

Grant Park High School PACC Minutes

November 16, 2021 – 7:15 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Regular reports – Administration

a) Principal

- **High School Report Cards** – Reports were sent home via online link on Friday, November 12th outlining student strengths, challenges and next steps for all of their Term 1 courses. This sets the stage for upcoming conversations during Tri-conferences on the 18th and 19th of the month. These conversations are an excellent way for us to strengthen the home/school partnership and support student success.

Middle School's Term 1 ends on December 1st and reports will be distributed on Friday, December 10th.

- **Academic Success Learning Series** – The Academic Learning Series is a continuation of the work School Leaders and School Leadership Teams have journeyed together over the past two years (Collective Efficacy and PLCs). Our School Team includes the Indigenous Academic Achievement Representative, accompanied by the Principal, Vice Principals, Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, Resource, Support Staff and Indigenous Graduation Coach.

On Tuesday November 9th we participated in an online session with Dr. Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, an Anishinaabe academic and writer based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Originally from Selkirk, Manitoba. Sinclair did his undergraduate studies at the University of Winnipeg, a MA at the University of Oklahoma, and a PhD at the University of British Columbia. Sinclair is Head of the Department of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba and an activist and public speaker on Indigenous issues. He has edited and written *Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water* (Highwater Press, 2011), *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories* (Michigan State University Press, 2013), and *Winter We Danced: Voices of the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement* (Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2014) as well as a number of graphic novels. Sinclair is also a journalist for the Winnipeg Free Press and has worked as a high school teacher in Winnipeg School Division.

The session introduced us to the primary pedagogical principles of Indigenous Education and how these systems relate to the history of Indigenous Peoples of Manitoba/Canada & the rise of Indigenous Education in Canada. An analysis of concepts like reconciliation, Treaty Education, Treaty Relationships, and gift-giving as praxis took place as our team

analyzed their own role in the trajectory of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships.

- **Testing Clinic Update** – Winnipeg School Division announced changes to its schedule for COVID-19 testing appointments for those employees who have chosen to do testing rather than providing proof of full vaccination. Starting October 27th, the observed testing clinics were reduced from five evenings per week plus Saturday.

Grant Park's testing clinic will now only be conducted on Wednesday evenings in the Senior Gym from 4:30 – 9:30 p.m.

- **Return to School Sports Update** – The Return to School Sports Guidelines have been developed to ensure all Public Health, Winnipeg School Division, and Provincial Sports Organizations health and safety protocols are in place to support the safe return to school sports for students and staff. The Guidelines have been updated to include additional information in the areas of Participant Guidelines for the wearing of masks, and participation in MHSAA Provincial High School Volleyball Championships. We will continue to reevaluate and adapt as new information and guidelines become available.
- **IBM Compass For Success Training** – Planning assessment and instruction support student learning. Through the continuous improvement process, schools have used common assessments and student learning trends to identify targets and differentiate for different at-risk groups. WSD is collaborating with IBM to provide a common data warehouse and analytics function to further support schools in monitoring student learning trends, disaggregating data and planning for instruction. Through the Compass for Success platform and warehouse, Grant Park's school team will be able to analyze multiple data sources in a timely and effective manner to create reports, track student groups, inform decisions and gain new insights. Dashboards have been personalized for our context to display key performance indicators. Our team begins a four-part training on the application during this school year on Thursday, November 18th.
- **Downtown Youth Hub / Canadian Mental Health Association Partnership / Supports** – Grant Park has collaborated with the Youth Hub to augment Mental Health supports in the building with the provision of a clinician and peer support every Friday beginning November 26th.
- **Bullying Awareness and Prevention / Safe and Caring Schools** – As the Honourable Mr. Cliff Cullen, Minister of Education has proclaimed November 14 - 20, 2021 as Manitoba Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, our school has reviewed the updated Winnipeg School Division Safe and Caring Schools Bullying Prevention Fact Sheet. The document includes recommended programs and resources, professional learning

opportunities, as well as supports for caregivers. Please find the resource at:
<https://www.winnipegssd.ca/page/10328/bullying-prevention-fact-sheet>

- **School Age Immunizations** – The Public Health Nurse was at Grant Park High School on November 16th and 17th to offer school age immunizations to grades 7-12 students including missed doses from previous school years. This included Hepatitis B Vaccine, Human Papillomavirus Vaccine, Meningococcal Quadrivalent Vaccine and Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis and Polio Vaccine.

b) Middle School

- **Tri-Conferences** – This Thursday and Friday; if there are any problems, please let me know; parents indicated that virtual is a preferred method for conferences.
- **Mental Health Series** – Middle School has put forward funding for a grant towards a mental health series to identify some of the difficulties middle school students are experiencing. The series will run from December to June, one topic per month.

c) Senior High

- **Remembrance Day Update** – On November 10th the school participated in a virtual Remembrance Day Ceremony at 9:30am. Thank you to the committee that worked hard at creating it.
- **Nutrition Program** – There is an increased need in our building for a nutrition program. Students are showing up to school for a variety of reasons hungry, without eating breakfast. Grants have been applied for and school planning is underway to provide healthy snacks at the beginning of each day for students who need.

Questions/New Business:

- **Pronouns and Reporting at Grant Park**

Two years ago, our school received student feedback from in-school surveys that indicated there was a “limited inclusion to transgender, non-binary and two-spirit students” within the building. Student voice is extremely important to us and our Professional Development Committee sought out the support of the Rainbow Resource Centre to examine how to make the learning environment more inclusive.

In examining our data and talking with students and families we were able to zero in on the use of pronouns as a particular area of concern. Our partnership with *Rainbow Resource* led to specifically focusing on teachers adding gender identity pronouns to their signatures and even introducing themselves with their pronouns.

Binary pronoun usage on report cards was also recognised by our students as particularly limiting to both their self-expression and relationship to their educational experience. The outdated, binary designations of male and female indicated in our student administration systems may not be up to date or in keeping with how students view themselves.

Our staff-learning journey in this area led to some enlightening new discoveries. We learned that 200 linguists at the *American Dialect Society* recognized “they” as the word of the year in 2015 and that both *The Oxford English Dictionary* and *Merriam Webster* now both include the singular “they”. The long and the short of it is that the English language has evolved to recognize “they” as a grammatically correct singular pronoun.

We learned that it is extremely important never to assume someone’s pronouns and that if we do not know what pronouns someone uses to use the gender neutral “they” or their name. The feedback from our focus groups, clinicians and Inclusion Support Services indicated that this was safe and respectful approach to adopt for reporting.

- **Microwaves**

Under Caution Yellow Public Health Measures, regarding microwave usage, we must ensure proper hand hygiene is followed before and after use and that the microwaves must be cleaned in accordance with regular scheduled cleaning for high-touch surfaces. At present, we have stretched our available staffing throughout the school to provide supervision throughout the identified lunch areas in the school. We do not have the people power to designate staff supervision of microwave areas.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 7:15 p.m. (Zoom Meeting)