

# **MASS** **Journal**

Fall 2023

The official magazine of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents

## Welcoming Newcomers to Manitoba Schools





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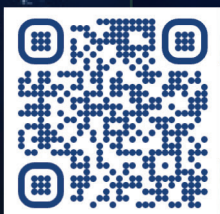
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**On the cover:** The River East Transcona School Division (RETS) has implemented a centralized process for welcoming newcomer students to their schools. Pictured on the cover is a family of newcomers to Bertie Wolfe Community School. This photo was provided by River East Transcona School Division. Turn to page 30 to learn more about how RETSD is Expanding their Welcoming Capacity.







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**W**elcome to the fall edition of the MASS Journal for 2023/2024. I hope the first weeks of the school year have been full of joy and excitement.

As I write this message, we're in the final days of the provincial election campaign. A free and fair election reminds us that it is a privilege and responsibility to participate in the democratic process. Canada is recognized as one of the world's most democratic nations. This is especially significant in a global context where there is an even divide between democracies and autocracies. Moreover, it's important to note that many democracies are relatively young, and there's a recent trend of declining democratic values worldwide.

Democratic citizenship doesn't happen without a universal education system and respect for human rights, and so a provincial election should have us renew our collective commitment to learn about and highlight these essential elements of democracy in our classrooms. Our schools must always make it their mission to inspire change for a more democratic, just, and caring world.

*"Students need to come to understand that the reason for learning is to nurture their intellectual talents for the construction of our society into a more democratic just and caring place to live."* – Maxine Greene

The theme of our MASS Journal for Fall 2023 is "Welcoming Newcomers to Manitoba Schools." Many newcomer families in our schools have left their country of origin in search of "a more democratic, just, and caring place to live." I invite you to read stories that emphasize an ethic of care and hospitality to support thriving newcomer communities within our schools.

Here are just a few of the tidbits of information you'll discover in reading the journal. Canada welcomed 437,180 immigrants in 2022 and that same year Canada experienced the highest annual population growth rate since 1957. Sixty languages are spoken in the Pembina Trails School Division. La Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine (FPFM) – a provincial Franco-Manitoban parents association that is also part of a federal network of associations – is an essential partner when welcoming newcomer families in la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM). Since Russia's most recent invasion of Ukraine, Manitoba has embraced over 22,000 Ukrainian newcomers fleeing the war. Winkler, Manitoba's fourth largest city, is now Canada's youngest census urban area due to a higher-than-average birth rate and young families moving to the region, many of them newcomers. The River East Transcona School Division welcomed 1,364 newcomer students from September 2022 to June 2023!

All the pieces in this issue shared by colleagues celebrate diversity, emphasize the quest for greater equity, and highlight the nurturing of inclusion in our public schools.

Be well,

**Christian Michalik**  
President



**B**ienvenue au numéro automnal du MASS Journal de 2023-2024. J'espère que les premières semaines de l'année scolaire se sont déroulées dans la joie et l'enthousiasme.

Au moment où j'écris ces lignes, nous en sommes aux derniers jours de la campagne électorale provinciale. Des élections libres et justes nous rappellent que c'est un privilège et une responsabilité de participer au processus démocratique. Le Canada est reconnu comme l'une des nations les plus démocratiques du monde et ce fait est particulièrement important dans un contexte mondial où il existe autant

de démocraties que d'autocraties. Il est de plus important de noter que de nombreuses démocraties sont assez jeunes et que l'on observe une tendance récente à la baisse des valeurs démocratiques partout dans le monde.

La citoyenneté démocratique n'existe pas sans un système d'éducation universel et sans le respect des droits de la personne. Des élections provinciales doivent nous inciter à renouveler notre engagement collectif à nous renseigner sur ces éléments essentiels de la démocratie et à les faire valoir dans nos classes. Nos écoles doivent toujours avoir pour mission d'inspirer le changement pour un monde plus démocratique, juste et bienveillant.

*«Les élèves doivent en venir à comprendre que l'apprentissage a pour raison d'être de cultiver leurs talents intellectuels pour que notre société devienne un lieu plus démocratique, juste et bienveillant où vivre.»* – Maxine Greene [traduction]

Le numéro d'automne 2023 du MASS Journal a pour thème «Bienvenue aux nouveaux arrivants dans les écoles du Manitoba». De nombreuses familles de nouveaux arrivants ont quitté leur pays d'origine à la recherche d'un «lieu plus démocratique, juste et bienveillant où vivre». Je vous invite à lire les articles qui soulignent une éthique marquée par le soutien et l'accueil pour aider ces communautés dynamiques de nouveaux arrivants dans nos écoles.

Voici quelques-uns des éléments d'information que vous découvrirez à la lecture du journal. Le Canada a accueilli 437 180 immigrants en 2022 et la même année, il a enregistré le plus haut taux annuel de croissance démographique depuis 1957. On parle plus de 60 langues dans la division scolaire Pembina Trails School. La Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine (FPFM) – une association provinciale de parents franco-manitobains qui fait partie d'un réseau fédéral d'associations – est un partenaire essentiel de l'accueil des familles de nouveaux arrivants dans la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM). Depuis l'invasion la plus récente de l'Ukraine par la Russie, le Manitoba a accueilli plus de 22 000 nouveaux arrivants ukrainiens qui ont fui la guerre. Winkler, la quatrième ville en importance au Manitoba, est devenue le plus jeune territoire urbain de recensement au pays en raison d'un taux de natalité supérieur à la moyenne et des jeunes familles qui s'installent dans la région, dont un grand nombre sont de nouveaux arrivants. La division scolaire River East Transcona a accueilli 1 364 élèves nouveaux arrivants de septembre 2022 à juin 2023 !

Tous les articles du présent numéro préparés par les collègues célèbrent la diversité, mettent l'accent sur la quête d'une meilleure équité et soulignent l'importance de favoriser l'inclusion dans nos écoles publiques.

Portez-vous bien,

**Christian Michalik**  
Président





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**T**he beginning of the 2023/2024 school year has been filled with much excitement as students and staff return to classes and begin their learning journey together. Positive and engaging classroom and school culture are critical elements in the success of our students. Divisional leadership provides the backdrop and support in creating a positive learning environment.

The fall edition of the *MASS Journal* provides us with numerous examples of how school divisions have planned for and worked towards welcoming newcomers into our schools. The support of newcomer students and families into school communities provides a safe place to learn, ask questions and gain further understanding of how to navigate and feel comfortable and connected to the new environment.

The work with newcomers as part of our school communities are a practical example of living the priorities of the MASS organization including:

- Being leaders of learning,
- Improving achievement and well-being of all our students which requires a shared commitment to raising both equity and quality, and
- Actively working towards equity and quality throughout the public education system with a special focus on three action areas: mental health and well-being, early learning, and Indigenous education.

The work with newcomer and all other families provides the opportunity to move closer to our goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion in schools. The importance of supporting positive connections to school and learning are illustrated through the articles that are included in this Journal edition.

The professional learning undertaken by MASS members will continue to focus on thinking broadly about what it means to lead during challenging times to continue to have positive outcomes for students. We appreciate working together with our educational partners to explore and enhance ways to facilitate an integrated support network for our schools and ultimately for the students.

Each MASS member should be proud of the work being done to support our students and their families as we strive to create new and deeper opportunities for collaboration across multiple sectors.

**Barb Isaak**  
Executive Director



**L**a fébrilité est palpable en ce début d'année scolaire 2023-2024, alors que les élèves et le personnel retournent en classe et amorcent leur parcours d'apprentissage ensemble. Une culture de classe et d'école positive et engageante est un facteur essentiel de la réussite de nos élèves. Les orientations

divisionnaires fournissent la toile de fond et le soutien nécessaires à la création d'un cadre d'apprentissage positif.

L'édition d'automne du *MASS Journal* nous offre de nombreux exemples de la manière dont les divisions scolaires ont planifié l'accueil des nouveaux arrivants dans nos écoles et y ont œuvré concrètement. Le soutien apporté aux élèves et aux familles nouvellement arrivées dans les communautés scolaires leur procure un lieu sûr pour apprendre, poser des questions et mieux comprendre comment naviguer dans leur nouvel environnement, et s'y sentir à leur aise et bien intégrés.

Le travail avec les nouveaux arrivants au sein de nos communautés scolaires est un exemple concret de la mise en œuvre des priorités de l'organisation de la MASS :

- Être des chefs de file en matière d'apprentissage;
- Améliorer les résultats et le bien-être individuels de nos élèves, ce qui nécessite un engagement commun en faveur de l'équité et de la qualité;
- Œuvrer activement à l'équité et à la qualité dans l'ensemble du système d'éducation publique, en mettant de l'avant trois champs d'intervention : la santé mentale et le bien-être, l'apprentissage précoce, et l'éducation des Autochtones.

Le travail avec les familles de nouveaux arrivants et les autres nous rapproche de nos objectifs d'équité, de diversité et d'inclusion dans les écoles. L'importance de soutenir des liens positifs avec l'école et l'apprentissage est illustrée par les articles inclus dans cette édition du *MASS Journal*.

L'apprentissage professionnel entrepris par les membres de la MASS continuera de mettre l'accent sur une réflexion élargie qui interroge ce que signifie exercer une direction pendant les périodes difficiles, dans l'optique de maintenir des résultats positifs pour les élèves. Nous apprécions le fait d'œuvrer de concert avec nos partenaires éducatifs pour explorer et améliorer les moyens de faciliter un réseau de soutien intégré pour nos écoles et, en fin de compte, pour les élèves.

Chaque membre de la MASS peut s'enorgueillir à bon droit du travail accompli pour soutenir nos élèves et leurs familles, alors que nous nous efforçons de créer des possibilités nouvelles et approfondies de collaboration entre de multiples secteurs.

**Barb Isaak**  
La directrice générale



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**Barb Isaak**  
Executive Director



**Karen Wohlgemuth**  
Executive Assistant



MASS provides leadership for public education by advocating in the best interests of learners and supports its members through professional services.

**MASS believes that our mandate is to be *leaders of learning*, in our local school systems and in the broader domains of provincial, national and global public education. MASS believes a quality education empowers the whole child to constructively participate in global society.**

We model learning that is:

- active and visible;
- based on robust research;
- tested through purposeful application in the field;
- evaluated using a wide range of meaningful data;
- responsive/supportive

We take responsibility for our own continuous learning and the learning of everyone we lead:


- creating and ensuring safe, supportive, inclusive and challenging environments;
- ensuring essential learning for each and every child;
- preparing others to go beyond our own learning.

We are guided by our learning in shaping policy and practice to achieve what is best.

**MASS believes that *improved achievement and well-being for all of our students requires a shared commitment to raising both equity and quality.***

- A conscious and persistent commitment to equity, system-wide and across sectors, leads to poverty reduction, greater inclusion and an appreciation for the riches that diversity brings.
- A purposeful and sustained commitment to quality education for every student increases the capacity for teaching, learning and leading throughout the system.
- A strong grounding in literacy and numeracy and a rich learning experience involving inquiry, curiosity, creativity and artistic expression enables all students to achieve success and to flourish in life, academics and career.
- A respect for and openness to authentic youth voices and support for meaningful student action are critical for building capacity and self-efficacy in our student

**MASS actively works towards *equity and quality throughout the public education system, with a special focus on three action areas:***

- 
1. Early Learning
  2. Indigenous Education
  3. Mental Health and Well-Being



The **Early Learning Committee** will take leadership to ensure that MASS:

- Advocates for full implementation of the Calls to Action in the MASS position paper on Early Childhood Education.

The **Indigenous Education Committee** will take leadership to ensure that MASS:

- Builds capacity in MASS and school divisions to address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.
- Promotes ever increasing academic achievement, graduation, school completion and positive life outcomes for Indigenous students, informed by collective inquiry into evidence.
- Actively supports the teaching of Indigenous perspectives, corrective history and culture and the use of Indigenous languages.

The **Mental Health and Well-Being Committee** will take leadership to ensure that MASS:

- Advocates for implementation of a comprehensive provincial Children and Youth Mental Health Strategy.
- Collaborates with Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning to develop tools and indicators for assessing the well-being and well-becoming of students in schools.
- Pursues inter-sectoral liaisons with public and mental health organizations and agencies.
- Contributes to a national voice on mental health through Canadian Association of School System Administrators (CASSA) and through input into the Canadian Mental Health Strategy.
- Promotes Mental Health Literacy in mental health for all educators and pre-service educators.
- Sharing of Mental Health & Well-being paper with community and provincial partners. ■





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# From Conflict to the Classroom:

**By Bonnie Silmmon Kiliwnik,  
Park West School Division**

Ukrainian roots run deep in Manitoba. Throughout history, our province has become home to Ukrainians escaping war and persecution. Since Russia's latest invasion of Ukraine, Manitoba has embraced over 22,000 Ukrainian newcomers fleeing the war. Like other divisions across Manitoba, Park West School Division (PWSD) has welcomed Ukrainian newcomer families and students to our communities and schools.

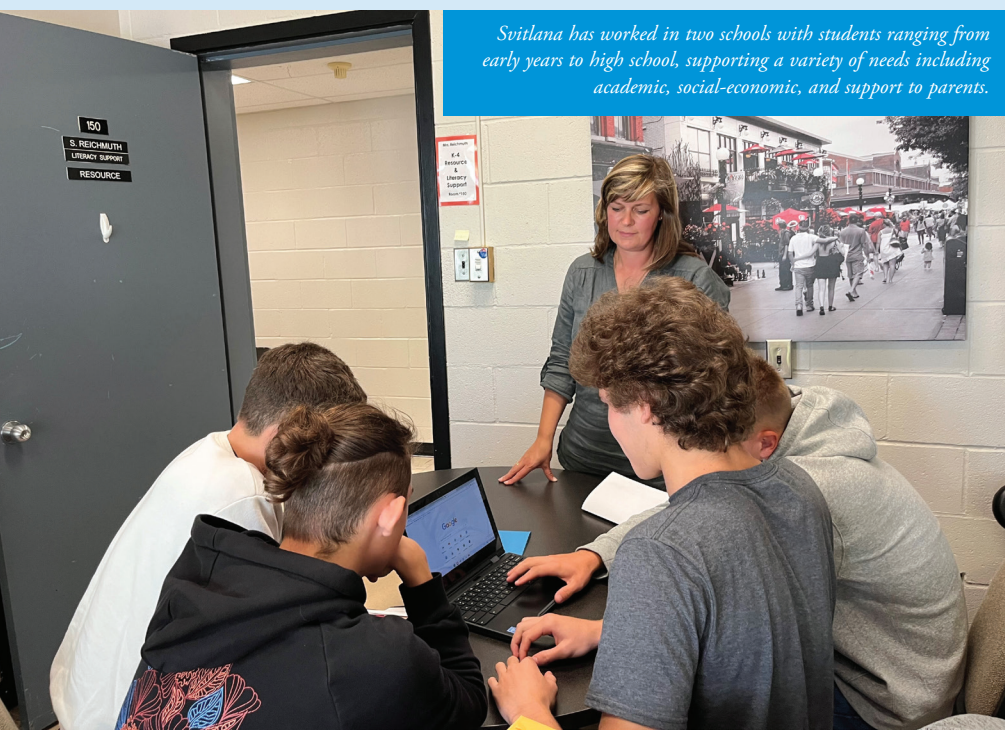
As newcomers began arriving, the division prioritized working with host families to address the Ukrainian newcomers' needs and connected them with necessary support to aid in this journey. School teams worked with community agencies, putting services in place within the homes, with help from interpreters, whose support was vital in assisting families with little to no English.

Providing a safe and caring environment and developing trusted relationships between home and school was critical. School teams recognized that addressing the trauma experienced by Ukrainian students was crucial to the students' academic success. Many of the students suffer from anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other social-emotional concerns. It was essential for educators to receive information on trauma-informed practices. By addressing their trauma, educators were able to support Ukrainian students in their healing process and minimize its impact on their learning.

Transition for newcomer students can be challenging in typical situations. Supporting our Ukrainian



*Svitlana Platova, pictured here with two early years students, was hired as a newcomer liaison working with the new Ukrainian students. Photos courtesy of Bonnie Silmmon Kiliwnik.*



*Svitlana has worked in two schools with students ranging from early years to high school, supporting a variety of needs including academic, social-economic, and support to parents.*



# Supports for Ukrainian Students in Inclusive Manitoba Classrooms

newcomer students under these circumstances required a trauma-informed approach, given that the Ukrainian children and their families have had prolonged exposure to violence and conflict. Ukrainian students have also experienced displacement in refugee camps and interrupted education. As students arrived in schools, it was critical to acknowledge and address the emotional and educational gaps caused by the conflict. By doing so, educators ensured that Ukrainian students felt understood and supported in their new learning environment.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) students need time to acclimatize to their new environment. Schools provided activities for the entire family to promote better engagement and relationship-building between families and school staff. Focusing on relationship building with Ukrainian newcomer students addressed physical and emotional needs and helped students become ready to learn.

The opportunity to apply for and receive the Intensive Newcomer Grant (ING) through Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning allowed for increased opportunities for Ukrainian newcomer students and their families. The goals on the grant application included addressing the mental health and well-being of Ukrainian students and family members, transition to the community, and student academic achievement. The ING allowed funds for student-specific programming, including the purchase of additional technology resources for English Language instruction. Funds were also used for additional staffing, including a Newcomer Educational Assistant Liaison.

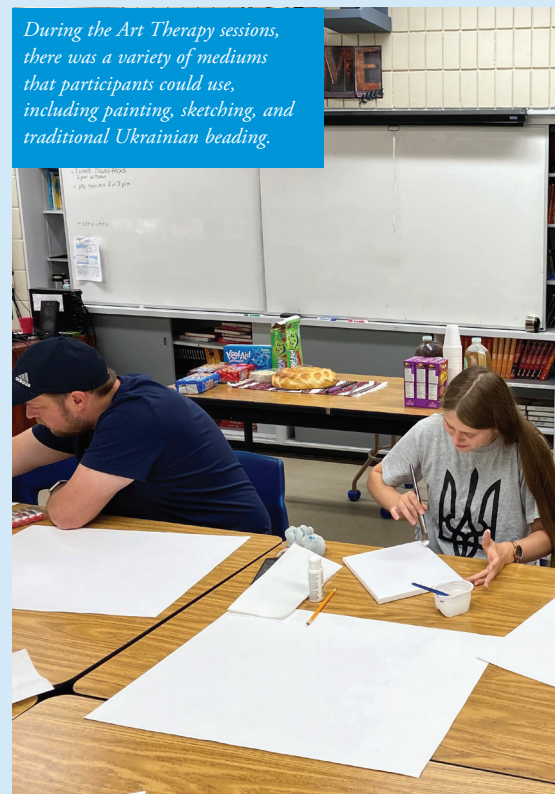


*Parents and their children participated in a variety of Art Therapy sessions together.*

Svitlana Platova, a Ukrainian newcomer, was hired as a Liaison to support the students and their families. Svitlana was an English Teacher in Ukraine for 19 years. Her story is similar to many other Ukrainian newcomers, as she fled Ukraine with her daughter when the war started. They spent four months in a refugee camp in Poland and then came to Canada in July of 2022. Svitlana shared, “We came to Canada with one suitcase, not knowing what to expect, but we knew we were safe.”

PWSD was very fortunate to hire Svitlana, as her skills and assistance with the language barrier were a tremendous asset to the Ukrainian students, families, and teachers. Svitlana also assisted the Ukrainian students with academic programming and was a support as a liaison between home and school. “Having Svitlana assisting with programming has been an instrumental asset for our Ukrainian

*During the Art Therapy sessions, there was a variety of mediums that participants could use, including painting, sketching, and traditional Ukrainian beading.*





students. Her academic and emotional support for the students has allowed them to transition and flourish in their new school community”, stated Sarah Reichmuth, Resource Teacher at Major Pratt School. The inclusive practice of students in the classroom with peers has significantly improved our Ukrainian students’ English language skills and overall academic progress.

The ING also allowed funds for Art Therapy sessions for students that were school-based and family art therapy sessions. The Art Therapy sessions

allowed students and parents to express emotions that would otherwise be challenging to articulate. In a safe and caring space, the children and parents came together as a community to meet one another and, through guided Art Therapy sessions, work through shared emotions and begin to heal from their ordeals. These opportunities allowed for the creative expression of feelings with no interpreter needed. Art Therapy counsellors, in addition to school-based and parent sessions, also provided individual sessions for

newcomer students through one-to-one therapy. “The students are doing OK,” commented Svitlana, “The most important thing is that they are safe. They have made new friends and like the schools and their teachers.” Compassionate and caring school staff continue to be aware of the impact of trauma on Ukrainian newcomers. School staff realized their approach to trauma would have to be unique and individual, respecting whatever the students choose to share and how they choose to do it.

When supportive and positive relationships are combined with supportive and safe learning environments, teachers create the opportunity for students to learn, grow, and thrive, especially those recovering from traumatic events.

PWSD has been awarded the ING for the 2023/2024 academic year. Plans going forward for the next school year include maintaining educational programming and continuing to provide mental health and well-being support to work through trauma and the impact of the ongoing war for newcomer students and their families. Additional educational liaison staff will be hired to support returning students and new students who are expected to register in PWSD schools.

Inclusive education plays a vital role in ensuring the success and well-being of Ukrainian students in Manitoba schools. By promoting cultural awareness, providing trauma-informed support, facilitating language acquisition, and fostering peer connections, PWSD teachers have created a classroom environment that acknowledges and supports the challenges faced by Ukrainian students. Manitoba’s inclusive educational system can lay the foundation for these students to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. This enables the students who have fled their homeland to overcome the impacts of conflict and turmoil and to embrace a brighter future in Manitoba, their new home away from home. ■

*Bonnie Silmmon Kiliwnik is the Director of Student Services and Stephen David is the Superintendent for Park West School Division.*



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# A Warm Welcome: Embracing Newcomers and Celebrating Diversity

**By Marla Armstrong, Julie Cordova, and Colleen Roberts,  
Pembina Trails School Division**

**I**n Pembina Trails School Division, all newcomer families and students are warmly welcomed and supported through an educational journey filled with opportunities, growth, and acceptance. We take pride in the vibrant diversity of our community, which has embraced over 700 new students in 2022/2023. Our student body includes learners from various countries across the globe, representing more than 60 different languages spoken within our schools. Establishing strong connections with newcomer families and understanding the strengths of our students is of utmost importance to us. We are dedicated to creating safe, nurturing, and inclusive environments where all students can feel a sense of belonging and connection. As a school division, we embrace and acknowledge that every person brings their own distinct experiences, cultures, and viewpoints.

The first component for establishing strong connections for our newcomer families is supported through interviews and intake meetings with the student, guardian, and school team members. School staff including English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers, classroom teachers, subject area teachers, resource teachers, and counselors are each involved with students from the time they enter the school system and extending to their exit. Our school teams follow the EAL intake process as outlined in Manitoba's provincial documents. This process allows us to gather information and learn about the educational backgrounds, aspirations,

*Arther A. Leach students  
packing humanitarian  
aid kits to send to  
Ukraine. Photo courtesy  
of Julie Cordova.*



and needs of newly enrolled newcomer students and their family.

A second crucial component in facilitating a successful experience for our newcomer families is guaranteeing that all students have the opportunity to learn from highly skilled educators. We recognize that teachers are the driving force behind student success and that they play a pivotal role in shaping meaningful learning experiences for all students. Understanding the significant role teachers play, we take pride in prioritizing teacher professional development and recognizing its profound impact on both educators and students.

Teachers strengthen their teaching methods, integrate best practices, and meet the changing needs of their students by participating in professional development opportunities. These opportunities provide teachers with the necessary tools to support

their students, such as incorporating technology and promoting inclusive practices. Through collaborative learning and workshops, teachers share their experiences, exchange ideas, and develop innovative solutions to enhance teaching and learning experiences for all. Professional development also offers teachers the chance to connect and collaborate with colleagues from different schools, facilitating the sharing of ideas, resources, and experiences. This networking fosters a sense of collective efficacy towards improving student outcomes. The summary that follows highlights various examples of the work done to support schools with EAL and newcomer students.

Firstly, whole school professional development was provided to assist schools that experienced a significant increase in their EAL student population during the 2022/2023 school year.



The focus of these professional development sessions was to help schools effectively support newcomers and English language learners with multiple objectives in mind. These included deepening their knowledge of intentional instruction strategies for language acquisition, identifying access points for subject area curriculum, and implementing differentiated assessment methods.

Secondly, school teams were provided with dedicated professional development sessions to ensure their understanding of the Manitoba Education EAL Intake Process. These sessions also offered guidance on creating individualized plans for students who require support in both EAL and Language, Academics, and Literacy (LAL) areas. Additionally, these collaborative learning sessions stressed the significance of being culturally responsive in the classroom.

A third component that supports a strong beginning for our newcomer students includes access to high-quality educational resources as essential tools that strengthen and enhance teaching and learning. In the Pembina Trails School Division, the primary purpose of support resources is to supplement and strengthen universal classroom approaches. Having a wide variety of instructional resources provides learners with additional support, promotes learning, and allows for differentiated instruction and assessment. We know

that educational resources take many forms, including text material, e-books, educational software, lesson plans, manipulatives, multimedia presentations, and, in some cases, additional educational assistant support.

In the 2022/2023 school year, school leaders and EAL teachers engaged in reflective practice where they were invited to critically analyze access to instructional resources and their teaching approaches. We learned that these schools required essential EAL/LAL teaching materials to address both the practical aspects of everyday communication, academic subjects, and the development of social-emotional skills.

While working in collaboration with the Divisional EAL Consultant, teachers identified the instructional resources and supports needed to positively impact programming for our newcomer students. With financial support from our 2022/2023 provincial Intensive Newcomer Support Grant, we were able to recommend and purchase engaging materials to support student learning in English language development, reading, writing, content-specific vocabulary, and social-emotional learning. The acquisition of computers and iPads for student use in middle and senior year schools supported the development of digital literacy skills. Furthermore, school teams were provided with dedicated release time

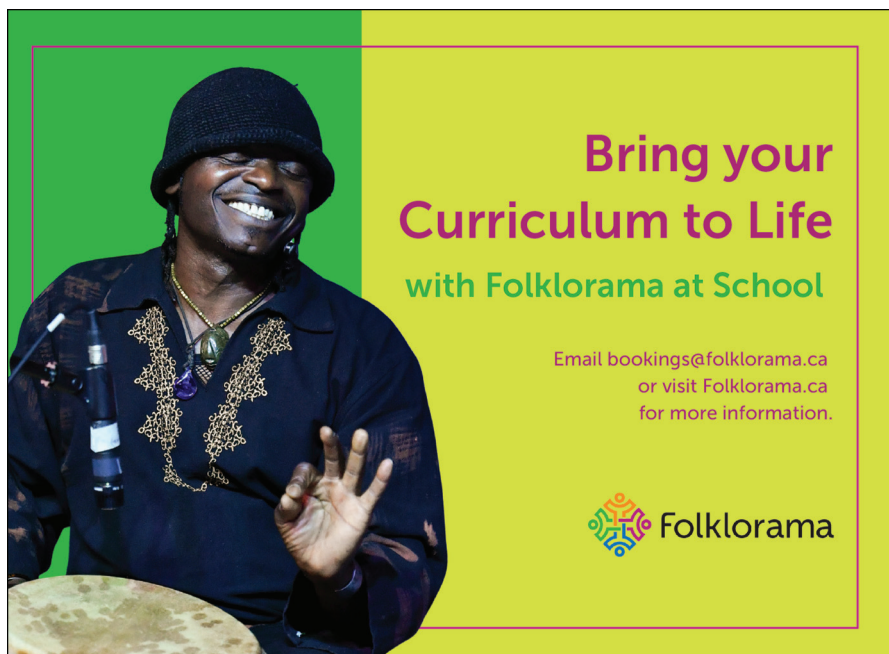
to explore these resources and plan for their use in effective instruction.

To enhance the reading experience for students, each of our school libraries invested in a wide range of resources. Both online and paper books have been acquired, catering to diverse languages to accommodate the needs of all students. This initiative ensures that students have access to reading materials in their preferred language, promoting a love of reading and language development. Additionally, the acquisition of software applications across the division allows students to consume literature and create their own stories, fostering creativity and self-expression. The integration of these resources in school libraries aims to facilitate an inclusive and enriching environment for all students.

Another crucial aspect of our commitment to inclusion and support for newcomer families is the organization of cultural celebrations and newcomer parent information evenings. These events offer parents an opportunity to gather essential information about the school system, curriculum, and available resources for their children. To ensure effective communication, we hire interpreters for tri-conferences, enabling parents with limited English proficiency to actively engage in their child's education. This practice aims to create a welcoming environment, overcome language barriers, and ultimately strengthen the partnership between the school and parents, leading to the success of all students.

Pembina Trails School Division is dedicated to creating warm and supportive educational experiences for all newcomer families and students. Our diverse student population is at the heart of our commitment to building strong connections and understanding the unique strengths of each student. With our unwavering support and ongoing dedication, we empower our students to thrive and achieve success throughout their educational journey and together we can *Accomplish Anything!* ■

*Marla Armstrong is the English as an Additional Language Consultant, Julie Cordova is the Divisional Principal of Curriculum & Learning, and Colleen Roberts is the Assistant Superintendent for Pembina Trails School Division.*





# Welcoming and Supporting Newcomers

By Dan Ward and Joanne Derksen, Garden Valley School Division

**W**ander the aisles of the sprawling Winkler Superstore on any given Saturday afternoon, and you will hear a multitude of languages being spoken by people from many parts of the globe. Winkler, Manitoba's fourth largest city, is now Canada's youngest census urban area, largely due to not only a higher-than-average birth rate, but also as the result of many young families moving to the region.<sup>1</sup> Newcomers arriving in Winkler and area is not a new phenomenon; however, over the course of the last few years, there has been a substantial increase in the number of families arriving from places that have not historically been a significant source for new arrivals in southern Manitoba, contributing to the region's diversity and vibrancy. It is exciting to be part of such a dynamic

community, but with growth comes challenges that necessitate genuine partnerships and a commitment to address the emerging needs of our students.

Since September of 2022, the division has received over 240 newcomer students, 93 from Ukraine alone. New arrivals come for jobs, housing, and an opportunity to live and raise a family in a safe and welcoming community. Garden Valley School Division (GVSD) plays a critical role in ensuring that families are supported in experiencing success as they navigate the challenges and opportunities that face new Canadians. The division remains committed to community partnerships, English as an Additional Language (EAL) programming, and providing a plethora of direct supports to our newly arrived families.

Tanja Funk, a School Liaison Worker, is based out of Winkler's Northlands Parkway Collegiate (NPC), one of the

two high schools in the small city of 14,000. Newcomer families come with many needs. Liaisons such as Tanja provide direct support to families in accessing critical services to ensure they successfully acclimatize and adapt to their new community. Tanja does everything from taking parents and students to get their health cards, assisting in navigating immigrant and refugee requirements, and ensuring that children and adults alike don't miss medical appointments. Winkler has a thriving manufacturing and agricultural sector with many employment opportunities, but still lacks public transportation, and many newcomers arrive without access to a vehicle.

Tanja talks about some of the intrinsic rewards of her demanding role within the division. She shares that a mother from Ukraine recently stated, "I've met so many nice people" as her eyes welled up with tears of joy and gratitude. Other families have expressed both appreciation

*The SWIS Mentorship Program.  
Photo courtesy of Dan Ward.*





and surprise by how welcoming the community and schools have been to them. Not all conversations happen in English as many new arrivals from Ukraine are not proficient English language speakers. In those cases, Tanja quickly switches to Russian, a language she is fluent in, and newly arrived Ukrainian immigrants can understand.

Newcomers are also provided with tours and information on how to manage life in Canada. Kara Wieler, a School Liaison Worker at Pine Ridge Elementary, shares, "I show them examples (of school lunches) and show them how to use a thermos and what to pack their food in." She reaches out to the wider school community for donations of bicycles, household items and clothes. When families have not planned a move, they often arrive with only the necessities. It is also important to note the celebrations. Kara cites highlights of the school year which included a child newly arrived who was invited to a birthday party and an eighth-grade student from Ukraine trying out for club basketball and elated

after making the squad. The classroom itself is a natural place of support, and staff members become much more than instructors. "My role as EAL teacher is bigger than teaching the language," says Janel Cowan, an EAL teacher at Winkler Elementary School (WES). "We become a community in our class." Approximately 25 per cent of WES' total enrolment is now made up of newcomer students.

There are significant food security challenges among many newcomer families, exacerbated by inflationary pressures. Although school lunch programs and community agencies provide assistance, numerous new arrivals have large families and require at least two incomes to support their needs. In some cases, immigrant families have a single parent, often with a partner who is still overseas. Consequently, it is not uncommon for a 16- or 17-year-old to pitch in, holding down evening jobs on an almost daily basis to make ends meet. Balancing education with the immediate needs of the family is challenging, and teachers have noted both problematic absentee rates and fatigue amongst some

of the newly arrived students. Adding to the challenges is trauma. Tanja and other school staff have heard stories from newcomers of homes being bombed and families having nothing left. One mother emotionally acknowledged that prior to leaving for Canada, her surroundings were forever changed. "It was all completely gone," she shared.

Along with counselling supports, building a community network is critical in assisting newcomers who many not only be struggling with trauma, but a sense of detachment. Raffaele Bagnulo, NPC's Vice-Principal, shares that the school has a great rapport and working relationship with Regional Connections Immigrant Services in Winkler, an organization that provides settlement services which include support in acquiring local employment, English classes, and community integration.<sup>2</sup> Schools in Garden Valley directly benefit from the partnership through the Settlement Worker in Schools (SWIS) initiative. SWIS personnel provide individual and group support to newcomer children, youth,






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and families within the school system to ensure their successful integration in the school and community.

This past school year, Raff and the SWIS staff noticed that some of the newly arrived students seemed lonely and were not socializing well due to language barriers. Of the thirty recent arrivals to NPC, only 25 per cent were proficient in English. Toby and Aubrey, the two SWIS members attached to the school, sought permission to partner with school staff to start a program based primarily on the concept of mentorship. Raff, Toby, and Aubrey recruited students who had recently been newcomers themselves to act as mentors to new arrivals. The group met Wednesdays at lunch and each volunteer was responsible for organizing a game or activity. They also engaged in social events outside of school such as Winkler Flyers and Winnipeg Goldeyes games, shopping, and weekend get-togethers. Raff shares, "One of the mentors even got a summer job with Regional Connections, supporting newcomer youth in soccer and cooking!" The mentorship program not only built the capacity of future leaders but ensured newly arrived students had their own venue to feel safe, supported, and welcomed. The SWIS members extended their work and organized similar programming in some of the division's elementary schools. They plan to continue the initiative at NPC and expand to Garden Valley Collegiate, Winkler's other high school, in 2023/2024.

Raff indicates that the school's EAL class doubled in size over the past semester, requiring a split into three groups, which was made possible due to recent government funding from the Manitoba government's Intensive Newcome Support Grant.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Statistics Canada. "Winkler: A young city in every sense of the word." StatsCAN Plus. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/3743-winkler-young-city-every-sense-word>. June 2, 2023.
2. Regional Connections Immigrant Services. "About us." <https://regionalconnections.ca/about-us/>.

Garden Valley successfully applied for two such grants since February of 2023, and received approximately \$300,000 in support to provide enhanced programming for newcomer children and youth.

The arrival of newcomers continues in the region, presenting both opportunities and challenges for the education system. Schools are an integral part of the community supports that work to ensure new arrivals are successful. When asked if they would stay in Winkler long term, many newcomers respond positively, citing the city's

small size and sense of safety, welcoming people, and the availability of jobs as reasons to make the community their permanent home. Educators, support staff and partner agencies will continue to work alongside newcomers to help them successfully adapt and thrive in their newly chosen community. ■

*Dan Ward is Superintendent of Garden Valley School Division. Joanne Derksen is Assistant Superintendent of Student Services of Garden Valley School Division.*



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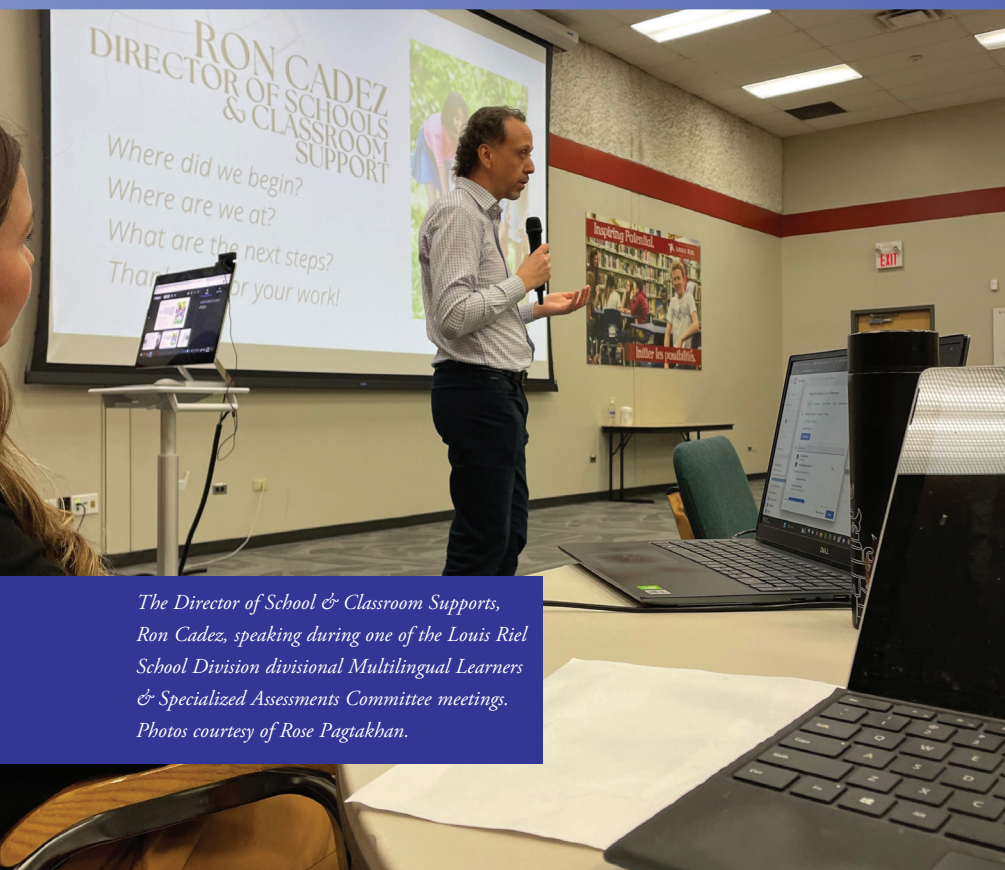


*A group of teachers and clinicians from the Louis Riel School Division's Divisional Multilingual Learners & Specialized Committee working together.*

**By Rose Pagtakhan, Louis Riel School Division**

**T**he Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) is implementing significant, far-reaching changes with respect to our approach to supporting multilingual learners (MLLs). This year, we continue building capacity in all teaching staff throughout LRSD to support students who are learning an additional language. This is more than just a solution to meet the logistical needs of a rapidly growing MLL student population. Building such capacity in all teachers is, ultimately, about building community and promoting equity. It is critical that we, as educators, recognize the true significance of this work.

# Building Capacity Builds Community



*The Director of School & Classroom Supports, Ron Cadez, speaking during one of the Louis Riel School Division divisional Multilingual Learners & Specialized Assessments Committee meetings. Photos courtesy of Rose Pagtakhan.*

According to Statistics Canada, in 2022, Canada welcomed 437,180 immigrants. It saw a net increase in the number of non-permanent residents estimated at 607,782, making 2022 the year with Canada's highest annual population growth rate since 1957. While it is important to note that not all immigrant students are necessarily multilingual learners, many are. As the immigrant population in Canada continues to grow, so does the population of MLL students within our schools.

Therefore, even from a strictly numbers-based standpoint, the need to build MLL support capacity in all teaching staff throughout the division is clear. Previously, a small Divisional EAL (English as an Additional Language) Itinerant Team, considered to be the divisional "experts" on supporting MLLs, were solely



responsible for attending to the specific educational needs of MLL students for all of LRSD. This work included welcoming, registering, planning, assessing, and instructing multilingual learners, often using the pull-out instructional delivery approach. Given the rapid growth of the MLL population within our school division, it is simply not logistically feasible for only a small group of educators to be responsible for the needs of an entire school division with 40 schools.

However, while changing demographics do indeed ask us to adapt our processes and procedures, they do not constitute the fundamental reason for needing to build capacity in all teachers to support MLL students effectively. Rather, such an approach is ultimately underpinned by the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism, which are core values that inform all areas of LRSD's work.

The question "how will we support multilingual learners?" is ultimately a question of how we honour the diversity of learners within our community. An approach that isolates and marginalizes MLL students from their peers in the classroom may address immediate instructional needs but does not lend itself to linguistically and culturally sustaining pedagogy. By building capacity in staff across the division, we are not only bolstering educators' skills, but also empowering them to foster a culture of unity, belonging, and reciprocity within their classrooms and schools.

How, then, do we empower teachers to carry out this work of building community? We must first begin by providing them with the necessary skills, tools, and resources to do so. The starting point for the 2022/2023 school year was to build capacity in our Student Services Teachers (SSTs) as they support classroom teachers in addressing student needs. Several initiatives were taken toward our goal of building capacity in all teachers.

Some examples of capacity building initiatives that began during the 2022/2023 school year were:

- Offered Divisional Professional Development: Supporting and Planning for Multilingual Learners for Student Services Teachers.
- Supplied copies of the Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum Framework for EAL and LAL to each SST in the division.
- Provided divisional articles on topics such as: Clarifying the Manitoba Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum Framework for EAL/LAL, Appropriate and Equitable use of Terminology, Rethinking Educational Marginalization by Dr. Jonathan Rosa, Translanguaging, etc.
- Presented at the LRSD Educators' Summit on Linguistically & Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.
- Created Divisional Documents for Teaching Functional Language, MLL Resources for Teachers and Registration Procedure Guide for Newcomers.
- Reviewed Divisional EAL Library – began purchase of decodable books for middle years & senior years students.
- Collaborated with school teams on their MLL planning & programming needs via Requests for Service, which reached over half of the schools.
- Contributed to Staff Meeting Presentations on MLL topics.
- Offered Affinity Space which are Resource Groups for Racialized and Minoritized Employees. These groups allow organizations to better respond to the needs of these groups, which in turn enrich our school communities.
- Formed a division-wide MLLs & Specialized Assessments Committee. This Committee was comprised of teachers from a cross section of staff groups such as Early Years, Middle Years and Senior Years from English & French Immersion Schools, Student Services Teachers, Clinicians, LAL Program Teachers and the Indigenous Team. The goal was to create a divisional document adapted from documents from two other Canadian School Divisions to guide teaching staff when it may be more than just additional language acquisition.

- Mentored teachers new to LRSD on important aspects of supporting and teaching MLLs.

For the 2023/2024 school year, we will continue the aforementioned work with the following:

- Provide FAQ sheets for different staff groups. These documents help staff understand the ethic of hospitality/importance of ensuring that everyone feels welcomed and belong to our school communities and identifies their roles and responsibilities for supporting our additional language learners and their families.
- Roll out The MLLs and Specialized Assessments Document for all teaching staff; includes strategies and suggestions for core subjects.
- Create a committee from teachers across the division with a plus one model with the goal of continued capacity building within schools.
- Offer a Lunch & Learn Series focused on supporting MLLs.
- Include a series on Immigration for greater understanding of global trends and issues, to be featured in our monthly divisional e-newsletter for staff.
- Begin to create a "Model School" to assist with providing the best possible practices for MLLs and their families.
- Collaborate with ISP Staff and the Zone Settlement Program.
- Continue to mentor teachers that are new to LRSD.

In closing, at LRSD, our vision and mission is "to provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment, where personal and collective learning are valued, and each one of us reaches our full potential." While the prospect of building capacity in staff division-wide may seem like a lofty, daunting goal, we must remember why we are seeking to do so in the first place. It may be a long and challenging journey, but so too is learning a language, just as hundreds of students in our own communities are doing each day. ■

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*Rose Pagtakhan is a Divisional School & Classroom Support Teacher for Louis Riel School Division.*



# Défis et réussites d'une intégration positive

**Par Alain Laberge,  
Superintendant/Directeur  
général, Franco-Manitoban  
School Division/Division  
scolaire franco-manitobaine**

**L**es nouveaux arrivants dans les écoles de la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM) apportent une grande richesse à nos communautés, mais pour faire en sorte que leur intégration soit bien réussie, il faut que tous les partenaires en éducation mettent la main à la pâte. Cela peut paraître une évidence, mais de façon pratique, ce n'est pas toujours facile.

Pour débiter, il est important de bien comprendre que plusieurs familles dites « nouveaux arrivants » n'arrivent pas au Canada par choix. En effet, c'est souvent par souci de sécurité suite à des événements traumatiques : guerre, conflit, pauvreté, qualité de vie, aide médicale, etc. Il s'agit donc de familles, et plus particulièrement d'enfants qui arrivent dans un environnement scolaire avec des traumatismes sans compter que plusieurs d'entre eux ont un retard scolaire dû au fait qu'ils n'ont pas eu accès à l'école de manière constante.

En second lieu, ces nouvelles familles nécessitent un accompagnement de plus longue durée que ce que leur offrent les gouvernements provincial et fédéral. La plupart du temps, ces nouvelles familles sont prises en charge à leur arrivée, mais cette aide gouvernementale diminue au fil du temps pour souvent se terminer six mois après leur arrivée. Soyons honnêtes, six mois est un court laps de temps pour qu'une famille soit bien intégrée dans une nouvelle communauté.



*De gauche à droite : Fabran, septième année ; Fariha, première année, et Asmae, maternelle. Cette photo a été prise à l'École Noël-Ritchot.*

Mettons-nous dans leurs souliers l'instant d'un moment : obtenir une carte d'assurance maladie, trouver un médecin francophone, obtenir un permis de conduire, trouver un emploi et un logement, apprendre une autre langue, trouver une école, comprendre les lois provinciales et fédérales, faire sa déclaration de revenus, etc. Imaginez que demain matin vous arrivez avec votre famille dans un pays où les gestes quotidiens « anodins » vous semblent étrangers. Votre priorité serait de simplement tenter de survivre et de protéger votre famille. C'est à ce moment que le travail collaboratif entre écoles, communautés, familles et acteurs du milieu devient un incontournable. Cela demande une coordination des services offerts, et surtout, une connaissance des rôles de tout un chacun afin d'éviter que ces nouvelles familles se noient dans cette mer d'intervenants.

Maintenant, que peut faire l'école? Quel rôle peut-elle jouer? L'école joue un rôle clé dans l'intégration et l'inclusion d'élèves nouveaux arrivants. La première étape la plus cruciale, à mon avis, est l'accueil. L'équipe-école a un très grand rôle à jouer lors de la première rencontre où les parents et enfants se montrent souvent, et avec raison, méfiants et vigilants. Ouvrir les bras pour accueillir une nouvelle famille peut sembler banal, mais ce premier geste en est un d'ouverture et sert à mettre les nouvelles familles en confiance. Elles ont maintenant l'assurance qu'elles peuvent se fier à l'école et à son personnel pour s'occuper de leurs enfants.

Par la suite, présenter l'école aux parents et aux enfants a pour effet

de rassurer ceux-ci que leurs enfants sont entre bonnes mains. Préparer le groupe-classe qui accueillera ces nouveaux élèves est primordial. Lorsque la langue est un défi, l'adaptation de ces enfants doit passer par des gestes et des apprentissages qui ne requièrent pas tout de suite la maîtrise de la langue : socialisation, sports, arts et culture sont des activités qui ne nécessitent pas de longues consignes et qui permettent à tous de s'exprimer.

Puis, afin de répondre aux besoins criants des familles nouvellement arrivées au Manitoba et dont les enfants sont inscrits à la DSFM, nous avons créé de nouveaux postes d'agents culturels dont le travail est d'appuyer ces familles, pour les aider non seulement à s'organiser à vivre au Manitoba mais aussi à se familiariser avec le monde de l'éducation au Canada. À cet égard, et afin d'appuyer ces familles de la meilleure façon possible, nos agents ont un horaire de travail flexible qui ne se limite pas aux heures scolaires. En fait, ces agents travaillent souvent en soirée afin d'accompagner les parents de ces enfants dans tous les aspects de la réussite.

Par la suite, l'école joue aussi un rôle important dans l'accompagnement scolaire et psychosocial des élèves : évaluation des besoins, soutien scolaire, appui en matière de francisation, plan personnel, appui orthopédagogique, soutien psychologique si nécessaire, et parfois, appui sur le plan alimentaire, etc. Tout se fait dans la dignité de l'enfant et de la famille.

Il ne faut pas oublier l'appui de la communauté. Au sein de la DSFM, nous travaillons en collaboration avec nos comités scolaires de parents afin de continuer d'appuyer nos nouveaux arrivants : collecte de fonds pour appuyer les sorties scolaires, achat de patins, de vêtements d'hiver et de matériel scolaire, soirée de rencontre avec la garderie, etc. Nos parents sont au courant des défis auxquels sont confrontées nos nouvelles familles et s'engagent afin de diminuer le fardeau que représente l'accès à l'école.

Si la réussite scolaire de ces enfants est possible, c'est aussi grâce à nos partenaires en éducation. Nous travaillons de près avec la Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine (FPFM) afin de nous assurer que les petits frères et petites sœurs de ces élèves aient une place en garderie dans nos écoles. La FPFM fait aussi un excellent travail de francisation et de socialisation pour ces nouveaux arrivants dont le français est une langue utilitaire.

Donc, en conclusion, l'intégration d'élèves nouveaux arrivants est l'affaire de toute une communauté. Cette intégration ne sera possible que si nous tendons la main à ces enfants, sans jugement, et que nous prenons le temps de bien faire les choses. ■

*Alain Laberge est le directeur général de la Division scolaire franco-manitobaine.*

*If you'd like to read this article in English, please email Barb Isaak at [barb.isaak@mass.mb.ca](mailto:barb.isaak@mass.mb.ca).*



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# Expanding our Welcoming Capacity

By Sandra Herbst, Elise Downey, Karen Boyd, Jason Drysdale, Mark Bruce, & Tammy Mitchell,  
River East Transcona School Division



*Caring and compassionate support that newcomer families experience as part of the coordinated River East Transcona School Division newcomer reception process. Photos courtesy of Jason Drysdale.*

“ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ, (Sat Sri Akaal)”, said one of our bus drivers as a student boarded the school bus. The student’s eyes lit up as they recognized a greeting in their own language. “I’m trying to learn how to greet my riders in all of their languages,” the bus driver explained. “I think it helps them to feel welcome.”

As you read this article, imagine that each word that your eyes move over represents one newcomer student who we welcomed into River East Transcona School Division during the 2022/2023 school year. Over 1300 new students from all over the world now sit in classrooms in 39 of our 42 schools – number equal to our largest high school. Some of those students are amongst our youngest learners, while others are joining us for a short time before they graduate. Regardless of their age, the journey that brought them here, or their school experience, our goal for each student is to ensure that they feel welcome.

We want the logistical challenges of such a quickly expanding enrolment to be invisible to the families, while at the same time providing support to them and to our school staff. This article shares the processes and practices that were continued, expanded, and revised during a year of unprecedented growth to ensure that we had the capacity to efficiently welcome our new students, from their first bus ride to convocation.

River East Transcona School Division has a centralized process for welcoming newcomer students. Families who reach out to a school after moving into the division are supported

by a Newcomer Reception Facilitator (NRF). The divisional NRF welcomes the family, reviews their paperwork, and does an initial assessment on the students. The paperwork that accompanies newcomers is very specific; families often require support to ensure they have everything needed to complete registration. While regular registration is handled by the school office, this centralized process for newcomers reduces the pressure on each individual<sup>1</sup> school and their need to be aware of all the intricacies of documents from varied governments.

The initial assessment provides an opportunity for the NRF to provide the school with some academic and social information, while gathering it in a comfortable environment. Families who have children across several schools only need visit with the NRF once. The NRF coordinates the dissemination of materials to the appropriate schools, thus reducing the challenges families and their support network may face. Having the NRF in place from mid-August to June has provided a coordinated process to support families, schools, and the division. More importantly, because the NRF is one of the first caring faces of the school division, families begin to understand that we are in this together – RETSD is invested in them and their success.

The NRF process has been an established process for over 15 years and prior to August of 2022, there was no reason to suspect that it would not continue to be effective. However, the impact of the war in Ukraine began to be felt over the summer of 2022. As families arrived and<sup>2</sup> settled in River East Transcona communities, the waiting list to be seen by the NRF began to grow. By the third week in August, it was necessary to adjust the process to ensure that students were enrolled and ready to start school as soon as possible. First, the NRF team was increased by one additional staff. The team of three was also heavily supported by divisionally funded and coordinated interpreters.

The team moved to a central location, instead of traveling to the school where the family was<sup>3</sup> registering. The



*River East Transcona School Division's newcomer reception process welcomes families, reviews their paperwork, and helps students find their right place to learn.*

initial student assessment was abbreviated, based on general student profiles, to further expediate the process. During this intense registration time, it was made clear that the Newcomer Reception Facilitator Team made a difference to families and schools. Families appreciated this connection and the opportunity to discuss their questions and concerns before engaging with the schools.

Newcomers who were impacted by the war in Ukraine were offered<sup>4</sup> additional opportunities during registration. River East Transcona has a long standing and successful Ukrainian Bilingual Program (EUBP) that is offered from kindergarten to Grade 8. Ukrainian newcomers were

interested to hear about this program and considered if it was the best fit for their family. We also had to revision how that program might meet the needs of both newcomers, with Ukrainian as their first language who were accessing the program as a soft landing while they learned English, and students who may have Ukrainian as a family heritage language but would be new to learning and using the language.

Families with students in Senior Years also had the option to enrol in one of<sup>5</sup> our two Sheltered EAL/LAL programs, while families in Middle Years were offered support in one divisional EAL program. These opportunities were another way that we welcomed



families into the school division and each one necessitated complex decisions around staffing, transportation, budget, and professional learning.

Because of the high volume of registrations, another challenge at the beginning of the year was meeting the requirement to have students attend school<sup>6</sup> within the prescribed number of days. The NRF team worked as quickly as possible, but it was still difficult to keep up with the number of families entering our division. As a support, we designed a welcome program for

newcomer students who were waiting for placement. Two itinerant substitute teachers and two educational assistant substitutes provided learning opportunities that included outdoor time, literacy/numeracy centres, and inquiry events. This programming was directed by the divisional Settlement team and the welcome program ran most of September, providing support to families who were trying to get settled and find employment while also waiting to be supported by the<sup>7</sup> NRF team.

Once newcomers were registered and attending either their home school, the EUBP, or one of the sheltered programs, in-school support was put in place. The divisional team includes a half time Newcomer consultant and one and a half Inclusion Support teachers. Recognizing the immense and shifting needs in River East Transcona, the Newcomer consultant and support teachers worked diligently with school and system leaders to expand teacher capacity to respond to the learning needs of the students. The rapid influx of newcomer students meant many schools that had never had EAL learners were now having to quickly shift practice.

The consultant and support teachers worked to co-teach, mentor, and model best practices in EAL across Early, Middle and Senior Years. In some schools this work was focused on specific classes, while in other sites, an in-school teacher capacity building model was employed. In all cases, the feedback received by the team,



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through post-support data collection, was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers and school leaders appreciated the assistance; there was a broad-based understanding that given the volume of registrations, capacity beyond the sheltered programs<sup>8</sup> was needed.

Public Education must welcome all students who live in Manitoba. Those who live within our division boundaries call one of our 42 schools their home school. The volume of new students arriving in our schools was unparalleled; we did not have the option to turn people away, nor would we have wanted to. Certainly, it is our responsibility to ensure that newcomer students and their families were welcomed, included, and educated. More importantly, though, it was our great joy to serve them as members of the RETSD community – a community where they can turn from their often traumatic and difficult journeys to face a future filled with hopes, dreams, and aspirations. We are grateful that these 1300 students and their families have made River East Transcona a better, richer, and more

diverse place to work and learn – both today and tomorrow. ■

*Sandra Herbst is the Superintendent/CEO, Elise Downey<sup>9</sup> is Secretary-Treasurer/CFO, Jason Drysdale is the Assistant Superintendent – Educational Services and Planning,*

*Karen Boyd is the Assistant Superintendent – Educational Programming, Mark Bruce is the Assistant Superintendent – Human Resources, and Tammy Mitchell is the Assistant Superintendent – Student Services for River East Transcona School Division.*

Throughout this article footnotes have been added to indicate specific words in correlation with the number of newcomers enrolled in RETSD.

1. Word 327: The number of newcomers who enrolled during the month of September<sup>10</sup> 2022.
2. Word 512: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of October 2022.
3. Word 599: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of November 2022.
4. Word 667: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of December 2022.
5. Word 782: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of January 2023.
6. Word 850: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of February 2023.
7. Word 955: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of March 2023.
8. Word 1138: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of April 2023.
9. Word 1289: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of May 2023.
10. Word 1364: The number of newcomers welcomed by the end of June 2023.

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