

LEARNING MATTERS

2014 BACK TO SCHOOL EDITION

Randy Dueck · Chris Gudziunas · Rick Ardies

EVERY STUDENT MATTERS



IN THIS ISSUE

OPENING DAY

ECO-GLOBE RECOGNITION

SRSS EXPANSION



What a country we live in! I am reminded of this every time someone comes home from another country, tells the story of all the adventure and excitement they had on their trip, but always remarks that they are so glad to be home in Canada for so many reasons. We always seem glad to come home. For me, one of the big reasons is that we are a wonderfully diverse country with wonderfully diverse people, and, despite all of our differences we find a way to live at peace with one another. In fact, we celebrate and safeguard this diversity in law through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Human Rights Code (Manitoba) provides for fundamental human rights and protections for all of the following specific characteristics of human diversity; ancestry, nationality and national origin, ethnic background or origin, religion or creed, religious belief, religious association, and religious activity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief, physical or mental disability and social disadvantage. As a country and as a province it is important that we ensure a commitment to the rights of every person. And that is a big part of what makes it great to live here.

MOVING TO THE RIGHT

OPENING DAY OF CLASSES

NES

At NES we were all smiles on our first days back! We enjoyed our brand new play structure and planted colourful flowers in our recently landscaped green space at the front of the school. At our assembly we reviewed our school motto - Niverville Elementary: Where Everyone Shines!

Our visiting mascot agreed with our school expectations on being a STAR – be Safe, Trustworthy, Accountable, and Respectful. We filled up the gym with our enthusiastic voices as we sang along with Ra and reviewed our basic needs of Survival, Belonging, Power, Freedom, and Fun. We focused on having fun and being safe at recess. Students volunteered ideas on the ‘deep, skillful, bucket filling’ choices we can make, compared to the ‘cheap, less skillful, bucket dipping’ choices. It was an exciting and meaningful start to our new school year!

*- Judy Hiebert, Principal
Niverville Elementary School*



Great Expectations at GVS

The halls of GVS were a lot emptier than usual on our first day of school. That’s because the grades 5 and 9 students had the entire building to themselves. We decided to take a full day to help the grade 5’s transition to a new school and the grade 9’s transition from middle years to senior years.

Our grade 5 students spent time getting organized with their homeroom teachers. Timetables were altered for the day to allow a full period with each specialty teacher including Phys. Ed, Music and Library. In the afternoon, groups of four students were matched with a mentoring adult in the school and took part in a scavenger hunt in which they had a chance to explore the whole school. They were reminded that this would be the only time in their school career where it would be okay for them to run in the halls, and they enthusiastically took advantage.

comfortable here. It made me feel safe here. I also have my brother here. It

Grade 9’s benefitted from extra homeroom time in which they learned about the credit system and how to successfully transition from class to class. We then had a shortened timetable for the next part of the day so students could meet their subject area teachers. The day was capped off with an assembly where students met with our principals and guidance counsellor. Student council led in some organized games and everyone got to make their own sundae at the end.



Feedback from students was very positive. Our students appreciated this orientation day and we look forward to Great Expectations again next year.

“It was good. I liked the assembly at the end of the day. We didn’t do lots of work but we got to have some fun and the teachers were nice. It was good to be the only grade in the hallway. We were able to find our classes and our lockers.” Faith P. Gr. 9.

“It was really helpful. We got to know where our classes were, meet our teachers and learn where our lockers were. It was a busy day but lots of fun. It was confusing at first but the second day we knew where our classes were and didn’t have to ask other people where our classes were.” Shannen F. Gr. 9.

“It was helpful. It would have been a lot to take in if all the students were at school.” Carson B. Gr. 9

“It was easy to find classes when halls were empty. The best part of the day was the assembly at the end of the day.” Jason G. Gr. 9

*- Michael Zwagstra & Connie Epp,
Teachers, Green Valley Elementary School*



IN OUR SCHOOLS

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

A Healthy Start

Welcome to another school year! By now I am sure the summer is a distant memory and you have hit the ground running. As adults, we know that the routine of getting up and going to work takes a few days to get used to and if you feel this way, your students certainly feel the same.

After 2 months of less structure, more free time, video games and hopefully lots of outdoor activity, sitting in a desk or chair can truly be a shock to the system. Furthermore, for most students, the recess/break time received in fairly small doses a few times a day is not quite the same as the summer activity they experienced, and it may take some time to make the adjustment back to school. Sitting for long periods of time, regardless of one's age, can be difficult and thus one needs breaks from long sedentary tasks. Taking "brain breaks" often helps students to refocus, and allows the "fidgeters" to move.

Brain breaks have been all the rage for quite some time now. We've learned that regularly incorporating short physical activity challenges not only helps students of all ages to be ready to learn and remember information better, but energizes them and increases their ability to focus on the next learning activity as well.

What do Newcomers Expect to Experience in our Schools?

~ 79 174 f, 6

When I was the English language teacher at an elementary school in Steinbach, a newcomer parent occasionally came to see me about her child and to practice her English skills. She was educated at the University of Moscow and was eager for her children to be successful in Canada.

However, one day she earnestly asked, "I not know what to do. I go to the shops, and they want to help me. I walk on the sidewalk and people smile to me. What I must do? What I must do?"

This lovely, well-educated woman had never experienced kindness from strangers and was at a complete loss as to how to respond. She went on to tell me that in her country of birth and in her repatriated country, she regularly experienced discriminatory slights and insults. Since she had already experienced hostility in two countries where she should not have been considered a foreigner, she fully expected the same social culture here.

I wondered how she prepared her children for our schools. What did this family expect to experience from teachers and classmates? How were her children taught to respond?

Our on-going mandate is simply to reach out to our newcomer students and their families, over and over again.

What is Student Engagement?

- 11 14 / -i 174 174

Student engagement happens when students make a personal psychological investment in learning. When working with Grade 7's and their teachers on student engagement (to collect data for the annual MB Dept. of Education Provincial Assessment), I often define it as "how into learning you are".

Student engagement is like a puzzle; when the many different pieces are in place, engagement rises. A key piece of student engagement is a sense of belonging. When students feel they belong, they start to engage in the academic and non-academic activities that are available.

Another key understanding of student engagement involves rigor, persistence and celebration. Students are engaged when they are involved

As a teacher we all know how important it is to communicate with parents, and in this modern digital age there are many different ways to do this. Of course there is no substitution for face-to-face or phone conversations, but there are times when we just need to get information out to parents (the student courier system is not always the most reliable!). One tool that more and more teachers are using is known as "Remind". Formerly called Remind101, this web based tool allows teachers to communicate with parents directly using phone or email from one central location. How it works is:

1. different

BOOK REVIEWS

SUPERINTENDENT'S BOOKSHELF

Student Aspirations:
Eight Conditions That Make
a Difference

Deux amis: Lisez et riez avec Liam et Aisha

17M 17M



A humorous collection of French short stories, written by Helen Malandrakis, is now available through Tralco-Lingo. Deux amis: Lisez et riez avec Liam et Aisha features ten one-page stories following two friends on their adventures

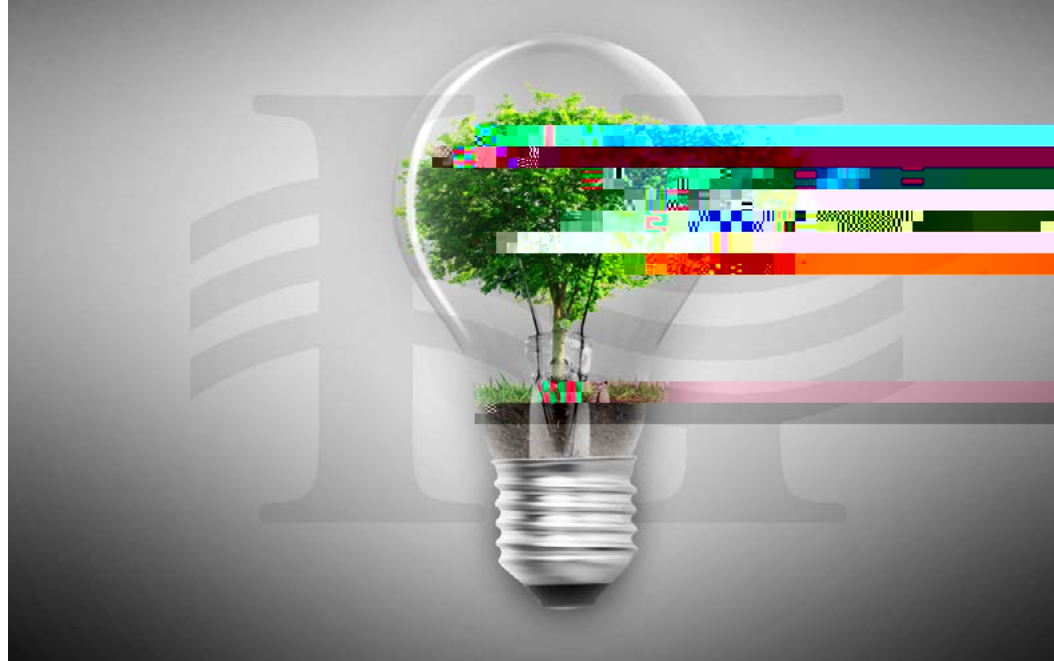
and misadventures. Events include amusing school predicaments, the challenges of babysitting, and the indignation of an unfair curfew. The collection is supplemented by a variety of activities and supports designed to maximize French learning and student engagement.

Intended for students in grades 7-9, Deux amis is designed with the Common Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) in mind, which is now the international standard for teaching and learning all languages. The various teacher and student supports consist of pre-, during, and post-reading activities that touch on the competencies that make up the CEFR: spoken production, spoken interaction, reading, writing, and listening. Additionally, each story is prefaced by the language competencies within, specific grammatical points, and suggested activities and questions to accompany it.

This is a highly useful resource for beginning French teachers who want to see how to incorporate balanced literacy into their French classes, and it provides experienced French teachers with more ideas on post-reading activities. The engaging themes and well-designed activities in Deux amis make for a highly accessible text to integrate into one's French class.

Keep in mind that Deux amis contains only ten of a twenty-story collection, so be sure to watch out for Volume 2!

- *Chloe Tate, Grade 8 Teacher/French Specialist
Clearspring Middle School*



HANOVER SCHOOLS ACHIEVE ECO-GLOBE SCHOOLS RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Hanover schools that are newly proclaimed recipients of the Eco-Globe Schools (2014) recognition program. The Eco-Globe Schools annual recognition program has been developed to recognize that Manitoba schools are involved in a variety of activities that promote and integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Schools are invited to apply for one of three levels of participation: Awareness, Action or Transformation. Schools that have submitted applications in prior years, continue their work in ESF and maintain their status as Eco-Globe Schools at various levels. As of June, 2014, 16 of 18 Hanover schools have achieved Eco-Globe Schools recognition. These schools are to be commended for their outstanding efforts in Education for Sustainable Futures.

2014 Awareness Level: Mitchell Middle School

2014 Action Level: South Oaks, Mitchell Elementary, Woodlawn

The following schools are still active as Eco-Globe Schools but received recognition in prior years for their most recent level.

Awareness Level: Green Valley ('11), Niverville Elementary ('11), Bothwell ('13)

Action Level: Landmark Collegiate ('10), Niverville Collegiate ('12), Blumenort School ('12), Landmark Elementary ('12) Southwood ('13), Stonybrook Middle School ('13), Clearspring Middle School ('13), Elmdale ('13), Kleefeld ('13)

For further information about how schools achieve Eco-Globe School recognition: www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/eco_globe/index.html. Feel free to contact Russ Dirks (rdirks@hsd.ca) if your school would like assistance with achieving one of the Eco-Globe Schools levels. There are some examples of application submissions from other Hanover schools in the ESD wiki, <https://esd.wikis.hsd.ca/home>.

- *Russ Dirks, CST Education for a Sustainable Future*



IN OUR SCHOOLS

OPENING DAY

When faced with the challenge of welcoming and orienting more than 700 new learners to the SRSS, the entire school community

Grand Opening of

The Honourable Gregory F. Selinger, Premier of Manitoba and the Honourable James Allum, Minister of Education participated in the opening ribbon-cutting ceremony along with students, staff, trustees, dignitaries and invited guests.

Marshals. Despite threats of poisoning, models of black dolls in coats, and public riots, Ruby spent her entire grade 1 year as the only student in her class. Barbara Henry was the teacher who refused to leave her teaching job when parents, students, other teachers, and her principal, all left the school in protest. Norman Rockwell immortalized this moment in human rights history in one of his famous Saturday Evening Post pictures.

Earlier, in 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for civil disobedience when she refused to give up her seat in the “coloured” section of the transit bus to a white passenger after the “white” section was full. Not only did she refuse to give up her bus seat, but as an African American person, she also defied the white bus driver.

Further north in Canada, Residential Schools discriminated under The Code - treating a person or group differently, and to their disadvantage, because of a definable characteristic. The primary objectives of the Residential School System were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and culture and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the premise that First Nations cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior or unequal. First Nations peoples were stripped of their traditional clothing and hairstyles, forbidden to speak their first languages, or practice their cultural and spiritual celebrations.

The A in Hanover School Division’s ABCs, refers to all students, with no exceptions. Teachers need to move from accepting the diversity of students to respecting the diversity of students: respecting their right to a classroom teacher, their right to access the curricula, and their right to self-determination.

Geri Robson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services

