



École Robert H. Smith School

# The Communiqué

June 28 - 30, 2021

## Message from the Admin Team

As we sit down to compile the final Communiqué of the school year, it may be sinking in that we are officially winding down. We have met briefly with the 2021-2022 admin team, Adam Dyck and Sarah Arnold, and will continue our transition meetings with them next week to ensure continuity. Mr. Dyck and Madame Arnold have been asked to provide a brief bio that will accompany our final missive next week.

Final report cards were sent out on Friday, with comments based both on in-person and remote learning.

We'd like to acknowledge the amazing efforts of our parent community and our PAG. The ongoing offerings through the year (Thank a Teacher Thursday, kind notes, food drop-offs, flowers for each staff member...) kept us going through some very challenging times. Our parents have updated the grounds, painted the benches, refurbished the community garden, bought teachers sound field systems, held a virtual dance... all contributing to the life of the community and supporting the children and staff in a way that was truly felt and appreciated.

As well, we have PAG members who have represented our parents and students at a variety of divisional meetings, advocating for the school's programs. Many parents have educated themselves on the upcoming changes to education by sharing information and reaching out to one another. This is a special and highly supportive community. Warren and I are quite reflective these last days here, knowing what we are leaving behind.

We'd also like to thank the teachers and parents (led by the tireless Gail J.) who worked to prepare a send-off for our grade six students. Teachers Mrs. Kowalchuk, Mme. Champagne, and Mme. Byron visited the homes of each student to provide certificates and t-shirts, hand out a few goodies and the beautiful photographs provided by the Grade 6 Farewell parent team. Thanks to Will H. who agreed to have me share his fabulous photo, and thanks to Ellie's mom Marie, who took the photographs. Félicitations, nos amis en sixième! Well done!

Monday, June 28, 2021

Day 6

- *Welcome to Kindergarten* bags available for pick up; welcome message out to parents of 21-22 N – K students

Tuesday, June 29, 2021

Day 1

- Final school day for children of Critical Service Workers in Nursery/Kindergarten attending **AFTERNOON** classes.

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Day 2

- Final school day for children of Critical Service Workers in grades 1 – 6 (dismissed at 11:30 AM)
- Countdown and send-off on the hard top at 11:30!



## RHS Staffing for 2021-2022

A comprehensive list of staff members for 2021-2022 will be sent out early next week. We are awaiting some final staffing decisions before finalizing the RHS line-up. As well, teachers will be sending out a short video to their incoming students introducing themselves. As the classrooms have been largely cleaned out during remote learning, there may not be much of the classroom to “share” at this time. As we did in the fall, teachers will find a way to provide more information (and visuals) of the classrooms should the school not be able to hold a formal “Meet the Staff” night in September.

## Division Trades People Go the Extra Mile

It’s important as we look back on the year to reflect on the incredibly high-quality work at our school site completed by the Winnipeg School Division Building Department. We’d like to take a moment to say how thankful we are that you all take such pride in your work. The children and young adolescents who attend our school, and the women and men who work here every day, have an amazing workplace because of the attention to detail you’ve paid to all the little jobs at RHS.

We’ve had some major upgrades at Robert H. Smith, and we’ve had a whole bunch of little jobs. This list is an attempt to say thanks for some of the ones that stand out (and sorry for anyone we’ve missed).

- Thanks to Tyson Hofer and Jekko Axalan for the work on the concrete on Ash Street and removing the compost bin.
- You’ve got to see the upgrades to the outdoor gardens! Thanks to John Hearn and Melanie for the grounds work and support. Thanks, too, to the summer students on the grounds crew.
- After the roof upgrade, we had lots of work to do with our HVAC systems, so thank you to Clint Hudzick, Rory, Mike Oman, and Denis Pescitelli. The A/C is now on!

Examples of upgrades by the division's building and maintenance department at École Robert H. Smith School.



PLUMBING FOR NEW BOTTLE-FILL STATION



UPGRADED LANDSCAPING



NEW DRIP EDGE AND PARGING



UPGRADED ELECTRICAL FOR LAPTOP CART CHARGING

- We've had a huge upgrade to the gymnasium – all new energy efficient lighting! Thanks to Chris B and Rob R. for your work there, plus the new outlets for charging laptop carts.
- RHS has had major upgrades to its fire systems. Lucky for us the division sent Richard Bras with his expertise on alarms.
- The exterior wall of the “P wing” was showing its age until Neil repaired the stucco and installed a new drip edge. Quality work.
- The building division carpenters have done a dozen important jobs, from building fire doors to hanging projectors. Thanks to Rob, Jess, Bill, Roger, Mike K., and Beau for making the building safer and more livable. Shout out too to the lock and key expertise of Paul Herold.
- RHS has improved safety and drainage by removing the Ash Street overhang and building a masonry wall in the crawlspace. Lucky for us the division sent bricklayers Mark Peterson and Terry Egan. The entrance looks amazing.
- The painting trades upgraded our P-wing hallway, and we had the glazier out several times to repair windows. Thanks to Lionel Duval and Ashley Wollman. Your work is much appreciated.
- Big thanks to Jack Buckle, Dan Shepit, and Michael White (small engines).

Being a tradesperson in WSD must be daunting – there are 80 schools and even more buildings. The work we've had done at École Robert H. Smith has been of high quality, improved the functionality of the school, and looks pretty darn good, too. Thanks for going the extra mile!

# Parent Advisory Group (PAG) Updates

## Chair End of Year Report

With this being our last PAG Update of the school year I thought it best to review what the PAG has accomplished during this school year - in the middle of a Global Pandemic!

- The PAG was able to have all 5 of our mandated PAG meetings - all done virtually this year
- The PAG was able to put pressure on the WSD1 to insist that they reinstate the 3 South District Advisory and 3 French Language Advisory meetings after going 9 months without any meetings
- Fun Lunch - although they were restricted from providing any events for students this year (because of COVID) they were able to put last year's (2019-20) unused funds from the Pay-It-Forward donations towards Ma Mawi Chi Itata - an Inner City Community Program - at a time when it was needed most. A total of \$1725.
- Created a New Initiative in November called Thank-A-Teacher Thursday where parents had the opportunity to contribute notes, treats and money to go towards our staff at a difficult time in the Covid School year. We raised a total of \$1035 and were able to have 4 events before Christmas including a Catered lunch for each staff member (47 in total). [Plus with the remaining funds we provided another lunch on June 16th to end the year!](#)
- Created a New Initiative in November called Pay-It-Forward Thank-A-Teacher Thursday where parents from our school had the opportunity to contribute treats and money towards the staff in an Inner City School. We raised a total of \$580. We provided treats from parents to: Pinkham, Victoria - Albert and Norquay schools. Plus with the money raised we provided a Catered Lunch to all the staff in David Livingstone and Dufferin schools before Christmas break.
- The PAG held a Wine Raffle in December to raise money for the school to use towards purchasing much needed Teacher Voice Amplification Devices - as a result of needing to wear face masks while teaching in-person. We raised a total of \$4766.80.
- Held our 1st Ever Virtual Family Dance on Friday, March 12th!
- Staff Appreciation was able to ensure that all staff were recognized and acknowledged throughout the year (Administrative Assistants Day, Custodian's Day, Support Staff Day etc...) plus the annual lunch event was held in February and each staff member received an individual catered meal
- The Environment Committee was able to provide a new area on the school field with trees, rocks and mulch for when students arrived back at school in September 2020. Put out a survey to gain feedback from parents for future projects. Continued to find ways to have parent volunteers water, weed and plant our school gardens. Currently working on a summer project to enhance and improve the track and Hardtop areas of the playground.
- Babysitting Course was able to go ahead with a new format this year - 3 day virtual event in April - 50 Grade 6 students participated

- Updated the website to include a new section devoted to information for parents on Bill 64
- Grade 6 Farewell was able to make the best of a COVID situation - instead of the traditional evening dinner and dance in the school gym, this year the students received a lunch delivered to their house with a Virtual DJ Dance Party in the afternoon
- PAG Fundraising held 4 Fundraisers this school year which included: Mabels Labels, Wine Raffle, Sunset Gourmet and Glenlea Plant Sale. A total of \$9454.65 was raised!!!

As you can clearly see that although this was a very different looking year with COVID restrictions, it was a successful year for the PAG and one that all of us can be proud of. Even during difficult times the PAG has and will continue to support our valued staff and school. A BIG Thanks to all the PAG Directors and parents of our school - we could not do what we do without your support!

### Environment Committee

Good things are growing in the RHS gardens! A big thank you to Mr. Nickerson, Ms. Kowalchuk, Mr. Zawadski and the custodial team for all their help with the outdoor classroom area. The classroom garden boxes are full to the brim with student grown and planted flowers and grasses, and the boxes and paths have been refurbished - be sure to walk by and check it out! The community veggie garden and butterfly gardens are also looking great, thanks to many helping hands.

Can you help us water this summer? We need more volunteers to keep the plants blooming till school returns in the fall. Recent adaptations to the water set-up make it easy! Please email [environment@roberthsmithpag.ca](mailto:environment@roberthsmithpag.ca) for information and to sign up. Hilarious

### Grade 6 Farewell

Congratulations to all of this year's Grade 6 Graduates - 61 in total! This year the Grade 6 Farewell Committee organized a lunch for each of the students - which included their choice of a custom sandwich from Subway or an individual pizza from Pizza Hotline, along with a bag of chips, box of smarties, kool-aid and a freezie! The meals were delivered to the students houses on Thursday, June 24th along with an invitation to join the Virtual Dance Party hosted by DJ Chedda from 1pm-2pm. The Committee also organized a parent photographer to take a special 'graduation pic' of each of the students at the school prior to the school shutdown. These pics were then given out to the students to keep as a memento! Big Thanks to Gail Johnston and her crew for making this happen!

If you are interested in joining the PAG or finding out further information please email Melanie at: [chair@roberthsmithpag.ca](mailto:chair@roberthsmithpag.ca). Don't forget to check out our PAG website: [www.roberthsmithpag.weebly.com](http://www.roberthsmithpag.weebly.com) and our PAG Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/RobertHSmithPAG> (please like and follow us).