

Park West Publisher

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LEARNERS TODAY, LEADERS TOMORROW

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A Message from our Superintendent

It goes without saying that this is the start of a school year unlike any others in recent memory. The new reality of the global pandemic has created much uncertainty. As a school division and a region we have faced many challenges. We have been asked to respond quickly to changing circumstances and significant direction from both Public Health and Manitoba Education. This situation has created concerns about the immediate safety and health of students and staff as well as the long term impact on teaching and learning.

Through all of this, I could not be more impressed with the collective response of those in our schools and communities. Students have worked hard and seem as focused as they have ever been. They have adapted quickly to the new safety measures and protocols and are helping to keep our schools safe. Our parents have been supportive and patient while advocating strongly for their children. Each community has done considerable work on behalf of their residents. And finally our school and divisional staff have done exceptional work in creating learning environments conducive to both safety and learning.

While there is much uncertainty, one thing is clear. We will continue to respond to challenges collaboratively with a collective spirit of perseverance. Thanks so much to everyone in the schools and communities of Park West for everything that you are doing.

Masks for Cancer Care Expansion

Park West School Division would like to recognize and thank Janice Murray from Russell, Manitoba for her contribution to our community. Janice and her team have been producing COVID19 masks with all proceeds going to Cancer Care. Janice made approximately 32,000 masks and raised \$18,000.00. In preparation for the return to school, Park West purchased masks for in-school use.

Janice is a former teacher and her husband Allan served four terms for the Birdtail School Division. He was board chairman, 1981-1985, and also served as part of the Provincial Finance Committee.

In this unprecedented time, Janice felt the need to contribute. On behalf of the students and staff of Park West, we would like to thank her for making a difference in our communities.



Birtle Elementary and Birtle Collegiate Emergency Community Support Fund Grant Recipients

Submitted by Josie Simard

Early last spring, the Emergency Community Support Fund was delivered by the Community Foundations of Canada. The ECSF is a collaborative effort with support from the Government of Canada and for qualified donees and non-profit organizations working with vulnerable populations impacted by the Covid-19 crisis.

The Birtle District Foundation and its network was able to support many different community groups in various ways with this fund. Birtle Elementary and Birtle Collegiate were eligible to apply for this grant money, each applying at three different times and were successful with each application! Birtle Elementary received \$14,205 and Birtle Collegiate received \$19,750 in total to put towards Covid Emergency needs in their school communities.

Both schools anticipated mental health needs upon the return of students in September due to the pandemic and after not attending in person classes since the school suspension which began at the end of March, 2020.

The two schools' first goal was to put in programming that would support students' in their mental wellness and mental health. We are so fortunate to have been able to have contracted Dana Corr from Valley Art Therapy to meet with all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in individual classes for 30 sessions at Birtle Elementary and 50 sessions at Birtle Collegiate. These sessions have helped students understand their own "super powers" in keeping healthy physically and mentally, and have taught them different ways to help calm worries and work through big feelings by practicing different breathing techniques, activities and experiencing different forms of art. These skills are invaluable and we are so grateful to have Dana in our community and to have been able to offer them to every class with a portion of this grant money.

Both schools were also able to purchase a 75 inch television that can be moved from room to room in areas of the school that are not generally used as classrooms. For Birtle Elementary, we have been able to set this up to use the gymnasium as a classroom at different times for social distancing, as well as to project lessons used in gym classes as we are limited in sharing equipment and are limited in games that can be played with little to no contact. Birtle Collegiate has been able to use their tv in the library, transforming it into a classroom when needed for social distancing. Both of these have been used by teachers and classes as well as by Dana Corr when she is in the school.

Birtle Elementary has faced challenges due to spacing and keeping student belongings separate from others. With some of the grant money, individual three tier rolling cabinets were purchased for every student to keep all of their work and supplies in one place as nothing can be shared between students. In addition to this, we will be purchasing individual stand up hampers to keep each student's winter clothing, because we can no longer use hooks in classrooms. Learning through play is very important in our younger years, and to further keep students safe, individual play buckets were purchased for the Kindergarten and Grade 1 students so that

students aren't able to touch each other's toys during play time and these can be cleaned after each use. Plastic math sets were also purchased to help in the cleaning of these materials every night and in between individual uses. In addition to this, wipeable seating was purchased for Guidance sessions to be wiped down in between student visits and sand tray therapy kits to be used with individual wipeable tools. Material will also be bought to construct ten benches that will be put outside to be used for an outdoor learning area to have our students outside as much as possible.

Birtle Collegiate also faced spacing issues as bigger rooms were needed to adhere to the two meter social distancing mandate from the provincial government. A large portion of grant money is allocated for the renovations of a large area on the second floor at Birtle Collegiate that is being turned into a functional classroom for our high school students. An outdoor sound system will also be purchased to allow for outdoor learning as much as possible. Birtle Collegiate has also designated period 5 every day for mental wellness and recovery learning for grades 9-12. This time has been used for mental wellness programming including Valley Art therapy, outdoor wilderness, art, canoeing, biking, construction and individual and whole class recovery education. Supplies for this class have also been supported through a portion of grant money received.

We cannot express enough how thankful we are to the Birtle District Foundation and the Emergency Community Support Fund for this grant money. Their continued support in helping our two schools keep our students and staff as safe as possible during this difficult time has been astounding. Thank you!

@CommFdnsCanada, @ESDC_GC,
@BirtleDistrictFoundation, #ECSFund,
#BirtleDistrictFoundation





Shaving cream fun for Sully Coder from Mrs. Samson's Kindergarten class at Inglis School.

We will bring the world to our **Students**
to prepare our students for the **world.**



Our Motto
Learners Today
Leaders Tomorrow



Health Care Aide Program

Park West School Division is excited to be chosen as the next rural rotating site for the Assiniboine Community College Comprehensive Health Care Aide Program beginning January 2021.

The program will take place at Birtle Collegiate with practicum placements held in various communities throughout the division. Students will acquire basic knowledge and skills required to assist in caring for patients of all ages in hospitals, nursing homes, and the community. The HCA program is available to current PWSD students as well as residents within the division.

For more information please contact Stephen David at sdavid@pwsd.ca or at 842-2117.



BCI students Cody Lawrence and Cassandra Brown work on an ecological study for Mrs. Bowley's Gr 6/7 Science class.

Dates to Remember

- November 30 PD Day
- December 7 PD Day
- December 19 to January 4 Christmas Break

Regular Zoom meetings for parents and guardians are scheduled every second Tuesday. Watch your email for login codes to hear the latest updates from Senior Administration regarding the Division's COVID19 response. The meetings also provide an open forum for you to ask questions, raise concerns, and share how things are going for your children and family.



In the picture on the left, SLS students have been taking part in various activities. Pictured below Grade 1 and 2 students enjoyed the great weather and playing while participating in the Terry Fox Run.

This year's Global Read Aloud book was Fry Bread. Tyson Shwaluk (right) is trying out fry bread first hand.



Mrs. Obach visited SLS to work with the Grade 2 students. Student Evan Knight and Mrs. Obach are shown working on unplugged coding.



Leah Grenier and Eloise Jaeb from Shoal Lake work together doing unplugged coding.



Owen Biglani of SLS works on coding a robot from his iPad.



Inglis students work on an Eggperiment in science class.



Students in K-3 at Inglis (left) are working on some new dance moves in the gym while social distancing.



On the right the Kindergarten students take part in a Milk Tasting activity.

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