

Our most recent project was inspired by the story of Malala Yousafzai and the following quote from the late Nelson Mandela, "education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world". In discussion with my students, I could see how frustrated and horrified they were by Malala's story. They clearly felt that all children should have the right to an education. That feeling turned into action. My grade six students volunteered five hours of

their own time over two nights of parent teacher interviews to sell ABC Education Rafiki Chains. For each chain sold, *Free the Children* would provide one overseas student school supplies for a year. They sold enough chains to provide one hundred children school supplies and raised \$1000! The pride and excitement I saw in my students when they heard the total was one of the best feelings I've had in my teaching career.

Since *We Day*, my students have become active and engaged citizens. They are genuinely concerned about the well-being of others, quick to lend a helping hand, and have become exceptional role models for the younger students in our school. I consistently see empathy, compassion, and pride in my classroom and I could not be more proud of what my students have accomplished this year. When I say that *We Day* was a life-changing experience, I truly mean it.

Excellence for Every Learner



Princess Margaret Public School Has Heart

Princess Margaret Public School is excited to be a part of a service learning project with *Free The Children* this year. It is an international organization that empowers youth to create change locally and globally. Students involved in our SLC or Student Leadership Council joined the movement and chose to support the Prince Albert Children's Haven for our local project. Jenn Henry, one of our three SLC advisors had the idea to spread Christmas cheer and raise money and *Carolling for a Cause* was born! We practiced a few familiar Christmas carols during our noon hours, sent out notes advertising our that our Princess Margaret Carollers would spread cheer and visit homes for a donation to the Children's Haven. On a very cold December 18th we piled into a 15 passenger van, travelled around the city ringing doorbells and singing loud and proud. We visited 4 personal homes, 3 Care Homes, carolled around the fourth floor of the Victoria Hospital and then visited the Children's Haven where we presented them with the \$192.00 in donations. We experienced

the true meaning of "giving back" that night. The smiles, laughter, clapping, singing along and thanks we received at each stop will be remembered for a long time. Our evening ended with a gift of hot chocolate and delicious cookies from the generous grandmother of one of our carollers. *Carolling for a Cause* is sure to be a tradition of giving at Princess Margaret Public School.

To continue our service learning initiative we chose *Free The Children's* global cause called *WE CREATE CHANGE*. We are collecting coins or "change" to fundraise for their Education initiative where they plan to build 200 schools around the world where they are needed the most. Every \$20.00 that is collected equals one brick used to build a school. In February we had Hat Days and collected loonies totalling

\$185.30! Our *March of Dimes* is currently happening as we work to fill our school house with as many dimes as we can. Each month the SLC plans to collect a different coin through a variety of creative ways to see how many

bricks we can contribute to the *We Create Change* program. We are proud to be part of giving the gift of education because we value ours and know that it's a gift that lasts a lifetime!



Responsible For Our Community at WJBPS

Students at W.J. Berezowsky Public School took part in a *National Pink Shirt Day Campaign* on February 26 along with support from the Sask Tel Pioneers, the A & W Bears and the P.A. Mintos hockey clubs. As a bit of a give back for support in some of our school activities,

like our annual pancake breakfast and our Christmas Dinner, students were asked to bake 900 cookies to be handed out to students at WJB and also given to kids that came into the Sask Tel store on February 26. Our local social justice group, the Berezowsky Fun Blasters, took over the kitchen for a few after school baking sessions. The result met with a great response, both at school and at the store. *The Berezowsky Fun Blasters* have been involved in three other social justice campaigns through the course of this school year. The other campaigns aligned with *Free the Children* included *We Scare Hunger* where students brought in over

500 items for the Prince Albert Share-a-Meal Food Bank, *We Are Love* where students raised \$260 by selling candy grams and buttons to support education

in other countries. They are currently acting in *We Create Change* to raise money for *Rays of Hope for Uganda* to help build schools.



Flag Ceremony at Carlton

Carlton Comprehensive Public High School students gathered on Wednesday March 12, 2014 for an intimate ceremony to recognize the Saskatchewan Forces members who have lost their lives in Afghanistan. The event coincided with the official end of Canada's mission in Afghanistan. Canadian soldiers

lowered the flag for the final time at NATO's Kabul headquarters. This is a significant day for our school and citizens – of the 45,000 Canadians that have taken part in the mission, 162 heroes have made the ultimate sacrifice, and 17 of those heroes were from Saskatchewan.

Carlton's ceremony was attended by a Saskatchewan veteran of

the war in Afghanistan, Master Corporal Gerald Minielly and several Cadets who are students at Carlton. It included a reading of all the Saskatchewan heroes who died in the war and was followed by the raising of the Canadian Flag accompanied by the singing of O' Canada by students Kassia Clarke and Shaelynn Cowles.

Canada had joined other member

NATO states in the War on Terror in Afghanistan following the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001. And for students at the Carlton, the war spans most of their lives. This was an opportunity for Carlton students to learn the impact of the contributions of all Canadians, whether they were in uniform or not, to the international effort in Afghanistan.

Carlton Continues Partnership with Habitat for Humanity

Carlton Comprehensive Public High School formed an exciting partnership with *Habitat for Humanity* to provide students with an opportunity to build new homes for our community in the fall of 2010. Since then, approximately 50 Carlton students have been responsible for building four beautiful new homes in Prince Albert over the last four years in semester one. These 50 students have been part of the Carlton Carpentry

Apprenticeship Program (CCAP).

The partnership between Carlton and *Habitat for Humanity* has proven to be a benefit to both organizations and to the community. *Habitat for Humanity* facilitates partnerships between prospective home owners, businesses, individual donors, and volunteers to build affordable housing in Prince Albert. Carlton students in grades 10 – 12 involved in CCAP can earn up to six credits toward graduation in semester

one and also accumulate carpentry apprenticeship hours. Students learn about and take part in every aspect of construction of a home from the ground up. Students work along with and learn from a Carlton teacher who is a journeyman carpenter.

You can find out more information about the Carlton Carpentry Apprenticeship Program (CCAP) and the homes that have been built by coming into Student Services at Carlton

or by visiting the Carlton webpage at www.carlton.srsd119.ca. Carlton is currently taking applications for next year's build.



P.A.C.I. Students Create Community Connections

Our PACI family is committed to developing social responsibility within our students. We have many different initiatives ongoing within our community and school.

class. Through classroom lessons students are exposed to different forms and examples of leadership. They explore their own leadership strengths and have the chance to develop their areas of growth. Students make connections to the community through opportunities where they initiate and lead projects. This past year, the class was involved with volunteering at Jesse's Garden, the SPCA and King George School where students carried out a *Reading Buddies* program with Grade One students. Students from this class continue to shine as leaders within our school with their involvement in SLC, PACI Changers and other groups at the school.

Working from a course developed by the *Martin Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Program*; the *Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship Credit Course* focuses on the skills needed to develop youth

entrepreneurship ventures with a point of view guided by First Nations principles and beliefs. Students work on the development of a business plan throughout the semester utilizing mentorships with community business owners. These mentors are valuable resources to the students as they develop their plans and make them as realistic as possible. The end goal is for PACI students to be able to enact the plan towards their own business venture after the class is completed.

Another initiative at PACI is the dance program. Dance is a way to express one's self physically, emotionally, and mentally. It develops confidence, sparks creativity, and fosters relationships. The *PACI Dance Program* takes pride in being able to share these benefits of dance with people in the community by teaching classes, leading workshops, and giving performances. This year, the dance

program had a blast working with adults from Kin Enterprises, giving them weekly lessons during November and December. PACI dancers also spent a day helping younger kids build self-esteem and stand up to bullying by leading a workshop with Grade 4 – 6 students at Vincent Massey. Dance has changed the lives of many of the students at PACI and they plan to continue passing on their love of dance to other elementary schools and Kin Enterprises in the upcoming months. You can also find the dancers on stage at their May 28th, *More Than A Room* show at the E.A. Rawlinson.

PACI continues to foster connections within our community providing our students with countless opportunities to develop into well rounded young adults. We create unique learning experiences and develop literacy skills as we support students to become who they want to be!



Leadership is a characteristic that we value and nurture at PACI. There are many extracurricular options to develop leadership through experiences in sport and club atmospheres. Students at PACI also have opportunities to learn leadership skills through their curricular classes as well. One class in particular which focuses on this characteristic is the Leadership 30

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