

IN FOCUS

WITH GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION



January/February 2021

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, 2021, GSSD will demonstrate a commitment to provide professional development and training to staff based on the four focus areas.
- By June 30, 2021, 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, 2021, GSSD will demonstrate a commitment to the establishment of new and reaffirmed partnerships.
- By June 30, 2021, GSSD will actualize an Early Years Engagement Network.
- By June 30, 2021, GSSD will establish a First Nations, Metis and Inuit Engagement Network to enhance educational opportunities for Indigenous students.

RCMP & GSSD: A PARTNERSHIP TO CELEBRATE

Good Spirit School Division is proud to acknowledge and celebrate a strong and dedicated partnership with the RCMP.

This partnership supports safety in all GSSD schools and surrounding communities. The entire Parkland Region depends on the RCMP to be essential members of the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol, and they are involved when any Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) is conducted.

The RCMP has taken the initiative to coordinate safety events, including a comprehensive lockdown drill held at the Yorkton Regional High School in May of 2019.

School administrators and counsellors appreciate that they can depend on RCMP members to be available for consultation and learning support. In the Yorkton area, this includes the assistance of a dedicated Resource Officer.

On February 4, the GSSD Administrator's Group was pleased to accept the certificate, pictured below, from former Yorkton Staff Sergeant Jeff Simpson. The group took time to express sincere appreciation to S/Sgt. Simpson for his work and dedication to supporting safety in GSSD. Simpson has recently moved out of the Yorkton area to become the Director of Operations for Mackenzie County in Alberta. We wish him all the best in his new endeavors!

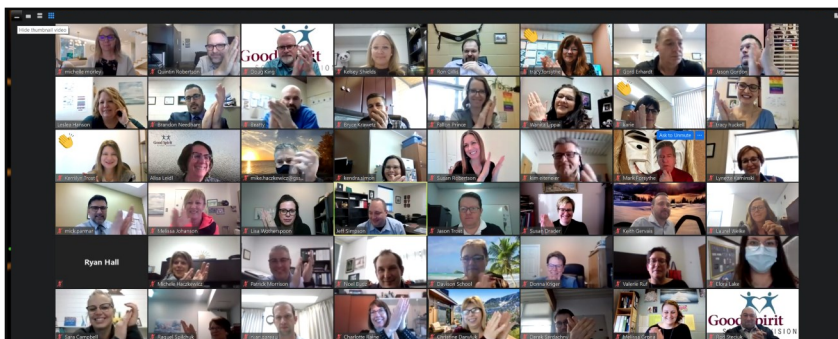


Photo above: At the February 4th Admin meeting, GSSD Administrators Group expressed their appreciation to S/Sgt. Simpson for his work and dedication to safety for staff, students and community members within GSSD.

STUDENT & FAMILY

INTERNAL PROCESSES

PEOPLE CAPACITY

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

COTE FIRST NATION PARTNERSHIP

Good Spirit School Division and Cote First Nation representatives have committed to meet throughout the 2020-21 school year to create an Educational Service Agreement (ESA). Beginning in September 2020, several meetings have taken place both in-person and virtually with GSSD leadership and Cote First Nation's Education Council.

Educational Service Agreements outline basic education services that the Division will provide to federal students. Federally funded students pay tuition using Regulation 16 rates to the school board in exchange for educational services.

It is the goal of both parties to have a mutually beneficial ESA finalized in advance of the 2021-22 school year. The ESA will form a foundation for future discussions with other neighboring First Nations. GSSD is proud of the collaborative relationship with Cote First Nation and strives to continue building strength, trust, and accountability through continued discussions.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS VIRTUAL MENTORING

Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Good Spirit School Division have been in a partnership with each other for over 10 years, providing mentoring opportunities for students in Yorkton and surrounding area.

Good Spirit School Division has students who are mentors from Esterhazy, Langenburg, and Yorkton.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, mentoring was moved to a virtual platform, MentorCity, to ensure safety protocols are maintained.

MentorCity is a platform supervised by Big Brothers Big Sisters, where mentors and mentees can schedule meetings, chat with each other and set goals all within a safe, secure, and confidential environment.

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“As a mentor, I strive for creating a safe space that allows my mentee to feel free and express themselves with no judgement. I make them feel validated and accepted. At the beginning, my mentee was shy and reserved. They did not speak up and only answered when prompted. However, after consequent meetings, they started opening up as we discussed their interests. Having a safe meeting platform such as MentorCity has helped this to take place. It is extremely user friendly and meets our needs.”

~ Yorkton Mentor

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Virtual mentoring has opened the doors for GSSD and the Big Brothers Big Sisters partnership to expand.

Mentors and mentees who live in different communities now have the ability to connect with each other regardless of their location.

If you would like to volunteer as a mentor, contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yorkton and Area at bbbyorkton@sasktel.net or by calling 306-782-3471.



MEET A BUS DRIVER

Bus Drivers play an important role within a school division, they are often the first and last person students come in contact with on schools days, they ensure the safety of students who ride the bus and they build connections with parents and the Administration at each school.

Over the remainder of the 2020-21 school year, the transportation team will be highlighting drivers from the division.

Read below to learn about one of the GSSD Spare Bus Drivers — **Brian Campbell**.



- 1) How long have you been a spare bus driver?
 - “I have been spare driving for 14 years.”
- 2) What inspired you to be a bus driver?
 - “Several regular bus drivers suggested I should spare drive to help them out when they were unable to drive. That sounded interesting so I got my bus driver endorsement.”

3) What other interests do you have?

- “I’ve been fully retired for the last five years and love trying different things. I’ve helped neighbours farming, have distributed and collected ballot boxes, landscaped, renovated houses and built bat houses to name a few.”

4) Do you have a pet?

- “We have a farm dog named Bandit! He doesn’t bark, doesn’t chase anything and has no qualms about sharing his food with the magpies.”

5) What adventures over the course of your career have you found particularly satisfying?

- “The most outstanding I suppose was the two years I spent in eSwatini (you’ll have to Google that one) on a Canadian dairy project as the farm engineer/shop foreman.”

6) If you could invite anyone to be a guest on your bus, who would it be and why?

- “I would invite members of the design teams for the various school bus manufacturers. I am sure we would have an interesting discussion.”

7) What is your favorite travel destination?

- “I’ve travelled Canada from Whitehorse to Charlottetown. I have seen Niagara Falls and Victoria Falls, the Grand Canyon and the Big Muddy. The favorite spot is the next one. One of my most enjoyable trips would be the three day whirlwind trip in August of 2017 that my sons and I took to Alliance Nebraska to view the full eclipse of the sun.”

8) Would you recommend being a spare bus driver?



- “Certainly, for several reasons:
 - If you have time available and like to drive, it’s an excellent way to meet others, keep abreast of changes occurring in the countryside and simply help out the regular drivers and the school system in general.
 - Extracurricular trips provide the opportunity to view Saskatchewan points of interest you may not have seen or been aware of... The fish hatchery at Fort Qu’Appelle, The Science Centre, one of more of the many interpretive centres, Batoche, and even the ski hills;

• The school division will cover your training costs to get the school bus endorsement needed on your driver’s license.”



You can become a driver too!
Call 306-786-5505 to get started today.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Every January, GSSD holds a professional development (PD) day... the students may have the day off... but the staff are hard at work!

With the current pandemic, staff participated in the January 29 and February 1, 2021, PD days virtually.

The days provided staff with the opportunity to strengthen their skills and learn new ideas to use inside and outside of the classroom.

Staff had the opportunity to join a Zoom session with facilitator Britton Houdek from the Saskatchewan Health Authority. Houdek allowed staff to explore their feelings and thoughts surrounding the current experiences society is facing. Staff were encouraged to do self-reflection and were given self-assessment tools to continue to take care of their mental health.

The session was well received by staff and we thank Britton Houdek for taking the time to connect with the division.

It was a great two days of collaboration, communication and learning!

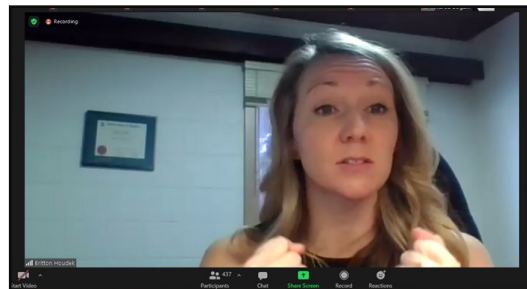


Photo above: During her mental health presentation, Britton Houdek touched on “Radical Acceptance” the practice that reality must be accepted, rather than fought against.

GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PD Event	Date	Topic / Outcome
Mental Health Session	Jan. 29, 2021 Feb. 1, 2021	This mandatory session for all staff touched on validation and recognition of current experiences, mental health information that applied to experiences that staff might be going through and self-reflection and self-assessment tools. The session was presented by Britton Houdek from the Saskatchewan Health Authority.
Kindergarten Report Cards	Jan. 29, 2021	Kindergarten teachers in GSSD were shown how to complete the new report card template in Edsby.
Human Resources for Administrators	Jan. 29, 2021	This session was facilitated by Superintendent of Human Resources, Jason Trost. Trost gave an introduction to the hiring process for 2021-22, discussed new interview questionnaires and touched on documentation storage in the system Atrivee.
Library Technician PLC	Jan. 29, 2021	Library Technicians in GSSD met via ZOOM for a networking meeting to discuss recent developments and changes in the divisions school library practice.
Kindergarten to Grade 6 Physical Education PLC	Jan. 29, 2021	This mandatory session for all Kindergarten to Grade 6 Phys. Ed. teachers was facilitated by Dr. Reg Leidl. The session included sharing of physical education and health resources that support K-6 blended/remote learning.
StayLit Conference	Feb. 1, 2021	This was a recorded session from Dr. Jody Carrington. Staff had the option of viewing it during the month of February. Dr. Carrington discussed all things trauma, mental health, joy and staying connected.
Grade 7 to 12 Physical Education PLC	Feb. 1, 2021	This session was for Grade 7-12 Phys. Ed teachers. Dr. Reg Leidl shared resources and external professional development opportunities, and highlighted outcomes focusing on exercise, psychology and mental training strategies.
Grade 7 to 12 PAA PLC	Feb. 1, 2021	This PAA PLC focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safety, budget and facilities updates, • curriculum updates; • PAA and outcome-based report cards; • Apprenticeship and Ag Tech opportunities.
Grade 7 to 9 Middle Years Outcome Based Reporting and Gradebook	Feb. 1, 2021	Grade 7 to 9 teachers reviewed outcome-based assessment and reporting while learning to maintain grading integrity.

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, 2021, GSSD will implement systemic and transparent approaches to find efficiencies and increase value for money allowing the division to respond to the challenges of student and staff needs.

2021-22 SCHOOL DIVISION FUNDING

Annually, the Ministry of Education requests projected enrollments from each school division in late December or early January. The projected enrollment is used to calculate the grant revenue for each division. Good Spirit submitted 2021-22 projected enrollments to the Ministry on January 8, 2021.

The 2021-22 student enrolment projections were determined by reviewing three data sets: local knowledge; straight-line projections; and Barager data, which is planning software that assists with decision-making. GSSD Senior Administration reviewed the data with in-school administration to identify consistencies and anomalies. Greater emphasis is placed on local knowledge in the determination of enrolment levels. This is particularly important when predicting Kindergarten levels as in-school administration have close connections to local daycares and other child-care providers.

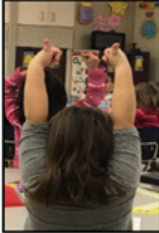
Based on enrolment data submitted to the Ministry of Education, GSSD will be experiencing an enrolment decline of 120 students. This decline's primary cause can be attributed to fewer students entering Kindergarten versus students graduating from Grade 12. The decline in enrolment attributes to the anticipated budget reduction of approximately \$900,000. Significant work will be occurring this spring to develop a balanced budget given the anticipated revenue reductions. Consultation sessions will be planned with in-school administration, school community councils, and the Board of Education to ensure that GSSD has developed a budget that aligns with the division priorities (shown below).



Board of Education Budget Framework 2021-22

HOW ARE WE FUNDED?

The Government of Saskatchewan determines the funding available to school divisions each year. The primary driver for funding is projected enrolment levels established prior to the upcoming academic year. Boards of Education are given the responsibility to allocate funding in an equitable and transparent manner that reflect the principles, priorities and commitments adopted by the Board of Education.



WHAT ARE WE ABOUT? GSSD Aspirational Statements

Student Learning and Well-Being
We exist to provide the highest level of student learning. All students will experience learning environments rich in the opportunities and experiences necessary to promote intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being.

Equitable and Balanced Opportunities
We are committed to provide equitable, balanced opportunities among schools, students and staff.

Accountability for All
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 schools.

People Engagement
We are all a community of learners. Collaborative partnerships with students, staff, families and community members will enhance educational opportunities.

Sustainable Infrastructure
We are committed to providing modern, responsible infrastructure to maintain and promote the highest levels of support for students, staff, families and the community.

WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

Advocacy —The Board of Education and Administrative Council will conduct targeted advocacy sessions with the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Government seeking sustainable funding. GSSD will also explore innovative partnerships with a mission to expand funding sources allowing the division to meet the vision of building strong foundations and bright futures.

Principled Decision Making — The Board of Education and Administrative Council will strive to make budget decisions based on our Aspirational Statements.

Expenditure Review—The Board of Education and Administrative Council will support processes and practices that allow for the review of expenditures for cost efficiencies in operational, administrative, and instructional areas.

Equitable Staffing —The Board of Education and Administrative Council support equity and transparency of staff allocation. Staffing equity will be achieved by considering the Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) with an eye on class size, grade configurations, the diversity of our students, schools, and communities. Consultation and collaboration will be a key feature of the staffing process.

Targeted Supports for Indigenous Students – The Board of Education and Administrative Council are mindful of the significance and urgency of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. GSSD is compelled to work with stakeholders to enhance educational outcomes for indigenous students, now and into the future.

Maximizing the Impact of the Division's Strategic Plan – The Board of Education and Administrative Council is cognizant of the importance of the division four Focus Areas – Student & Family, People Capacity, Internal Processes, and Financial Stewardship. The division is committed to exploring new and innovative ways to enhance opportunities for students, staff, and communities.

Building Strong Foundations to Create Bright Futures

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, 2021, 30% more students will exit Kindergarten at appropriate development (green) than when entering Kindergarten.
- By June 30, 2021, there will be 2% more students reading at or above grade level in Grades 1 to 6 compared to the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021, there will be 2% more students writing at or above grade level in Grades 4, 7, & 9 compared to the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021 there will be 2% more Grades 2, 5, & 8 students at or above grade level in math compared to the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021, the number of students in Grades 4 to 12 reporting high levels of anxiety will reduce by 2% from fall 2020 data.
- By June 30, 2021, the three-year graduation rate will increase by 2% from the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021, the five-year graduation rate will increase by 2% from the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021, students in Grades 4 to 12 will report a 2% increase in student intellectual engagement from fall 2020 data.
- By June 30, 2021, all students will achieve a 2% increase in student attendance based on the June 2019 data.
- By June 30, 2021, GSSD will obtain an 80% parental satisfaction rating regarding COVID-19 supports and response.

OUTDOOR PLAY & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITHIN GSSD

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way physical education has been taught over the past year. Although there have been challenges, one positive influence may be the fact that GSSD physical education classes have moved outside as much as possible. This shift has created an opportunity to let children physically move in a less restrictive environment while continuing to promote safe social distancing. It encourages the use of playground structures and sports equipment and provides an opportunity for land-based instruction. GSSD physical education teachers have shown incredible creativity and ingenuity when moving their classes outdoors, in many instances, collaborating with their community partners to develop safe and engaging outdoor play spaces.

Research has shown that there is a marked positive increase in the health and wellness benefits of playing outside as opposed to the same activity or lesson being taught inside. Students exert more physical effort outside, they sleep better, are less stressed, feel better physically and emotionally, and best of all, they are more focused and open to learning in their other subject areas. Outdoor play has a positive effect on brain development and brain function. Happy, healthy students who play and exercise outside simply learn better and perform better academically. Although it has its' challenges, in terms of preparation and implementation for both the students and the teachers, the benefits of teaching outside may have a lasting impact on how students learn now, and in the future.



Photo above: Students at M.C. Knoll School play the game of "Newcomb Ball." Newcomb Ball is a game played as a variation of volleyball.



Photo above: Grade 7 students at Yorkdale Central School take part in a fun Crockicurl game at the Silver Heights Park in Yorkton.

FAMILY LITERACY DAY

Family Literacy Day, which is celebrated every year on January 27, raises awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in literacy activities as a family. This year's theme, "Travel The World Together", encouraged families to travel the world through imagination from the comfort of their own home.

Schools within GSSD used their creativity to celebrate this important day.



Photo above: The 38 page book, showcases the different languages and cultures that can be heard and seen within the halls of KCI.

At Kamsack Comprehensive Institute (KCI), teacher Julie Gareau created a special virtual book "Around the World Adventure Without Leaving Home" written just for the occasion to celebrate the diverse cultures and languages at KCI. You can view the book in full here: [Virtual KCI Book](#).

Literacy Fast Facts:

- 57% of kids who are frequent readers have parents who read books 5-7 days per week. (*Kids and Family Reading Report – Scholastic, 2017*)
- Research shows that reading aloud to your child is the single most important thing you can do to help prepare your children for reading and learning. (*Canoy et al., 2006*)
- Spending 15 minutes a day reading to your child, develops language and literacy skills—increased vocabulary, phonics and comprehension. (*Renaissance Learning. (2016)*)

INDIGENOUS STORYTELLING MONTH

Every week in February, students and staff had the opportunity to take part in Indigenous Storytelling, to celebrate Indigenous Storytelling Month.

First Nations people have long passed on knowledge from generation to generation through oral traditions, including storytelling.

Storytelling is a traditional method used to teach about cultural beliefs, values, customs, rituals, history, practices, relationships, and ways of life. Traditionally, it is during the winter months that First Nations storytelling occurs.

Schools had the opportunity to virtually hear from Knowledge Keepers and members of the Indigenous Community.

Traditional Stories such as the story of Iktomi were heard from Leslie Wilson, teachings of Pow wows and Regalia's were heard from Diane Musqua, and traditional plant uses were explained to students by Danny Whitehawk.

Questions were asked, stories were heard and lessons were taught. Good Spirit School Division would like to thank Leslie Wilson, George Musqua, Diane Musqua, Danny Whitehawk and Daphie Pooyak for taking the time to share their traditional stories and teachings with the students and staff of GSSD.

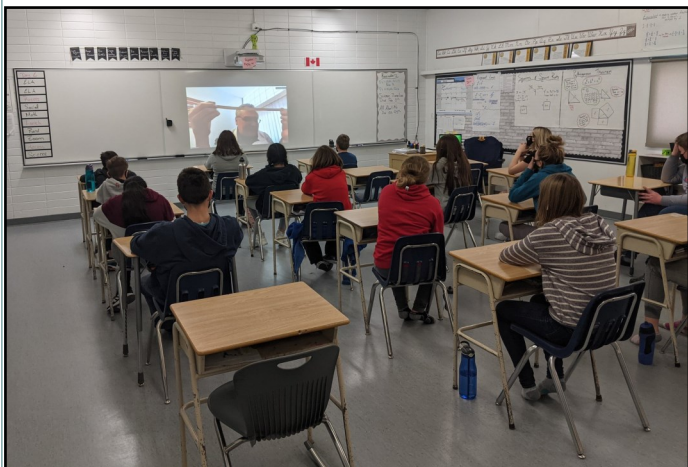


Photo above: Students from Grayson School heard from Danny Whitehawk, who shared his knowledge about traditional plant uses.



Photo above: Diane Musqua joined students every Friday in February and shared the story of Turtle Island— The Ojibwe creation story.

PINK SHIRT DAY 2021

Staff and students throughout the Good Spirit School Division donned their pink on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 for Pink Shirt Day.

The day started in 2007, when a grade nine student in Cambridge, Nova Scotia was bullied by classmates for wearing a pink shirt to school. Two boys chose to do something about the bullying and rallied behind the student, getting their peers to wear pink the next day. Their decision that day to not be bystanders, created a worldwide movement, educating and inspiring others to stand together and take action against violence and bullying.

While in previous years, many schools have held assemblies featuring guest speakers and various team-building activities. Due to the current COVID-19 guidelines, things looked a bit different this year.



Photo above: This Pink Shirt Day wall bulletin board created by the staff and students at M.C. Knoll School demonstrate the schools commitment to inclusion, kindness, and respect for all.



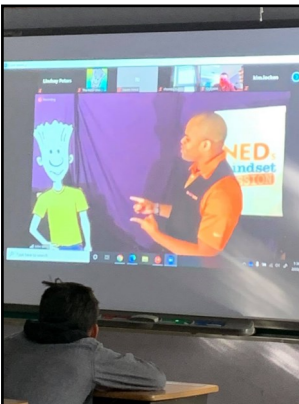
Photo above: Preeceville School students enjoyed the virtual Pink Shirt Day event.

Students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 at Preeceville School

took part in a special live virtual Pink Shirt Anti-bullying event with Canadian authors Eric Walters and Sigmund Brouwer. The event featured a visit to a Kenya orphanage and musical performances by RBC's Top 25 Immigrant Wali Shah and CCMA artist, Raquel Cole.

At GSSD, everyday is Pink Shirt Day, but on the 24th pink was worn to symbolize and support the movement of anti-bullying. The Division is continually working towards creating a positive and inclusive culture in our buildings.

NORQUAY STUDENTS ENJOY THE NED SHOW



Kindergarten to Grade 8 students at Norquay School were treated to a presentation about perseverance and learning.

Students participated in a character education assembly called "The NED Show."

NED is a cartoon character whose name is an acronym for *Never give up, Encourage others, and Do your best.*

The storytelling presentation transformed into teachable moments for students—encouraging students to stick with challenges, show a positive attitude and commit to goals.

Photo to the left: Students watched the virtual assembly of "The NED Show."

Sturgis Composite School Mini Miracle / Telemiracle Fundraiser



Great job, students and staff!

Thank you for supporting this year's Mini Miracle/Telemiracle!

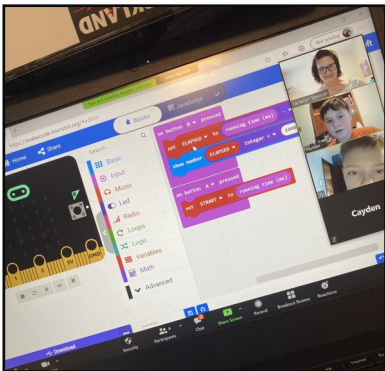
Walk-a-thon total = \$3112
Dress Down Fridays (Staff) = \$780
Hat Day Fridays (Students) = \$170

Grand Total = \$4 062



WINTER BLUES? NOT HERE!

Although it may be winter—schools in the division are warm with learning, creating, and having fun along the way! Check out what some GSSD schools have been up to in the first months of 2021.



In the photo above, Grade 5 students at the Digital Learning School shared their knowledge about Coding with each other.

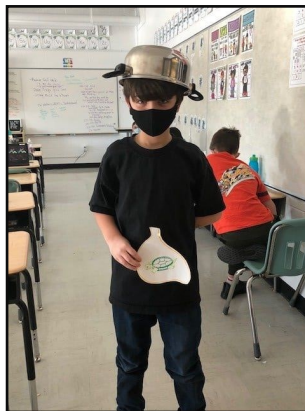


Shown in the photo above and to the right, Indigenous Success Coordinator, Jess Armstrong taught the Outdoor Leadership 20 class at Churchbridge Public School the history and art of beading.



Macdonald School's grade 7/8/9 class, along with schools from USA, Canada, China and France, attended a zoom call with actor Liev Schreiber through the Young Global Citizens initiative. The movement aims to empower young people to become engaged citizens and leaders, acting as ambassadors of inspiring values around the world. Staff and students at Macdonald School who are X-Men and Spiderman fans were said to be a little star struck.

P.J. Gillen School wrapped up their "One School, One Book" with a book character dress up day! The school read Judy Blume's book "The Tales of Fourth Grade Nothing!". Check out some the characters to the right.



Columbia School was the successful applicant to the "Take It Outside Winter" community grant. The grant allowed the school to build a Learn to Skate Outdoor Rink. Students and families are enjoying the pad of ice before the weather starts to change.



BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS

IT'S TIME!



Kindergarten

Children who were born in 2016 can register!

Register by the end of March.

Prekindergarten

**Now accepting applications for children who will be
age 3 or 4 during the 2021-2022 school year.**

Please apply by April 30th.

**PreK selection is based on the
Ministry of Education eligibility criteria.**

Children who turn 3
later in the year may
apply to PreK
throughout the year.

**Visit www.gssd.ca for
registration information
or call 306-786-5500**



INTERNAL PROCESS FOCUS

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

Long Term Goals

- By June 30, 2021, each functional area within GSSD will demonstrate improvement in services through the development and revision of processes and administrative procedures.
- By June 30, 2021, each functional area within GSSD will demonstrate improvement in services through the development, review, and revisions of processes.

ZONAR—STUDENT SCAN CARD PILOT PROJECT

In the interest of safety, Good Spirit School Division implemented a pilot project with eight school buses, requiring the students to carry cards that are scanned upon entry and exit of the bus. The implementation was staggered over three weeks in January, in an attempt to gradually work out any issues. Routes were chosen to get a mixture of rural, urban, and transfer students, to ensure a better compilation of data. Each bus involved in the project has a ZPass module installed that uses RFID technology to communicate with the card that each student must tap (similar to a bank card). This allows the division to view any students that have entered or exited the bus, which is useful in occasions of an accident, a missing student, or contact tracing.



Once a card is issued to a student, the parents or guardians of a student may sign up to receive notifications when the student scans on or off the bus. The cards are originally sent out with a GSSD lanyard and a zip-tie for fastening flexibility. In the event of a lost card, a replacement costs \$10 and is issued from the transportation department.

As a driver arrives at a scheduled stop, a list of students registered for that stop populates on the tablet. The name will highlight as the student scans on or off the bus to show the entrance or exit. This allows the bus driver to keep track of the students and ensure the information is being entered into the tablet correctly. The information is then sent to a secure database, where it can be viewed by the transportation department.

GSSD's goal is to have any issues resolved, which would allow us to expand the project to be present on all buses in the near future.

GSSD MANAGES THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

We want to assure you that school is a safe place to be and that transmission of COVID-19 is occurring outside of the school. The SHA would like our help with continuing to do our part in stopping the spread of COVID-19 by following Provincial regulations/protocols. Everyone is reminded to stay home if you display even the slightest symptom of COVID-19.

During the months of January and February, Director of Education, Quintin Robertson, held 27 Traumatic Events Response Team (TERT) and TERT Review meetings with school administration, Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) officials, GSSD Trustees, and GSSD Administration including the Deputy Director, Superintendent, Assistant to the Director, Facility Manager, Transportation Manager and Technology Coordinator due to individuals connected to the school testing positive for COVID-19.

Prior to Christmas, staff and students at **Macdonald School, PJ Gillen School and Esterhazy High School** were notified that they would either continue with or move to remote learning until Friday, January 8, 2021. On January 7, Public Health confirmed that face-to-face classes would resume on Monday, January 11, 2021.

A meeting was held with SHA on Wednesday, February 3 because an individual at **Columbia School** had tested positive for COVID-19. It was decided that the cancellation of classes was not necessary as staff and students in the classroom were not deemed as close contacts.

Langenburg Central School Kindergarten and Grade 2G classes were required to self-isolate therefore classes for these grades were cancelled on Friday, February 5 and Monday, February 8. Students participated in remote instruction on Tuesday, February 9 to Friday, February 12. Face-to-face classes resumed on Monday, February 22.

Continued on next page.

On February 5 and February 12 SHA advised GSSD that individuals at **Yorkton Regional High School** had tested positive for COVID-19. Staff and students who were considered a close contact were notified and classes continued as usual. On February 19, families with students in Welding 20-b and Mechanics & Automotive B20-b at the Yorkton Regional High School were notified that their classes would be cancelled on Monday, February 22 and that they would begin remote learning on Tuesday, February 23 to Friday, February 26. These classes returned to face-to-face on Monday, March 1.

On February 15, Public Health advised GSSD that all students in Grade 3B and some students in Grade 3F at **Yorkdale Central School** were required to self-isolate. Classes for these two grades were cancelled on Monday, February 22 and remote instruction took place on Tuesday, February 23 to Friday, February 26. Public Health officials confirmed that classes could return to face-to-face on Monday, March 1.

On February 15, families with students in ELA 30, Biology 30, and Phys Ed 30 at **Kamsack Comprehensive Institute** (KCI) were notified of that there would be a change in instruction due to an individual in those classes testing positive for COVID-19. Then on February 19, GSSD was notified that additional positive COVID-19 cases were identified within the school. To minimize further risk, it was decided that all Grades 5 to 12 classes would be cancelled on Monday, February 22 and Tuesday, February 23 and then remote instruction would occur on Wednesday, February 24 to Friday, February 26.

On February 28, Victoria School and Esterhazy High School families received notification of change in instruction due to positive COVID-19 case(s) associated to their school. At **Victoria School**, all students in Kindergarten to Grade 4 moved to remote instruction. As a result, all classes are cancelled on Monday, March 1 and Tuesday, March 2, 2021. Remote instruction will begin on Wednesday, March 3, 2021. PreK classes will be cancelled beginning on Monday, March 1, 2021. Classes will tentatively resume face-to-face on Monday, March 15, 2021. Individuals in the Grade 11 and 12 classes at **Esterhazy High School** had tested positive for COVID-19. To minimize further risk of transmission resulting from possible exposure in the Grade 11 class, all Grade 11 classes moved to mandatory remote learning on Monday, March 1 to Friday, March 12, 2021.

To view all correspondence that has been shared with families within the affected schools, visit gssd.ca > [COVID-19 Response](#) > [Covid-19 Updates from GSSD](#).

A parent and a staff member shared their experience of transitioning to remote instruction:

Although remote learning is a different way of learning, the positive is it increases everyone's technical skills and it fosters independence & self-advocacy in students. Families are doing a wonderful job navigating through the remote learning landscape to make our job easier to still provide a quality education during these uncertain times.

– Ryan Gareau, KCI Vice Principal

We found the transition to remote learning through Yorkdale seamless...hard to believe...I know...but it's true.

Mrs. Breitzkreuz had taken time during her break to message and let us know what she could do about what would be happening...she messaged twice over February break and then on Monday she sent the schedule, zoom link and what to expect/anticipate .

The packages of work for each day were organized and easy to understand. The workload was well thought out, my child has enough to do to keep her engaged in school but does not feel overwhelmed. The type of work sent home is very conducive to working from home.

The situation isn't ideal, but we couldn't ask for a better experience as far as we're concerned. We think Yorkdale did a great job rolling this out and executing it. Our child is excited to be back in the classroom next week though!

– Parent of Yorkdale Central School Student

Once again, Good Spirit School Division and Board of Education would like to **thank the Saskatchewan Health Authority for their dedication and clear direction** as they have guided GSSD through over 50 separate COVID-19 related meetings throughout this school year. Thank you to **all GSSD families and staff for continuing to persevere through these unprecedented times!**

TEACHER/ STAFF APPRECIATION

Focusing
in on ...

Teacher/Staff Appreciation was celebrated during the week of February 7, 2021. The theme was appropriately titled “Unsung Heroes”! Amidst a pandemic, Good Spirit School Division staff have shown resilience, strength, and creativity.

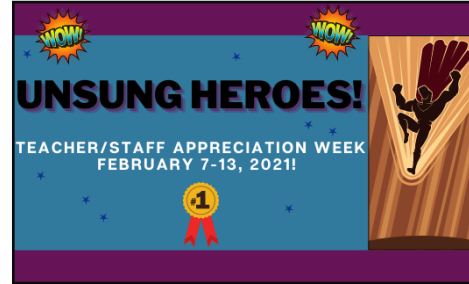
Below is a message to all GSSD staff from Quintin Robertson, Director of Education:

There is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it. – Amanda Gorman

Thank you to all the “Unsung Heroes” within the Good Spirit School Division who have been a light during a time when it has been most needed.

Each and every one of you have exemplified our GSSD service commitments and values by keeping our staff and students safe. Your willingness to go the extra mile has exceeded our expectations.

You are the “Unsung Hero” who gave everything you had, expecting nothing in return.



We are forever grateful for your continued commitment of ensuring “Students Come First”!



Photo above: Esterhazy High School staff enjoy their staff appreciation popcorn from the Esterhazy Student Association.

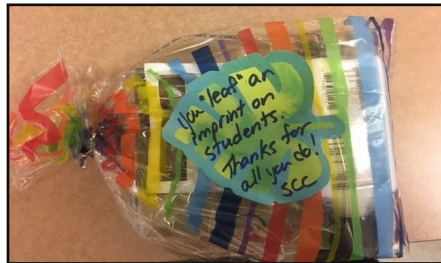


Photo above: SCCs at Columbia School expressed their appreciation with a pun and a treat bag.



Photo above: Davison School’s SCCs gave staff these amazing baskets filled with goodies to show their appreciation.



Photos to the left: Staff at Canora Junior Elementary School received Co-op gift cards from the SCCs for staff appreciation week.



Photo above: All GSSD staff received a “thanks” stress reliever ball.

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