

NEWS RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division renames school Keewatin Prairie Community School

May 4, 2022 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) Board of Trustees has approved the name Keewatin Prairie Community School to replace the formerly named Cecil Rhodes School. The name is effective September 1, 2022 at which time signage at the school will also be updated.

“We’re very pleased to have a name that was chosen based on careful consideration and acknowledgement of the Truth and Reconciliation process,” says Betty Edel, Chair, WSD Board of Trustees. “We took the time necessary to ensure that changing the name of Cecil Rhodes was a community decision, and that the appropriate stakeholders were consulted and included in the choice of the new name.”

The newly named Keewatin Prairie Community School is a Nursery to Grade 9 School located in the Weston neighbourhood on Elgin Avenue with an enrolment of approximately 520 students. The school community reflects the cultural diversity of Winnipeg and provides a positive school climate for children to grow and learn academically, socially and emotionally. Staff, students and community value inclusion and respect for all. The school and community work together to build strong community spirit, foster a positive and safe school climate and promote attitudes and skills that develop responsible social behaviour and global citizenship.

“Our naming committee received over 100 survey responses from the community, as well as classroom responses from our students in the school,” says Stormie Duchnycz, Principal, Cecil Rhodes/Keewatin Prairie Community School. “There were many submissions that met our criteria, but the one that was chosen stood out because of the rationale.”

Keewatin Prairie Community School identifies with the school’s geographical location while also honouring the Cree and Ojibwe languages. Keewatin means “the land of the northwest wind”. Both Keewatin and Prairie were a popular recommendation among survey responses. Students at the school, who are proud to be residents of the prairies, also acknowledge that the word prairie represents growth and a connection to nature and Indigenous ways. Including the word “Community” in the school’s name was also a key recommendation from both staff and students.

WSD is celebrating 150 years of learning this year and has 78 schools, 29,593 students and 4,573 full-time employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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