



# STONY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL COMMUNITY REPORT INTERLAKE SCHOOL DIVISION



2014-2015

## ISD FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

We believe...

- In fostering independent, lifelong learners who are critical and creative thinkers.
- In nurturing responsible global citizens who have respect and empathy for others in a diverse society.
- In communicating in a way that facilitates the open-minded sharing of ideas.
- In creating a challenging, caring, inviting and respectful learning community.
- That we must address the needs of all learners in a safe and engaging learning environment.
- That we must provide appropriate resources to meet a range of learning needs.



### Priority 1.1 Literacy

In order for students to deeply understand ideas interlinked throughout curriculum, they must be immersed in a culture of literacy. When students read well, they become adept at accessing gathering, and synthesizing information from traditional print and digital media. They think critically about what they read and apply these ideas in the world. Students must also communicate well by expressing ideas in various forms and by communicating with a style and language that suits different purposes and audiences. Bringing about this culture of literacy requires high quality instruction where students take increasing responsibility for reading and writing, and where teachers model literate strategies, give students guided practice, and provide opportunities for independent reading and writing in each curricular area. Authentic assignments allow all students to make progress in literacy as defined by shared criteria.

### Priority 2 Positive, Respectful Learning Environment

Schools will nurture positive, respectful relationships among students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and community members. Within a warm, inviting school climate, people use respectful language, schools have high staff morale, and students feel valued and accepted for who they are. A paradigm shift from reactive punishment towards proactive discipline allows students to maintain their dignity and to resolve conflict in a positive manner.

### Priority 3 Intellectual Engagement

Students are intellectually engaged when they feel personally invested in learning and experience an optimal degree of challenge. This personal investment motivates students to experience, to learn, to question, and to achieve. Teachers can nurture engagement by deliberately planning for student interests, learning preferences, and readiness levels.



### ISD FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS & PROIRITY GOALS

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## GOAL #1: INCREASED LITEARCY AWARENESS

Increased student engagement in literacy was a focus of Stony Mountain School this year. We believe that all students can appreciate literacy through enhancing the learning environment with rich experiences and opportunities.

In September, school-wide reading assessments were implemented. This provided information about each student's strengths and abilities. The information contributed to program development within each classroom and throughout the school. As a result, we formed novel study groups, cross-grade buddy reading and early years reading and skills support which continued throughout the school year.

February brought *I Love To Read Month* which we celebrated in a variety of ways. We kicked off the month with a school-wide assembly featuring Mr. Wayne



Davies, assistant superintendent, as our first guest reader.

A challenge was issued to the students of Stony Mountain School to record their daily reading minutes, in order to reach a goal of 100,000 minutes by the end of the month.

Fortunately for Mr. Blahut, reaching just over 77,000 minutes meant he dodged

having to wear a dress, high heels and makeup for a day! There's always next year Mr. B.! During the month of February, students and staff engaged in daily DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time. Every Friday, there was a contest to guess the identity of a mystery reader. There were theme days such as Stony Pride Day, Canada Day, Jersey Day, Dress as a Book Character and Pajama Day. The Earth Club sponsored their *Sweet Treat Café* book exchange. Students researched and displayed *Did You Know* and *Stony in 100 Years* posters. We scored a touchdown with Chris Greaves being our final guest reader at the month's end celebration.



Plans for the future include enhancing our library with additional seating, monthly literacy themes and introducing new literacy opportunities such as M.Y.R.C.A. (MB Young Readers Choice Awards).

***The more you read, the more you know,  
The more you learn, the more places you'll go!***  
***Dr. Suess***

## GOAL #2: POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

**Goal: By the end of June 2015, students and staff will have engaged in experiences that promote a positive, respectful learning environment.**

Our first step towards creating positive learning environments was to review our school teams in preparation for our first activity. We created 20 teams and each team had students from kindergarten to grade 8 on it. Throughout the year, we met in our teams and spent time playing traditional board games together and sharing collaborative activities. We participated in Halloween Spirit Week, Addictions Awareness Week, Christmas Spirit Week, Milk Spirit Week and Day of Pink. These days included various activities such as: special dress-up days, collaborative multi-age level crafts, games, contests, and bake sales. A new activity we did in our school teams was creating Christmas cards, which were then taken to local hospitals and personal care homes and handed out to the residents.

As part of working towards creating a positive respectful learning environment, we chose to acknowledge students abilities through our Recognition of Strengths celebrations. We reviewed the criteria for each pillar (excellence, leadership, teamwork, and respect). Our Recognition of Strengths assemblies were held four times throughout the year for students in grades 1-8. Students were acknowledged for their hard work with a dog tag and a certificate. Over the course of the school year we handed out 127 awards for respect, 128 awards for excellence, 85 awards for teamwork and 53 awards for leadership, for a total of 393 awards. Another way of recognizing our student's strengths was hosting a Stony's Got Talent show. Students had the opportunity to share a variety of their unique talents, including dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments.

Our students in grades 5-8 had the opportunity to be part of our MY (middle years) Voice team. Over the course of the year, our students participated in a variety of activities to raise awareness for social justice issues at the local and global level. Our students organized spaghetti and hot dog lunches, a pancake breakfast, and collected non-perishable food items at Halloween and Christmas. Students and staff collected 251 clothing items as part of our Jean and Hoodie drive. Thanks to everyone who donated items, the items donated were given to Siloam Mission.

One of the strategies of our team was to promote ongoing positive relationships within the classroom environment. We did this by promoting classroom meetings. During these meetings we often learned something interesting about each other; many students had the opportunity to share about a variety of topics.



## GOAL #3: INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

### INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING

Provide professional learning opportunities that increase capacity (including professional learning communities) in the area of inquiry-based and challenged-based learning.

**Our Committee Goal: To gain an understanding of Inquiry Learning in both early years and middle years settings, with the goal of implementing Inquiry Learning in our own classrooms, and promote school wide implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning.**

The essence of inquiry ...  
"Inquiry ... requires more than simply answering questions or getting a right answer. It espouses investigation, exploration, search, quest, research, pursuit, and study. It is enhanced by involvement with a community of learners, each learning from the other in social interaction."

What we did this year:

- ◇ Research: online resources, books, videos, bibliography of resources, school visitation to observe inquiry-based learning
- ◇ Teaching Writing Using the Big Ideas of Assessment for Learning
- ◇ Engaging Children through Inquiry in a Multi-age Classroom (K-5)
- ◇ PD with: Reggio Emilia Dialogue Session Inquiry-Based Learning Philosophy
- ◇ Staff Folder on Network: PDF files, project-based ideas, worksheets, etc.
- ◇ Staff Binder: In library with resources
- ◇ PLC meetings: To research & create resources about Inquiry-Based Learning
- ◇ Teachers have implemented in class Project-Based & Inquiry-Based activities
- ◇ Created a 4 Year Plan for implementing school wide PD & implementing Inquiry-Based Learning
- ◇ Grant application for specialty area learning
- ◇ MERN Conference: The Idea of Inquiry Learning