

École Robert H. Smith School

Community Report 2020-2021



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Our Purpose

Winnipeg School Division provides a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student's potential and provides equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

Our Vision

We envision people learning and working within Winnipeg School Division to be: **Engaged, Confident, Inspired, and Successful Learners.**

At École Robert H. Smith School we are respectful, safe, and accountable.

Principal: Andrea Powell
Vice Principal:
Warren Nickerson
Staff: 45
Classroom Teachers: 21
Resource Teacher
Specialist Teachers: 2
Educational Assistants: 2



About Our School

Built in 1919, École Robert H. Smith School is a Nursery to Grade 6 school located in the Winnipeg School Division. RHS is home to both French Immersion and English programmes. We are a community of learners, characterized by strong academic programming, environmental stewardship, a unique performing arts philosophy and "fitness for life" physical education.

École Robert H. Smith School has a student population of 375 students, with 17 classrooms, 22 teachers, five educational assistants, three office staff and three custodians. During a typical year we engage one of the largest volunteer bases in the WSD with over 300 volunteers who support our school and students in a variety of ways. We are fortunate to have a privately-run Lunch Program, a Before and After School Program and a Parent Advisory Group (PAG) that works collaboratively with staff and students to support school-based initiatives.

We continue to deepen understanding and implement initiatives that address environmental, social and economic issues both locally and worldwide. We are seeking to find authentic ways to infuse Indigenous perspectives through ongoing teacher learning, community involvement, and external partnerships. We want our students to better understand the truths of the past as we move forward toward reconciliation.



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

Highlights

Covid-19 Protocols:

- Implemented daily health screening at work with hand sanitizing and other health protocols
- Reorganized class structures to increase physical distancing
- Developed cohort systems with separate restrooms, entrances & recesses
- Did not have a case of Covid-19 among student body all year

Academic/Curricular:

- Mathematical goal-setting and short-term curricular focus as a class/in teams
- Land Acknowledgement research and learning in grades 1/2/3 and 6
- Festival du Voyageur celebrations
- I Love to Read Month activities
- Learning coaching & divisional support in early years literacy & numeracy

Physical & Mental Health:

- Outdoor Physical Education classes through the entire year
- Classroom programming on self-regulation and mindfulness strategies
- Spring Cohort Running Club
- Health Month in May (weekly focus on mental health, physical activity, nutrition, and sleep)

Education for Sustainable Development:

- Grade 6 Gardening Club (flowerbed plants grown indoors from seed)
- N/K Caterpillar/Butterfly Science Investigation
- Grade 3 Vermiculture Work Composting
- Grade 6 "Legacy" tree planting
- Upgraded landscaping around outdoor classroom
- New bottle-fill station installed (late June)
- New energy-efficient lighting installed in gym
- Dedication to furthering the infusion of Indigenous perspectives

Performing Arts:

- *School of Rock* approach; student-created music recorded in each classroom



Priorities for 2020-2021

Numeracy

Students at all grade levels will strengthen their core competencies through targeted instruction and mathematical dialogue. In early 2021 teachers developed a “teaching sprint” by examining data on modelling and communicating mathematical thinking, choosing a focus for improvement, and trying innovations in the classroom. Several teachers experimented with collaborative problem-solving on non-permanent vertical surfaces.

Literacy

Focus on developing workshop approaches to the writing process: increasing modelled writing and providing opportunities for collaborative writing and seeing improved independent writing. Some teachers developed practices for guided reading with flexible instructional groups. Working with learning coaches or support teachers, teachers enhanced their literacy practices in both English and French.

Professional Learning

All teachers will engage in professional learning and planning with student growth in mind. All teachers will develop and incorporate school-wide shared beliefs for literacy and numeracy.



Priorities for 2021-2022

School priorities for the coming year:

Numeracy:

- Regular opportunities for collaborative, open-ended problem-solving in mathematics. Include randomized grouping, vertical surfaces, feedback, cascading challenges
- Target individualized small group instruction
- Collaborate on a practical approach to strengthening mental math suited to each grade; create term 1 and term 2 milestones for mental math assessment
- Develop practical, student-friendly self-assessment tools for students with “I can...” statements to make goals and success criteria clear and increase student ownership

Literacy:

- Deepen understanding of components of an inclusive, engaging literacy block for both reading and writing, beginning early in the school year
- Expand opportunities for job-embedded professional learning (coaching, mentoring, professional learning communities)
- Clarity around expectations and instructional practices (clarity of routines and procedures, use of criteria, essential literacy components)
- Develop reading GRIT in addition to reading strategies and skills – students need to read independently, persevere through increasingly complex text, and challenge themselves to become better readers
- Refresh our available reading instruction materials in both English and French

Social Emotional Learning:

- Align classroom behaviour management with our school-wide PBIS approach
- Continue building strategies for self-regulation, including the use of mindfulness practice, school-wide pro-social programs, our sensory pathway and Movement Room

Parent and community involvement

While we couldn't have our parents in the building this year, our Parent Advisory Group was as active as ever. Including the five PAG meetings held virtually through the year, they supported RHS by:

- Attending French Language and South District Advisory meetings through the year
- Donating unused funds from "Pay-it-Forward" donations toward Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre community programming
- Starting a new initiative: "Thank a Teacher Thursday" (notes, messages and treats for staff – including two catered lunches). Treats also provided to three inner-city schools and catered lunches to staff at two inner-city schools
- Holding a Wine Raffle in December to raise money for the purchase of teacher voice amplification devices (responding to teacher need with mask-wearing)
- Having RHS's first ever Virtual Family Dance!
- Supporting teams through staff appreciation days (custodians, admin assistants, support staff...)
- Continuing to upgrade the school field area with trees, rocks, and mulch; surveying the community for future projects, planning a summer project to enhance the hardtop and track areas of the playground
- Offering a virtual babysitting course for 50 grade six students!
- Offering Bill 64 information to all parents through the PAG website
- Making the Grade Six Farewell special for students (delivering lunch to students' homes, having a virtual DJ dance party, providing individual portraits of students...)
- Holding four fundraisers through the year, including the annual plant sale. A whopping \$9454 was raised!

Many thanks to our parents who have supported RHS staff through this challenging year. We are most appreciative of your efforts!

