

IN FOCUS

WITH GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION



March/April 2020

Message from Director of Education/CEO, Quintin Robertson

We will all remember March 20, 2020, to be the day that schools were closed across the province in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. With the closure, students, families and staff were faced with a lot of uncertainty.

During these times, our beliefs of Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Nurturing and Perseverance continue to be our focus. I am very proud of our school staff for absorbing the reality of our current world and immediately reaching out to GSSD families to encourage their children to engage in supplemental learning. I am equally proud of our families for abiding to the directive of the Province in order to remain safe and healthy.

There are still many questions we are striving to answer; as we receive information or directives from the Provincial Response Planning Team, we will share it with our stakeholders.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other!

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

GSSD believes that we are all accountable. Board members, students, staff, families and community members have a responsibility, both individually and as part of the learning team, to participate and to contribute positively to public education.

Long-term Goals

- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will implement systemic approaches to find efficiencies and increase value for money allowing the division to respond to the challenges of student and staff needs.

TECHNOLOGY RENEWAL IN GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION

Over the past 25 years, Good Spirit School Division and its legacy School Divisions invested in Information Technology Resources for both staff and students. Our usual process was to complete a full removal of all the old equipment and replace it with all new equipment every four or five years. After reviewing the cost factors and the overall sustainability of continuing with this type of Renewal Cycle, GSSD Administration concluded that a new method of continuous renewal was required. Some of the factors used in our determination include:

1. Timeframe – one summer is not enough time to deploy and configure all the infrastructure, servers and devices without significant additional vendor support. Additional time is lost while all staff and students learn the new technologies introduced. Gradual changes, planned in advance with the schools, will eliminate much of this lost time.
2. Additional Vendor Support costs have significantly increased over the last few years. Interim project that keep Good Spirit School Division in compliance will continue to increase. It is more cost-effective to employ additional specialist positions that allow Tech Services to be self-sufficient.
3. Devices are now built for shorter lifespans. Renewal using annual deployments ensure that all schools have access to devices that are current and managed.

Photo below: Current staff laptops



Continued on next page...

STUDENT & FAMILY

INTERNAL PROCESSES

PEOPLE CAPACITY

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

TECHNOLOGY RENEWAL IN GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION continued...

4. Infrastructure such as Firewall, Servers, Networking Equipment (switches and wireless coverage) can be designed and deployed to meet the needs of annual deployments. Systems, especially cloud-based systems such as Google Suite for Education and Office 365, are continuously updated. Annual deployments combined with additional specialists will ensure we are able to fully utilize all the system's feature sets and keep the costs of supporting and maintain systems to a minimum.



Photo above: This is what the new staff laptop will look like

To begin this new process, the Board of Education approved two budget exception requests. The first is to update our fleet of staff laptops – all of which are 5 to 10 years old. The second is for student devices. These devices will be deployed in schools on a first in first out (FIFO) basis, with the oldest devices being removed from service first. It will be a busy summer readying and deploying devices in our schools.



Photo above: Student devices

PEOPLE CAPACITY FOCUS

GSSD is a community of learners and believes collaborative partnerships with students, staff, families and community members will enhance educational opportunities.

Long-term Goal

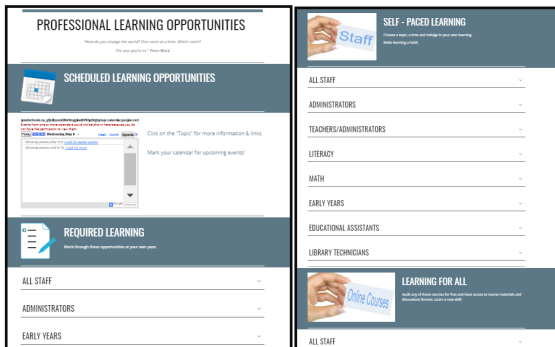
- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will demonstrate a commitment to provide professional development and training to its staff.
- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will increase our organization's cultural competencies through division-wide processes and professional learning that grow our collective understanding about Indigenous identity, histories, worldview and systemic barriers.
- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will enrich existing partnerships and establish new partnerships to enhance educational opportunities for Indigenous students.
- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will demonstrate a commitment to the establishment of new and reaffirmed partnerships.

GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Due to the global pandemic, Professional Development (PD) looks a lot different for staff than it did a few short months ago. Good Spirit School Division is continuing to provide PD via an online video and audio conferencing platform instead of face to face.

PD Event	Date	Topic / Outcome
Transition to Online Learning	March 31, April 1, 2, 3, 2020	These sessions answered many of the questions staff had about the transition to online learning. It included how to design and deliver interactive online learning opportunities using Seesaw, Google Classroom & Moodle, where to access resources, and how to collaborate with colleagues and families.
Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) PLCs	April 3, 2020	Two online PAA meetings where held for PAA teachers to discuss what their online supplemental learning will look like for students.
Phys. Ed PLCs	April 3, 2020	Two online Phys. Ed PLC meetings were held for Phys. Ed teachers to collaborate on ways they can continue to provide students with supplemental learning for Phys. Ed.
Transition to Online Learning—Student Support	April 7, 2020	This session reviewed online tools and resources to support students with intervention and go over how to provide support through Google Classroom, SeeSaw and Zoom.
Library Technician Meeting	April 8, 2020	All Library Technicians within GSSD met virtually to discuss tasks that can be completed from now to the end of the 2019/2020 school year and ways they can continue to support staff within the school division.

PD Event	Date	Topic / Outcome
Art Education PLC	April 23, 2020	During this session, Free My Muse Theatre Co. Artistic Director, Carrie Pengilly explored with K-12 teachers ways to engage students in the arts through additional learning invitations and weekly challenges.
Sigmund Brouwer—Academy4Writers	April 29, 2020	The GSSD Literacy Team invited ELA teachers to participate in a webinar with Sigmund Brouwer. Sigmund has developed a writing curriculum designed for at home delivery which includes on-demand video lessons where Sigmund introduces a concept and then assigns an activity for students. These lessons align with Saskatchewan curricula, with the cut and paste of a link, students have access to Sigmund’s highly engaging and motivational messages.
Educational Assistants (EAs) Online Learning Modules	Ongoing April—June	Educational Assistants have the opportunity from April to June to complete online learning modules. The modules come with 2-3 different sections complete with videos and reading materials. The modules are: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Behaviour, Executive Function, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Mindset, Relationships, Social Emotional Learning, Understanding the Adolescent Brain, Grit: What is it?, Why it Matter and How to Cultivate it, The Power of Relationships in Schools and Bringing the Science of Learning into the Classroom.
MySchool Sask Training	April—Ongoing	In the Fall of 2020, GSSD will begin using the provincial unified Student Information System. Branded as “MySchoolSask”, the new system is a centralized platform for safely and securely hosting and managing student data. Administrative Assistants and Administrators are participating in six—1.5 hour sessions related to student enrolment, reporting, fees and walk-in scheduling.



Photos to the left: GSSD has created a webpage of professional development opportunities for all staff to utilize. There is required learning, such as the 4 Seasons of Reconciliation training and then there is PD staff can do at their own pace. As of print, there are over 40 different PD opportunities for staff.

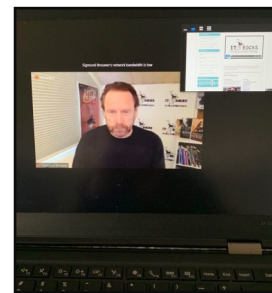


Photo to the left: Sigmund Brouwer joined ELA teachers on a webinar, discussing his writing curriculum for at home.



Photo to the left: Board of Education held their April 2, 2020 Board Meeting via Zoom.

4 SEASONS OF RECONCILIATION EDUCATION



“By June 30, 2020, GSSD will increase our organization’s cultural competencies through division-wide processes and professional learning that grow our collective understanding about Indigenous identity, histories, worldview and systemic barriers.”

In an effort to advance reconciliation, all GSSD employees, and the Board of Education, are required to complete the 4 Seasons of Reconciliation online course. This multi-media teaching unit promotes a renewed relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians through transformative learning about truth and reconciliation. Upon completion of this 3 hour course, attendees will receive a certificate via email.

Photo above: 4 Seasons of Reconciliation certificate of completion.

STUDENT AND FAMILY FOCUS

GSSD exists to provide the highest level of student learning & well-being. All students will experience learning environments rich in the opportunities and experiences necessary to promote intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth.

Long-term Goals

- By June 30, 2020, 30% more students will exit Kindergarten at appropriate development (green) than when entering Kindergarten.
- By June 30, 2020, there will be 2% more students reading at or above grade level in Grades 1 to 6 compared to the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, there will be 2% more students writing at or above grade level in Grades 4, 7, & 9 compared to the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, there will be 2% more Grades 2, 5, & 8 students at or above grade level in math compared to the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, the number of students reporting high levels of anxiety will reduce by 2% based on the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, the three-year graduation rate will increase by 2% from the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, the five-year graduation rate will increase by 2% from the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, students in Grades 4 to 12 will report a 2% increase in student intellectual engagement based on the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, all students will achieve a 2% increase in student attendance based on the previous year's June data.
- By June 30, 2020, GSSD will determine the levels of parental engagement of all schools.

COMMUNITIES GIVING BACK

Because school breakfast programs are not operational during this pandemic, communities within Good Spirit took it upon themselves to provide meals for students.

In Esterhazy and area, 100 lunches were provided for pick-up/delivery by Anytime Fitness, Maid Marien's Catering, Polvi Fitness and Crystal's Kitchen.

In Yorkton, the Yorkton Soup Haven worked with local churches to provide lunches for children. Lunches are available for pick up, on weekdays, from the Dream Centre, Prairie Harvest and Westview United.

In Kamsack, the Family Resource Centre hands out bagged lunches every Wednesday from 12pm to 1pm.



GSSD STUDENT SUPPORT

During this time of uncertainty, GSSD remains committed to supporting the well-being of students. Despite schools being closed, School Counsellors are still accessible to all GSSD students. If students require additional emotional or social support, they are encouraged to reach out to their respective School Counsellor by email. Emails are monitored and responded to during regular school hours.



Check out the videos which Miranda Reilkoff-Leis, School Counsellor, has posted on the Kamsack Comprehensive Institute (KCI) Instagram page. She shared information on "how to find your calm," "how do you express your feelings and soothe yourself in times of uncertainty?" and "who is connected to your invisible string". These great videos, for all students and families, can be found @KamsackSpartans on Instagram!

Photo to the left: Miranda Reilkoff-Leis, School Counsellor, posts videos on the KCI Instagram page, allowing her to continue to make a connection with families and students.

GSSD SPEECH-LANGUAGE SUPPORT

The speech-language team has been hard at work brainstorming, developing, and learning new ways of supporting families with speech and/or language from home.

GSSD parents are encouraged to email their school Administrator if they would like their child to continue receiving speech language support. The Speech Language Pathologist will work with families to determine the best way of providing support.

Check out the Good Sprit School Division Speech-Language Department brand-new Facebook page....they share fun ways of incorporating speech and language activities at home.



Photo to the right: Find the GSSD Speech & Language Therapy Program on Facebook. Activities are posted weekly.

TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Teachers across the division have found creative ways of connecting with students and have learned how to deliver supplemental learning in the virtual world.



Photo to the left: Mrs. Kitch, held a Zoom art class for Kindergarten students at Davison and Miller School

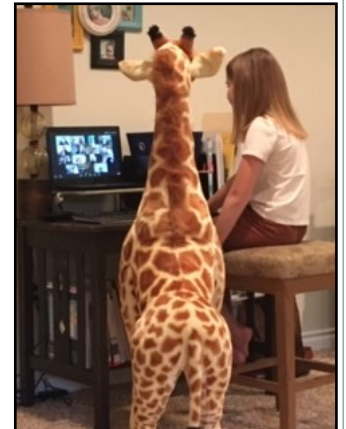


Photo above: In Mrs. Cleverly's Grade 2/3 M.C. Knoll class, students participated in Show and Tell via Zoom.

Photos to the right: Grade 2/3 teacher, Mrs. Reminek from Dr. Brass School, cleverly used a pizza box as her teaching wall while teaching in the Zoom world

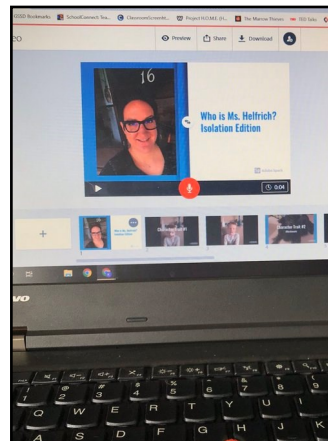
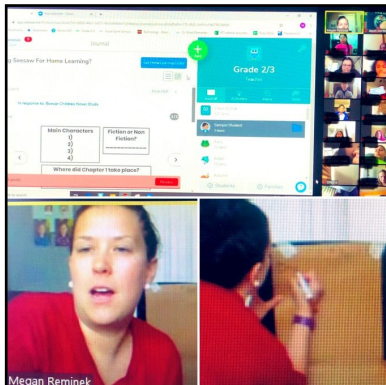
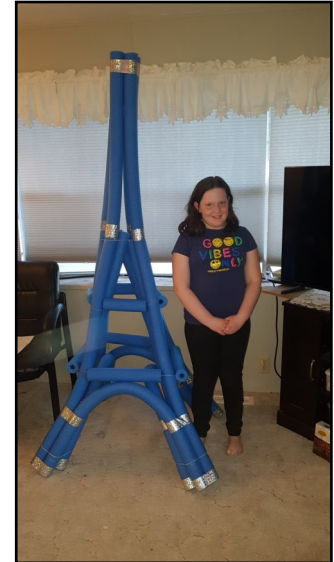


Photo to the left: Yorkton Regional High School teacher, Ms. Helfrich, creates virtual lesson plans like a character trait video assignment

VIRTUAL STRUCTURE FAIR

The Grade 3 students, at Yorkdale Central School, built structures for their science unit culminating with a virtual structure fair! When students were still at school, they researched information about their structures and wrote a report. Now that they are at home, students continued with this project by building their structures under parent supervision. The virtual structure fair was a hit!



ALL STAR SELECTION

Although Basketball Saskatchewan Inc. made their 2019/2020 All Star Selections, the 2020 Senior Classic is postponed. GSSD would like to celebrate the students who were a part of the selection including: Canora Composite School students, Rebekah Thomas and Ashley Stusek who were selected to the Senior All Star Classic; Norquay School students, Salem Johnson, Shanae Olson, Zane Bayer; and, Preeceville School student Agamveer Singh.

Congratulations!



STAYING CONNECTED WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES DURING COVID-19

GSSD staff never cease to amaze us with their creativity! Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have pulled out all the stops to continue connecting with students and families. Staff have exemplified GSSD's values of "Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Nurturing and Perseverance" and are ensuring that "Students Come First"!



Continued on next page...

STAYING CONNECTED WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES DURING COVID-19 continued...



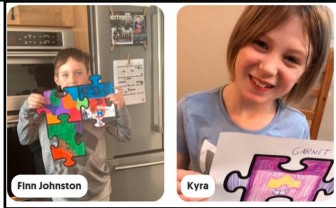
Photos to the left: Churchbridge Public School releases a weekly Charger Report on their Youtube channel. The report is an online newsletter with all the happenings within the school community.



Photo to the right: Staff at Melville Comprehensive School made a donation of \$500 to the Melville Food Bank. The funds were raised from their dress down Fridays.



Photo to the left: Preeceville School asked students and families to send in pictures of their pets learning alongside their owners.



Photos above: April 2, 2020 was Autism Awareness Day. Typically P.J. Gillen (PJG) School students and teachers do an activity as a school to recognize the day. This year, they took it digital...the puzzle piece is a recognizable symbol adopted to recognize the many facets of Autism. Families were invited to design their own puzzle piece and upload it. The individual pieces were then placed together showcasing each unique personality

Photo to the right: Victoria School has created a fun way for families to engage with staff, by creating "Guess Who" posts on their Facebook page. When the Victoria School staff member's baby picture is posted, students and families have the opportunity to guess who it is.



Photos to the left: Invermay School held a "Green Day" spirit day on April 3, 2020, students and families were encouraged to show their school spirit by wearing green.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL DAY

April 22, 2020 was national Administrative Professionals Day. Our success as a school division is a reflection of their hard work and we are grateful that they are apart of the team.

Staff from around the division shared why they love their Administrative Assistants... check out some of the responses!



INTERNAL PROCESS FOCUS

GSSD is committed to providing equitable, balanced opportunities among schools, students, and staff.

Long-term Goals

- By June 30, 2020, each functional area within GSSD will demonstrate improvement in services through the development and revision of processes and administrative procedures.

DEPLOYMENT OF GSSD DEVICES

With COVID-19 forcing schools to close, the Senior Leadership Team developed a Supplemental Learning Plan for all Prekindergarten to Grade 12 students who attend GSSD schools. With many families struggling to find adequate devices for online learning, GSSD developed a plan which saw approximately 750 electronic devices delivered to the doorstep of families.



Photo above: Jeremy Allard, Bus Driver in Kamsack, was just one of the many Bus Drivers who pulled together to deliver devices to students.

While technicians from the technology department worked tirelessly to clean and sanitize I pads and Chromebooks for distribution, members of the Facilities team worked with the Transportation Department to coordinate the delivery of these devices across all corners of the school division. Bus Drivers were deployed to ensure that students had the necessary tools to continue their learning in an online format.

Without the efforts of the Network Coordinator, technology technicians, the Caretaker Coordinator and school caretakers, the Transportation Information Systems Assistant and Transportation Assistant, as well as school administrators and bus drivers, this overwhelming task would not have been successful. Without question, not even the crisis of COVID-19 was able to deter a unified and dedicated team from supporting the learning needs of our students.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Within the Good Spirit School Division's Strategic Plan, goals are set within various functional areas to improve their services by revising and creating processes and administrative procedures. During the 2019-20 school year, the transportation department has been very involved in examining processes and endeavoring to improve and streamline them. Significant work has been done regarding policies and procedures involving fleet vehicles, out of attendance area transportation requests, allowances provided in lieu of bus service, bus accident process, student code of conduct, bus safety, and inclement weather.

Some of the work has involved collaborative sessions involving school administrators and bus drivers. This collaboration has been very valuable and has honored the voices of employees at the grassroots level. Continued efforts are focusing on the development of a Student/Family Handbook as well as a Bus Driver Handbook to be ready for distribution at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year.

SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL STAFFING

With the spring, comes the important task of staffing schools for the next school year. Each year, Senior Administration obtains feedback from in-school administrators, School Community Councils and the Board of Education to set priorities for staffing. During these feedback sessions, there was consistency regarding the priorities which Senior Administration was asked to consider for the 2020-21 school year. There was an overwhelming desire to maintain Pupil-Teacher ratios (PTR) and classroom size.

In developing a staffing formula, consideration is given to the allocation of in-school administration time, local diversities, school size, graduation rates, and unique programming. In deriving the staff full time equivalents (FTE) for schools, there is significant attention paid to the local context for each school.

GSSD, along with all other school divisions across the province, is dependent upon provincial funding to carry out its daily operations. Each year, the Education Council works closely with the Chief Financial Officer to ensure school staffing levels are equitable and work within the confines of the budget. With the staffing allocations being complete, Education Council is now poised to work with in-school administrators to hire the most suitable candidates for positions that are vacant.

THE GSSD WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Focusing in on ...

With the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic upon us, life as we have known it has changed dramatically in the course of a few short weeks. Suddenly our daily reality of being at school, teaching, learning and spending time with students, colleagues, family, and community has been altered. The new normal is abruptly upon us all!

With community closures, social and physical distancing, self-imposed isolation, quarantine, and strict personal hygiene requirements it has made everyone become cognisant of their own personal health and wellness. Not only for ourselves but also for our families, loved ones, and extended social networks.

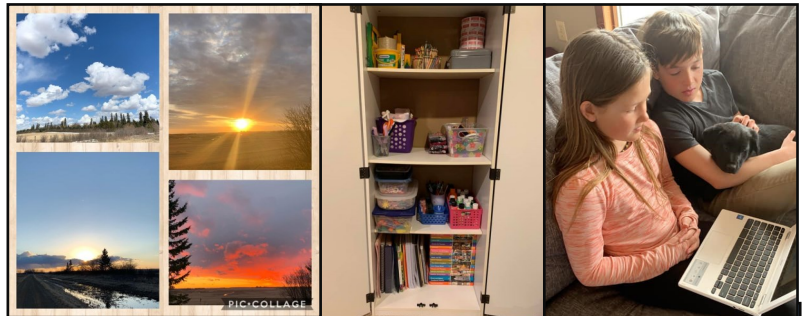
At this time, it is essential that our **personal wellness** is an important and critical element of moving forward to support our families, students, and colleagues. Staff members, Alisa Leidl, Amanda Kornaga, Shawna Davis, Melissa Johanson and advisor Reg Leidl created the Wellness Challenge; a 12 week challenge to motivate staff and students within GSSD to enhance their own personal wellness.

Some of the challenges have included a gratitude journal, rekindling or starting a new hobby, getting outside, being active, checking off a task on your to-do list, and practicing mindfulness. So far the participation has blown us away! We can't wait to see how the next few weeks go.

To those of you who have participated every week.. Thank you!

For those who have not... It is never too late to join us.

Check out some of the submissions so far!



* New challenges are posted every Monday!

@GSSD Wellness Challenge

@GSSD204

GSSD FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

- Our Motto** Students Come First
- Our Mission** Building Strong Foundations to Create Bright Futures
- Our Values** Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Nurturing, and Perseverance
- Our Vision** Learning Without Limits...Achievement For All