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Making a Difference Together

December 2007

Saskatchewan Community Schools Association

President's Message



Hello to everyone in the Community School Family. Thanks so much to each of you who participated in the 2007 Community School Conference in Prince Albert. It was a great success with over 620 delegates. We all look forward to next year's conference in Regina on October 23rd and 24th.

SCSA Executive 2007/08

Congratulations to everyone who let their name stand for nomination for the SCSA executive at the AGM. The list of your new SCSA executive is on the next page. All contact information for executive members will be kept updated on the SCSA website www.communityschools.ca. If you have any questions/concerns, please contact me at wdmelchert@shaw.ca or phone (306-922-2168 (w), 306-981-3222 (cell)).

Change of Government

As you know, the SCSA executive has been working hard at bringing your issues forward with policy makers over the past year. We have been successful in retaining the dedicated line in the FOG grant and have been included in the external review committee for the review/renewal of "Supports to Students" which includes Community Schools.

We look forward to working with Premier Wall and the new cabinet in retaining and expanding the work we have been doing in improving the outcomes for all students/families in Saskatchewan. We will keep you up to date with progress in this area.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to Community Education.

Delphine Melchert, President, SCSA

Delphine Melchert

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SCSA Updates

SCSA Updates

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SCSA EXECUTIVE 2007 - 2008

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Regina Community School Coordinator Nominated for First Nations Award

Byron Bitternose, Community School Coordinator at **Albert Community School in Regina**, was a nominee at the 13th annual First Nations Awards held at Queensbury Centre on November 8th. The First Nations Awards Ceremony acknowledges and honours the achievements and contributions of First Nations individuals in Saskatchewan, celebrating excellence and leadership within the community. Awards are presented to nominees in a wide range of categories, including journalism, education, justice, health, community work, science and technology, arts and entertainment, sports and recreation, social work, lifetime achievement and youth.

Byron, who has worked with Regina Public Schools for the past 25 years, was nominated in the area of community work for his extensive involvement and generosity, as well as for being a positive role model. He has worked at a number of schools (McNab, Haultain, McDermid, Imperial, Connaught, Herchmer, Thomson and Albert), and was the Director of the Regina Children's Community Program (a summer program for children in the inner city) for 15 years.

Congratulations to Bryon for being recognized for his outstanding contributions!



Even Those Too Young To Remember Must Be Taught Never To Forget

On November 7th, **École Connaught Community School in Regina** held a Remembrance Day service. The message for students was to be thankful for peace and to always remember the sacrifices made by our veterans to give us freedom.

Two veterans, Dave Ewart and Owen Campbell, were the colour party and made this service extremely special. Also, Rob Saxby, the bugler, played the *Last Post* and *Reveille*. The entire school population observed two minutes of silence to honour those who have served our country. Classroom wreaths were laid and are now displayed at the front of the school. Donations were collected for the poppies students received prior to the service.



Remember—Never Forget!

Shawna LaRocque Desjarlais, Vice-Principal

Thomson Celebrates World Food Day

On October 16th, World Food Day, staff from Farm Credit Canada (FCC) served a Thanksgiving turkey lunch at **Thomson Community School in Regina** to the delight of students, staff and the community. FCC was assisted by members of the Regina Pats hockey team.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations celebrates World Food Day each year on October 16th, the day on which it was founded in 1945. This year's theme, *The Right to Food*, recognizes the important role of human rights in eradicating hunger and poverty.

Terry Fox Walk Raises Money

Students at **Ken Jenkins Community School in Regina** spent the first couple of weeks of school donating their pennies, as well as other loose change, to their school *Coins for Cancer* drive. Classrooms had their daily totals announced over the intercom during morning announcements and the graph in the hallway grew accordingly. In the end, the school collected over \$350 for this tremendous cause.

On September 17th, the entire school population got in the spirit by conducting a Terry Fox Walk around the playground. To culminate this activity, the class that collected the most amount of money (Christina Donovel's Grades 3/4 class) had a pizza party for their efforts. They raised over \$100.



Let's Lead Program Nīkānētān

Vincent Massey Community School in Saskatoon is offering a new Grade Eight program to students throughout the entire Saskatoon Public School Division. Let's Lead – Nīkānētān is a program aimed at teaching the Grade Eight curricula through experiential learning, leadership and cooperative work skills, cultural responsiveness, future vision planning, and fun. This program is for those students who need hands on learning and have not reached their potential in traditional classroom settings. These students thrive during outdoor and experiential education, but have been unable to join other programs due to the barrier of cost.

We teach an integrated curriculum that is based on projects with practical/real life outcomes. Our experiential approach leads us to developing partnerships. Our students participate in lessons at the gymnastic room in the PAC centre with kinesiology undergrads. We are learning at the geology building and the chemistry labs on the university campus with grad



students and undergrads. SUNTEP students join us at Vincent Massey to teach our students. Swimming and lifeguarding skills are taught at Harry Bailey Aquatic Centre bi-weekly. We are developing a transition model where students are taught by teachers and students at Mount Royal Collegiate Institute. We continue to develop hands on experiences for our students to learn to give back to the community.



Our students belong to learning teams (4 person and 7 person), with whom they meet challenges, help each other learn, and develop strong working relationships. Our students learn to cook with our nutrition coordinator by making hot lunches with her daily. We have participated in four day camping trips twice this year and intend to go on extended trips at least another six times. We are having fun learning and therefore the learning has become a lot more fun, or as the students say 'easy'. We have had a very positive start to this new program and are looking forward to more success in the coming months.

Chris Clark and Gillian Strange
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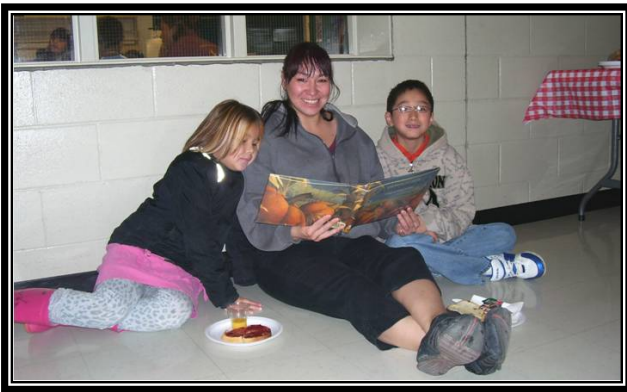


Education Week In Regina Schools

During Education Week, **Albert Community School** students participated in various activities to promote education. The Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students visited a pumpkin patch where they had a tour and enjoyed learning about the gardens.



During the middle of the week, parents were invited for “Books and Bagels”. In addition to parents, staff from the event’s sponsor, IQ Metrix, attended, and senior students helped read to the younger ones.



The senior class visited the Royal Saskatchewan Museum to learn more about glaciers, and Jason Chamakese (an Aboriginal traditional flute player and storyteller) was a special guest at the school.



Education Week at **École Connaught Community School** began with a tipi raising on the front lawn. Mike Partridge and his helper Jordan showed students, staff, and some community members how to raise a tipi. A few students even had an opportunity to help with the poles and pins. With their prior

knowledge of the tipi, students answered questions, followed by an explanation by Mike Partridge.



Special thanks to George Favel (RPS Cultural Liaison Worker) who joined the event to play his drum and sing. The entire school population was excited to participate in a final round dance!

Positive Attitude Zone At Carlyle Elementary Community School

We have started a Positive Attitude Zone (PAZ) at Carlyle Elementary Community School. We encourage the students to notice a positive behaviour or kind words being spoken by their classmates. When they notice this behaviour they give a PAZ token to them. This token is worn around the student’s neck on a lanyard. Once you receive a token it is up to you to pay it forward by noticing another classmate doing something positive and then passing on the token to them. The students continue to do this throughout the day. It helps to generate a more positive environment in the school and gets students into the habit of focusing on the positive behaviours in others rather than the negative.

We have declared the whole school a Positive Attitude Zone which means that anyone who enters our school is encouraged to speak to others in a positive and constructive manner and to leave behind a kind and encouraging word to help to make our school a more positive place to be. Anyone wanting more information about this program can contact me.

Denise Anderson, gdanderson@sasktel.net
Carlyle School Community Council Chairperson

Community Education is an opportunity for local citizens and community schools, agencies and institutions to become active partners in addressing education and community concerns.

Community Education brings community members together to identify and link community needs and resources in a manner that helps people to help themselves in raising the quality of life in their communities.

A Grade 12 Student Perspective On Community Education

Mount Royal Collegiate in Saskatoon became a designated Community School in 2001. As a result, we have funds to take our learning program into the community. Some things that I have done during my high school years include:

- Raking leaves and shoveling snow for our neighbours – we'll always remember the 83 year old woman who was so happy that we'd shoveled because she hadn't been able to leave her house in weeks.
- Partnering with Oliver Lodge and Oliver Place to do many projects such as writing a "Memoirs Book," a "Musical Memories" book and taking cosmetology students once a week for a "Pretty and Pampered" Program - Interviewing stroke victims and working with people who suffer from Alzheimers Disease is both challenging and rewarding. The seniors are always so happy to see us.



- Taking our black box Drama Productions on the road to elementary schools; Those little kids just loved our Robert Munch mini-plays and were excited to interact with the cast, shouting, "Mortimer, BE QUIET!"
- Hosting an annual Youth Conference for Grade 7 and 8 students; Our topics have included Bullying, Addictions, and this year's conference is titled, "Healthy Choices, Healthy Me."
- Putting on a "Carnival of Care" for neighbourhood elementary schools. We have over thirty free games for students to choose from. They really like the house on fire where they can fire squirt guns at high school students who are peeping through the windows.
- Going on field trips to Batoche, a World Religions Tour, Diefenbaker Centre, Native Theatre Company, Persephone Theatre Company, Powwows, Brightwater, the Zoo, Regina Science Centre, University of Saskatchewan, and much, much more. We have many different stories to tell!

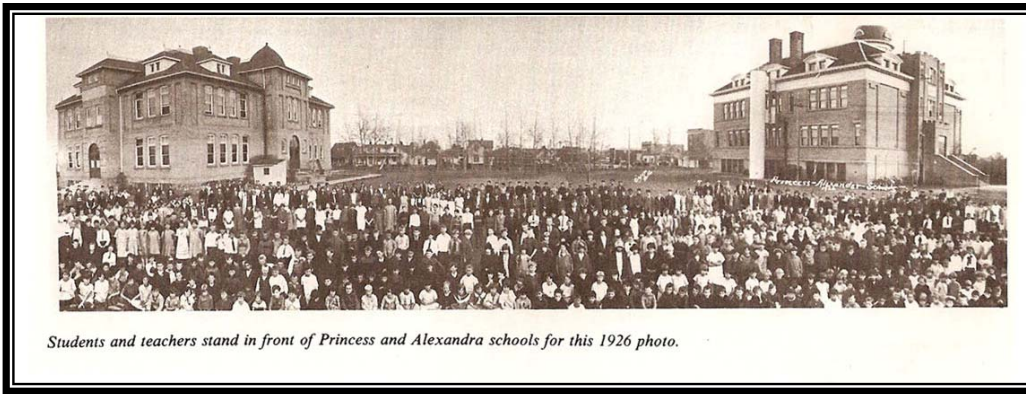


- Going to many conferences and student forums: Already this year, we've attended the "Roots and Shoots" conference with Jane Goodall, the FSIN "Residential School Survivors" Conference, "Voice of Youth" Multicultural conference, Conflict Resolution and Leadership Development camp at Shekinah, and held a student forum at Mount Royal with 100 students to discuss our school facility and delivery system. We learn a lot through these activities. Not in the stereotypical sense but in a real life environment.
- Listening to numerous guest speakers on topics related to gangs, drugs and alcohol, drunk driving, self motivation, internet safety, and much more. These experiences give us a perspective that is different from our teachers. It just adds to our understanding of the world around us.
- Community Service work for the Food Bank, Friendship Inn, Child Hunger and Education program, and Royal West Daycare. We make these into fun challenges, get the whole school involved, and feel good about giving back to the community.



Being in a community school has allowed all of us to become more aware of our community and how we can learn from it. We've been able to experience how much we can give back, and celebrate our strengths and diversity every day. We hope there's still funding to do all these special activities in the future

Nicole Derry, Grade 12 student
Mount Royal Collegiate, Saskatoon



anniversary. The contents were displayed and some former students were contacted to reclaim their lost treasures! Many former staff and students as well as community members attended the celebration assembly that featured the first performance of the year by the school Pow Wow dancers.

Princess Alexandra Community School Turns 100!

This year marks the 100th year of having a school on Avenue H and 20th Street in Saskatoon. Alexandra School opened in 1907 as one of the first “castle” schools in Saskatoon. A contest was held in the local newspaper “The Saskatoon Phoenix” to name the building, and Alexandra School was chosen to honour of the Queen of England at the time. Only five years later in 1912 another “castle” school opened on the same lot and was named Princess School. Before she became Queen of England, Alexandra was a princess in Denmark, therefore this new school was also named in her honour.

For many years the “sister” schools were in full operation together; however in 1961 Princess School was sold and demolished because maintenance costs were too high. A new Princess School was built that same year at 210 Avenue H South. In 1984 the Alexandra School was also demolished, again due to maintenance costs, and that is when Princess School took the name of both buildings, becoming Princess Alexandra School.



Celebration events took place on Friday, December 7th and Saturday, December 8th at Princess Alexandra Community School. A highlight for current staff, students, and community members was the opening of a time capsule that was buried in 1982 during the 75th

On Saturday, an open house was held and many distinguished guests were in attendance. Keynote guest speaker Val Harper, who is now the Director of Education for the Saskatoon Tribal Council, spoke of the important role that Princess Alexandra Community School played in her career as an educator. She began her career as a Teacher Assistant at the school and explained how she developed a passion for teaching and working with the community during her time at Princess. She shared many stories about innovative practices that were developed at Princess Alexandra that have become common in all community schools in the province.



Princess Alexandra Community School has long been a leader in implementing the Community Schools Framework in Saskatchewan. It has been an important part of the Riversdale Community in Saskatoon for 100 years, and hopefully will continue to play a vital role in the community for 100 more!

Shane A. Armstrong

Community Education is a unique education concept that embraces these beliefs:

- **Education is a lifelong process;**
- **Everyone in the community - individuals, businesses, public and private agencies - shares responsibility for the mission of educating all members of the community; and**
- **Citizens have a right and a responsibility to be involved in determining community needs, identifying community resources, and linking those needs and resources to improve their community.**

E.D. Feehan Catholic High School Career Academy, Saskatoon

Saskatchewan youth face several challenges as they prepare to choose their careers and enter the work force. Our desire is to give students an education that allows them to seize the best opportunities after they graduate, whether they decide to enter the work force or pursue higher-level education. The E. D. Feehan Catholic High School Career Academy was established to help our students successfully make these transitions.

The academy's classes are built into the school day as electives would be, they are complemented by standard classes in English and math etc.. The Academy is open to all students and it is reflective of the general population of the school. There are currently three separate career pathways Feehan students may choose to participate in, taking classes connected to one or more of the following areas: **Construction Technology, Communication Technology, and Bioresource Management.**

Academy Foundations

Classes in each pathway are based on three pillars: **knowledge, community connections** and **career discovery.**

- **Knowledge:** Students study specialized curriculum and must meet specific skill standards in the field they are studying to receive credit for their class. Curriculum has been adopted from existing courses, while in other cases the academy has created its own courses to meet its objectives. When possible, material from existing courses, such as math, is applied in an academy class.
- **Community connections:** Classes have been developed through partnerships with post-secondary institutions and industry. This allows organizations to offer their sites as locations where academy students may attend class, tour, job shadow, gain field experience or act as interns.
- **Career Exploration:** Through examining labour market trends, experiencing various workplaces and by interacting with people already working in a specific field, students can encounter many potential careers and perhaps discover the pathway they want to follow after high school.



About the pathways

Classes began in February 2007 in our first career theme: **Construction Technology.** Out of more than 75 applicants, 22 students were chosen for this inaugural academy. The program emphasizes innovations in the construction industry, including the advancement of automated systems and

equipment. It also stresses math, science, computer applications and entrepreneurship as components of today's construction industry. Along with acquiring new skills and high school credits, students are also earning apprenticeship training hours that will count toward SIAST journeyman certification in carpentry. Key partners in this program are Habitat for Humanity and the Saskatoon and Region Home Builders' Association. In spring 2007, students helped construct a Habitat for Humanity home in Saskatoon, as well as a two-storey playhouse to fulfill a request submitted to the Children's Wish Foundation. In fall 2007 Construction Technology students worked on the interior finishing of a Habitat home.

Communication Technology:

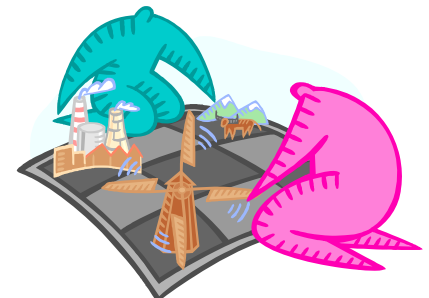
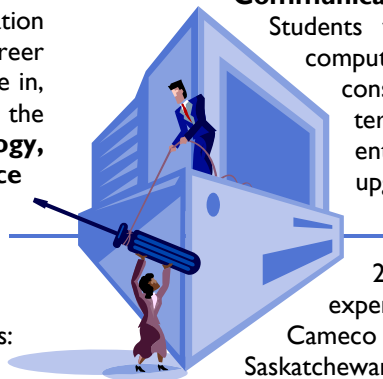
Students will pursue A+ certification as computer service technicians. It is considered the industry standard in terms of measuring an individual's entry-level knowledge of configuring, upgrading, troubleshooting and repairing desktop systems.

Classes began in September 2007. Computers and technical expertise are being provided by

Cameco Corporation. The University of Saskatchewan's Division of Media Technology is also a partner in this program.

Bioresource Management:

This career pathway will focus on science and sustainability. Approximately 50 students have registered for classes starting in February 2008. They will be empowered through education, career development and community relationships in a unique academic program that inspires a sense of wonder and respect about the natural world and the wise use of resources to benefit our society. This class will be presented to the students using a Problem Based Learning Model where students are given real world problems to solve. The students will work in teams and they will have access to facilitators and partner resources to help them find solutions to problems. Students within the program will receive enhanced instruction in Indigenous Knowledge. The program's focus on applied science fits well with renewal now under way at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, one of the program's key partners. The college recently changed its name and revised its mission statement to fully reflect its role in educating students about management of renewable resources. Many partners both from research and development and post-secondary education have stepped forward and said that they will support our



students through practicum placements, tours, and knowledge, both scientific and technical.

Goals of the Career Academy

The E.D. Feehan Catholic High School Career Academy exists to provide young people with pathways to academic, occupational and life success through business and professional partnerships with Catholic education. This becomes possible because students enrolled in the Career Academy will:

- have increased opportunity to participate in meaningful career planning;
- enroll in classes aligned with careers they may wish to pursue;
- gain first-hand experience of a potential career while still in high school, and;
- build contacts and confidence to help with their transition to post secondary education or the labour market.

For more information on our Career Academy please call Roy Sondershausen at 659-7553.

Tipi Raising At Lakeview Elementary Community School, Meadow Lake

On May 17, 2007 our school unveiled its new Tipi. During this event Elder Ernest Morin explained the importance and meanings involved. Lakeview students and staff went outside on a beautiful morning to watch the raising and smudging of our tipi. After the raising ceremony we all joined hands and had a huge round dance. Ernest then had groups go into the tipi for stories and teachings. The entire school had a meal of soup and bannock prepared by Mrs. Pollock and Mrs. Lavallee. At Lakeview we feel it is important to teach the students about different virtues. Our tipi fit in nicely with this idea because, as Ernest explained, each pole is a different virtue. Our tipi was designed with the animals of our forest families (Character Education

Groups). If you think your job takes you places, I learned how to design and paint a tipi!! It was great!!

This event was so successful that Mr. Craig and Elder Ernest Morin went to Cold Lake Alberta to raise the tipi for their students.



All of this was done as a way to introduce our C.O.O.L. (Circle of Outdoor Learning) club to our students. Mrs. Pollock, Mr. Craig and I are teaching the students how to go into the forest, "take only pictures, leave only footprints" (no trace camping). The students are now learning different ways of cooking, how to read a compass and read a map, the Hug a Tree Program (what to do when you are lost in the woods), basic first aid, basic knot tying skills and how to set up a camp. In the summer we will take the students on an over night camping trip. We will set up the tipi and create a camp on the grounds around. Thank-you to Mrs. Lavallee and her husband for giving us permission to set-up a camp on their land.

Pat Gervais, Community School Coordinator

Note From the Newsletter Editors

Thanks to everyone who submitted articles to this edition of the SCSA newsletter. We plan to publish one more newsletter this spring. We will accept articles at any time but will also send out submission deadline information in April. If you've already written an article for another publication, why not just forward a copy to me. Our focus for the newsletter is on innovation. We learn from each others' creativity – so send us your stories.

Hope to hear from you,
Nina Henry and Lauren Sawatsky
henryn@spsd.sk.ca

Rosemont School Welcomes Jeff Straker

Rosemont Community School in Regina was delighted to welcome Jeff Straker (recording artist and generally great person) on November 19th and 20th. Jeff held workshops on music appreciation and songwriting for all the classrooms and worked with the school's Heart of the City Piano Program (HCPP) students.



The younger grades sang their hearts out, learned various rhythms, and enjoyed some great piano playing. The older students worked on songwriting structure and design. The piano students did some work on their Christmas recital pieces and then participated in some serious jamming that included five pianos and several of the school's drums. A great time was had by all.



Rosemont Community School currently has 16 students in the Heart of the City Piano Program. Their talented piano players performed at the Christmas recital on November 28th. The volunteer piano teachers for the students this year are Marjorie Burns, Gail Garden and Barb Willows. Although not a volunteer, the community coordinator also teaches piano to four students in the school.

Rae Pelletier, Community Coordinator, Rosemont

Quilting and Conversation Circle Caroline Robins Community School, Saskatoon

For two hours once per week seniors and young moms in our community are coming together to learn how to traditionally hand quilt. As a collective, we decided to quilt the traditional log cabin style with the red square in the middle as the hearth and then light blues and yellows to encompass the red. We put a lot of thought into what colours we wanted to choose and it was suggested we go with our school colours of blue and yellow.

An entire day was spent placing our finished squares into different patterns of how the quilt could look. Who ever thought that the same 26 squares could be placed in so many intricate and incredible patterns? As we were going through this process our Grade 2/3 teacher brought her students in to teach a math lesson on patterns. This lent opportunity for our parents and community members to take the lead on teaching the students about what we were doing and how patterns work. The teacher then related it to the math they were working on. These are the great and incredible moments that can take place when community comes together.



Once completed, the quilt is going to be raffled off in the community as a fundraiser for the school. We would like to thank the Saskatoon Community Foundation for the grant money that made this project possible.

Melinda Brown, School Community Coordinator

Maude Burke Community School Melfort, SK

Maude Burke Community School has been very busy this year actively engaging our new and existing families. With the closure of Broadway Community School in June, we received a large number of new families. Our school community has been working very hard to transition these families and make them feel welcome. In September, the school hosted a pancake lunch and open house. There were over 250 people in attendance for this event. On November 28th the school hosted a Family Literacy Fun Night which brought out over 150 people. In addition to these events, we have encouraged new volunteers to become active members in our

school assisting with nutrition programming and working with students.

In addition to these events, our school currently offers a Parent n' Tot program. This program is available to children ages 3-5 yrs and their parents. The purpose of this program is to engage parents in their child's early learning experience and allow future school parents to become comfortable within the school environment. This group meets two mornings a week. One morning, children and parents are engaged in early learning activities, while the other morning, children work on activities with the program facilitator and the parents participate in a Community Kitchen. This program is free of charge, provides transportation and take-home resources for families to keep. We are very fortunate to have excellent community partnerships to support this wonderful program.

Bridging the Generations, a project originally started at Broadway Community School, is alive and well at Maude Burke. This project is in partnership with Diefenbaker Senior's Residence. In September, the Grades 2 and 3 students had the opportunity to celebrate Seniors' Week with the seniors at Diefenbaker. Students sang and then read books with the seniors. Again in December, a group of students will go to Diefenbaker to read and sing. Parents are also invited to attend these events to engage in dialogue with their children and seniors. This project has provided an excellent way to build meaningful intergenerational relationships.

Maude Burke Community School is very fortunate to have excellent staff and community members that are committed to creating a positive school environment. We will continue to engage families in ways that provide a sense of belonging.

Robyn Nielsen, Community School Coordinator

Albert Students Attend Unity Conference

Students from **Albert Community School in Regina** recently attended the Unity of Nations Youth Conference at Gordon First Nation. Students had an opportunity to build positive relationships with youth from First Nations and multicultural communities in the region, and they learned about First Nations culture through hands-on activities and information sessions led by Elders that took place within a tipi village.



Students learned about the traditional roles of men and women, treaties, and how to make moccasins and bows and arrows. They also had a great time watching a hoop dancer and then trying out their own dancing skills. It was a wonderful day for everyone!



Harmony Kattenat-Taysup, a student at Albert, listened to an Elder speak about treaties.

Tipi Raising at Arcola

The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity at **Arcola Community School in Regina** hosted a tipi-raising ceremony on September 21st. Larry and Glen Anaquod were very kind to come instruct the boys in how to raise the tipi on their own as a team-building exercise.



A big thank you to Maureen Johns Simpson (Acting Executive Director of the First Nations and Métis Branch of Saskatchewan Learning and former Regina Public Schools principal) for speaking to students and staff inside the tipi. Thank you also to everyone who helped make this project a huge success, especially staff leaders of the fraternity (Al Johns, Becky Middleton and Tracy Furry).



Leadership Initiative Bedford Road Collegiate, Saskatoon

As part of Bedford Road Collegiate's new Leadership Initiative, with funding from The Rotary Club of Saskatoon and the Community School Program, students had a unique opportunity to develop and enhance skills and qualities they didn't know they possessed.



On Wednesday, October 3rd, thirty-two students and ten staff jumped on the bus for the hour-long drive out to the Shekinah Retreat Centre for Bedford Road Collegiate's first annual Leadership and Mediation Camp. At the beginning of the year we put out a call to the staff to 'refer' or 'nominate' students they felt would be appropriate for the camp. We asked for students who are not involved extensively in the programs at Bedford such as the Student Representative Council, sports or other extra-curricular activities. We wanted to find students who possessed many leadership qualities, but may not be using them to their full potential. We were overwhelmed with the response. We had a difficult time cutting our list to a manageable number, as there were so many students who would benefit from the camp. We had lots of fun building balloon towers, eating Oreo's, and using lots of masking tape. All the games we played built confidence, promoted teamwork and cooperation, and required the students to think outside of the box.



We challenged the students to build free-standing balloon structures, get an Oreo from their forehead to their mouth without using their hands, and to put together a puzzle with a partner without knowing what it

looks like. We mixed the students up into groups with people they didn't know well, and students from other grades. At the end of the camp many commented on the new friends they had made, and many had never

even seen the others at school before. We also had a lot of work to get done. We talked about communication, conflict and leadership. Through the activities and lessons, students learned that they all had leadership potential. It was quite a profound moment when we talked about why each student had been chosen to come to camp. Many were astounded that their teachers or other people in the school would recognize their leadership qualities, and nominate them. We are confident that all our students will emerge as leaders not only at our school, but also at home and in our community.



As a result of the Leadership Camp, Bedford Road High School's students are organizing and running activities over the noon hour in neighboring community schools as well as developing a mentorship group for Grades five and six girls.

Bri Kurz, Restorative Action Program Coordinator
Maureen Strawson, Community School Coordinator

Hawk's Nest Classroom: Ensuring Student Success

The goal of any effective school division should be to ensure the development and success of all of its students. One of **Regina Public Schools'** Continuous Improvement Framework priorities is to ensure increased awareness and understanding of First Nations and Métis cultures and to support equitable opportunities and outcomes for students of First Nations and Métis ancestry.

As Barbara Kavanagh wrote in her 1998 discussion paper, *Reaching for Success: Considering the Achievements and Effectiveness of First Nations Schools*, there are several important attributes, or standards, of successful schools:

- "they foster a supportive environment, provide students a chance to expand to their full potential, and are places where children are secure and happy;
- they ensure children know who they are;

- they help children to develop the numeracy, literacy, and other academic skills they need to succeed, and;
- they honour parental and community involvement in education, as “education is the basis of a peaceful community, and Elders, adults and children are not separate.”

With these attributes and the Circle of Courage model in mind, Sarah Longman (Education Equity Consultant for Regina Public Schools) and Marla Dufour (Community School Coordinator) decided to create a unique classroom that would embrace First Nations and Métis traditional values, cultures, and methods of teaching/learning. The result is the Hawk’s Nest classroom at Herchmer Community School.



Instead of desks, there is a large medicine wheel on the floor surrounded by cushions for seating. The medicine wheel is an important symbol of peaceful interaction among all living beings on Mother Earth; it represents harmony, balance, and connections. Computers are located in a tipi where students can learn Cree and other subjects; words are posted in English and Cree to teach language skills; storytelling is used to promote literacy; a jingle dress, beads, and games are used to teach math concepts; books and other resources are located on a display table; and posters of historical and present-day First Nations and Métis leaders are displayed on the walls to promote positive cultural images. All of these aspects of the classroom have been developed to show that First Nations and Métis cultures can be used to teach a wide variety of established curricula.



According to Sylvia Obey, Elder-in-Residence at Herchmer, the Hawk’s Nest also provides a relaxed environment where students of all backgrounds feel accepted for who they are, where students feel comfortable talking with her one on one, and where students not only learn the regular curriculum, but develop a sense of identity and history as well.

Sarah and Marla have demonstrated that, with some creativity and effort, anyone can create a classroom like this one. A lot of the items were created by students and staff or donated by Elders and others in the community. The classroom has produced a lot of excitement from students, educators, community members, and many other school divisions.

Teachers are encouraged to contact Marla Dufour at 791-8450 to tour the Hawk’s Nest and create their own innovative classrooms.

Students Kick Off Fire Prevention Week at Safety Conference

Grades 4-6 students from **Albert, Herchmer, Kitchener, and Sacred Heart Community Schools in Regina** learned first-hand why it’s so important to have a fire escape plan as they took part in the first-ever Keeping Our Community Safe “Safety Conference 2007” on October 9th. The conference, with the theme *I Have a Plan*, focused on teaching students about fire and life safety in two half-day sessions.

The conference, a kick off to Fire Prevention Week, was an initiative of the Keeping Our Community Safe Coalition and was sponsored by the City of Regina Fire Department, Regina Police Service, Regina Public Schools, Regina Catholic Schools, and IPSCO Place.

The opening ceremonies started with a prayer by Elder Sylvia Obey and welcoming remarks by Mayor Pat Fiacco, Fire Chief Jack Lichtenwald, and Police Chief Cal Johnston.

Session I—The Reality of Fire: I Need a Plan

This session was presented by Angela Prawzick (Regina Fire Dept.) and Michael Bell (survivor of a Cathedral-area fire in 2007). Students learned about the difference between “Hollywood” fire and the reality of fire. They also heard how Michael survived a fire and learned why having a fire escape plan can save your life.





Session 2 - Escaping Fire: I'm Making a Plan

This session was presented by firefighter Len Antonini and the Fire Dept. crew. Students were led through a fire escape simulation and learned what they need to know to escape safely if they ever have a fire in their own homes.

Session 3 - Safe Cooking: My Plan is Hot

This session was presented by Candace Liskowich (Regina Fire Dept.) and Marla Dufour (Community School Coordinator at Herchmer Community School). Students discovered that the number one cause of fire in Regina is careless cooking. They learned how to prevent fires in the kitchen and what to do if a pot suddenly starts to flame.



Session 4 - Unsafe People/Unsafe Places: My Get Away Plan

This session was presented by Shelly Manuel South (School Counselor, Regina Public Schools) and Constable Neil Henderson (Regina Police Service). Students were taken on a virtual tour through their neighbourhood and discussed what is safe, what isn't safe, and what to do if they're ever caught in a dangerous situation.

Session 5 - Fire Setting: Not a Good Plan

This session was presented by Fire Inspector Rick Holmes and Constable Chad Sebastian. Students learned how the Inspector is able to determine the cause of a fire. Students saw how evidence led to the arrest of two youths, who were consequently charged by police with arson. They then found out what the

youth had to go through in Youth Court and what sentence the judge ultimately handed down in the case.

Marnie McMillan (Technology Integration Support, Regina Public Schools) also worked with a team of Grades 7 and 8 students from each of the four schools. These students worked as eJournalists to report on the sessions. They produced movies that can be viewed online by going to

<http://web.rbe.sk.ca/support/safety>.



Students had a wonderful time learning about fire and life safety!

Submitted by Marla Dufour on behalf of the Keeping Our Community Safe Working Group

SCSA has had a positive and successful history and over the years has developed the respect of Saskatchewan Education and many provincial partners. Members of the Association play an active role on Provincial, National and International Community Education committees. The Association is committed to continuing to advocate for and shape the direction of Community Education practices.

Family Literacy Weyerhaeuser Legacy Grant: Supporting Family Literacy in Community Schools

Over the past decade the Saskatchewan Community Schools Association (SCSA) has enjoyed a wonderful corporate partnership with Weyerhaeuser. The partnership ended as of the 2006/07 school year. We are very grateful to Weyerhaeuser for supporting Community Education in so many ways and helping us to make a difference in the lives of families in Saskatchewan. One of the legacies left is a fund to support family literacy in Community Schools. With the remaining funds, we will be supporting your efforts in training for, and program delivery of, family literacy programming in Community Schools.

You may apply for a Family Literacy Weyerhaeuser Legacy Grant (Legacy Grant) of up to \$500 to support family literacy training or programming. For the purposes of the grant, we are using the following guidelines to define "Family Literacy":

1. Family Literacy includes parents (adults/guardians) as well as children.
2. Family Literacy serves four basic roles (as defined by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network):
 - Increasing the families' access to materials, activities and services which are essential to family literacy development;
 - Supporting parents in their role of being their child's first teacher by providing them with encouragement and specific direction which will stimulate and sustain the child's interest and the child's potential for future independent success in literacy activities;
 - Assisting parents as adult learners to recognize and address their own literacy needs by creating an environment which is positive, supportive and contains the promise of benefiting both them and their children;
 - Strengthening the connection between parents and the school, creating a partnership for learning and education.

If you are interested in starting an initiative in your school, sending staff/parents for training or supporting work that you are already doing in family literacy, please use the application for the Legacy Grant posted on SCSA's Website. We will be compiling a list of programs, training opportunities, ideas and initiatives that you are doing across the province as we hear from you.

All Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN) sessions on their training calendar qualify for the grant. Call 306-653-7368 or go to SLN website address at www.sk.literacy.ca for information on training. Also

please check the SCSA website at <http://www.communityschools.ca>. We look forward to hearing about the many exciting things that are happening with family literacy in Saskatchewan Community Schools. If you have questions, please contact Margaret Marsollier at mmarsollier@srsd119.ca, 1-306-763-7571, or contact Delphine Melchert, President, Saskatchewan Community Schools Association, 1-306-922-2168.



Caswell Hill An Amazing Community

Caswell Hill is an amazing community. It is located in the "heart of Saskatoon" and has some of the most wonderful volunteers!

In October 2007, an announcement was sent out through numerous agencies to schools, community associations and non-profit groups, trying to locate a recipient for a "new rink", through the generosity of KABOOM and Home Depot.

The Parent Council at Caswell Community School stepped up to plate, secured the funds necessary and agreed that they could pull together enough volunteers to make this happen. They approached the Caswell Hill Community Association and they too agreed to do whatever it takes to make this project work.

Within a couple weeks, we have worked together to dismantle the old rink, and design the new one. We have confirmed the 150+ volunteers necessary to build the rink, (and all the side projects, too) in approximately 6 hours. On December 6th, 2007 the community of Caswell will be celebrating the completion of our rink, but we will also be celebrating with our neighbors and friends how amazing the community is!

The new rink is directly behind Caswell Community School and will be a winter "hot spot" for everyone, young and old!

This is the old rink, which was very tired and rotten. We invite you to come and check out the new rink during the Christmas break.



SCSA Works Closely With The Provincial Government

Update from SCSA President,
Delphine Melchert

Dear Friends,

As we look around at all the activities we are engaged in, we are reminded that the 2007 – 08 school year is already going by too quickly. At this time, I have a few updates to pass on to you. Over the past year, members of the SCSA Executive have met with the following officials:

April/07 Minister Deb Higgins
 April/07 NDP Caucus –
 Social Development
 June/07 Assistant Deputy
 Minister of Learning,
 Darren McKee
 July/07 Deputy Ministers,
 Wynn Young and
 Darren McKee

At these meetings we have spoken up very clearly about the need to retain the separate “Community School” budget line in the FOG grant. We have also compiled a long list of issues brought forward by your regional reps, including:

- increase to funding formula;
- expansion of community schools;
- leadership and shared ownership;
- student learning issues;
- measuring outcomes;
- access to resources;
- partnerships with First Nations/Metis governance structures;
- student mobility;
- summer/after school programming;
- nutrition;
- community development;
- Elders;
- multicultural factors;
- early learning & childcare;
- school community councils.

These issues and others are being brought forward through the current “Review of Supports for Learning.” Gillian McCreary is heading up the review. Three members of the SCSA executive are sitting on the external review committee. The review will take place in two phases over the next 2 years. The outcomes of this review will impact on the future direction of community schools.

Please continue to send us your ideas/concerns through your regional reps. See the website for a listing of all executive members. If you have any comments or questions, please contact me.


Thank you for the excellent work you do on behalf of the students and their families in our community schools.

Please join Saskatoon Catholic and Public Community Schools at the Fourth Annual Intertribal Powwow on May 30th, 2008. There will be day money for all dancers as well as specials in all adult dance categories. In past years there have been over 200 dancers and 12 drum groups. We welcome everyone to this community event and hope that you and your students can take the time to join us.


8:00 am
Pipe Ceremony
9:00 am
Registration
10:00 am
Grand Entry

Concession and
Artisans on Site
Honourarium For
All Dancers
For Information
Call Melissa
at 659-7563
or visit
www.edfeehan.ca

Hosts are not
responsible for
accidents or thefts.



The Gathering Of Communities



Saskatoon West
Intertribal
POWWOW

May 30, 2008
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
E.D. Feehan Catholic High School
411 Avenue M North
Saskatoon, SK

The First Six
Adult Drums
and the
First Six
Youth Drums
will receive
an honourarium
(minimum of five
people per drum)

Specials In All
Adult Categories

Women's Traditional
Women's Fancy
Women's Jingle Dress
Men's Traditional
Men's Fancy
Men's Grass
Men's Chicken

Hosted By:

