



Community Report 2019-2020



Hello to all parents, teachers, students, former students, community members, and all who participate and are interested in the happenings at Riverbend School!

The Community Report is an opportunity to reflect on the past year, celebrate successes, and provide a snapshot of what happened at Riverbend over the past school year. For my first year as Principal it has been a whirlwind of various experiences but ultimately it has been an interesting learning exercise for all parties.

This year the Grade 9 English students have tried to produce a Riverbend Review newsletter every month to keep all members of the community informed. I believe it was well received and will be continued in the future.

It is hard to remember past the whirlwind and changes since the pandemic COVID has hit us, but the year has been great regardless. September started with a new teacher, Ms. Wright, who taught the early years and phys-ed. The students welcomed her fresh look at learning various activities, and enjoyed getting to know her and she them. We had another new face, with Stefan joining us in Kindergarten. Stefan always entertained us with his cute comments and his ability to attend with a new cut, bruise, or bump.

Throughout the year Jonathan was a welcome presence to help fix or install various needs around the school. He was instrumental at the Christmas concert and is our go-to bus driver for field trips. Rosana and Candace were also very helpful. Both of these kind women often sub, and Candace took over the choir program. Anita is also a favorite volunteer when she is always there to help make pizzas, sandwiches, cookies, or any fancy snacks for our celebrations. Your dedication and willingness to help is greatly appreciated. Thank You All!

We always try to do a monthly activity as a school to keep a sense of community, and this year we tried a few different variations on those. In September, we found ourselves on a new hike around the 1.4 km Parson's Hill trail at Sprucewoods and then again at Marsh's Lake trail. We had a wiener roast and were home by 12:30. In October we celebrated with our annual Oktoberfest which included apple bobbing this year, and were surprised with an incredible amount of snow and our first Snow Day on October 11. We had an interesting presentation on Healthy Living which showed all students how much sugar is in each drink and how a healthy pig heart inflates. We held a student vote, went on our annual bowling trip, and shopped and packed shoeboxes for less fortunate children. In November we did something new: the Grade 5-12 students drove to Winnipeg to walk with Bear Clan Patrol. Many people were nervous and we all learned a bit about what others experience in their every day lives, and how thankful we should be for our blessings.

December was our first Christmas concert without the help and advice of Ms. Maendel. The students really pulled together and Jonathan was a great help also. In January we went curling, had a Jump Rope for Heart presentation, and Oak Hammock Marsh presentation. In February we had our Valentine's party, exchanging home made cards, eating snacks, and experiencing a student made heart shaped mickey mouse piñata. March we had our Jump Off event in the Garage and raised \$1900 in donations for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Our annual sledding trip with Acadia was the perfect day weather wise and the hills had decent snow, so it was all around a superb trip. March 12 was the Science fair at Brookdale school that the Grades 1-7 attended, and although none of our students won, they all learned many lessons from creating and presenting their projects.

We had many more learning activities and experiences planned for April to June but had to alter our plans drastically due to the pandemic COVID-19 and the suspension of classroom learning on March 23. It has been interesting, to say the least, but the community has shown resilience and persistence to continue to help the children succeed and continue their education. It has been a mix of take home work packages, Class Dojo communication for the early years, Google Classroom for the middle years, Facetiming and Zooming and many emails and messages in between. The high school students' education by correspondence and ITV was not interrupted, so they got to enjoy some quiet time in the school.

In all these activities and endeavors, we have been keeping our focus on our school plan and the priorities we set for the year: to be life long learners, be caring and cooperative, and involved with the community. Through modeling, and providing opportunities to practice these important character traits and values, we feel there has been personal and collective growth. I hope you notice this as well.

We also had some academic objectives in our plan, especially in regards to reading with better comprehension. In this, we teachers will need to continue to demonstrate, model, expect, reteach, and celebrate success. Reading is really a life-long skill and we want the students to get everything they can from what they read. We do take it seriously and it will be a continuing focus at school!

June may look a little different than it normally does with more stringent cleaning policies, social distancing, continued at home learning, some small group student visits into school, and lots of hand sanitizer. Despite these changes, we continue to put the needs of students first, and do our best for their continued success and health. We still look forward to a mini sports day and a social distancing approved outdoor field trip to go canoeing at our near by Jackson's Lake. We are acknowledging the success and graduation of one student, Maryelle, who will celebrate fully next year with our following 3 graduates.

We appreciate the parents' understanding and support in the hectic at-home learning environment. You have all shown great resilience and we truly are grateful for your endeavours. We wish you a happy, safe, and healthy summer.

