



Pembina Trails
School Division

START ►



Building Resilience

2020 Report to our Community



BUILDING

BLOCKS



A message from our Superintendent & Chair

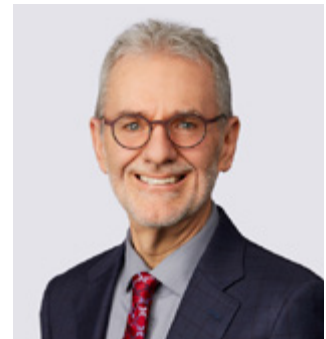
It was a year like no other: one that has tested our students, staff, administration and entire community. COVID-19 challenged every aspect of education systems across Manitoba, Canada and indeed the world. Kitchen tables became our offices, online classrooms became our new bulletin boards, and we became a stronger community of learners. Together, we have created a foundation for a reimagined way to instruct, communicate and engage, all built on resilience. We have boosted our knowledge far more than we thought possible, and we have created building blocks that help us continue to navigate a global pandemic. This grit and perseverance got us through the shift to remote learning in the spring and the reopening of schools in September 2020. Never before have education and health been so connected and interwoven.

As we evaluate our current circumstances, we are surrounded by people who have stories to share. Each story shapes us as a community. Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, in “The Danger of a Single Story,” has said:

Living through a pandemic means we each have our own stories, shaped from time spent in our schools, classrooms and homes. We are mindful that this report is prepared with the pandemic still affecting us all. We invite you to take time to reflect on the amazing work that our staff and students have done this year despite these hurdles, creating new opportunities for growth and perspective. The Pembina Trails Board of Trustees and Senior Administration Team are exceptionally proud of how all of us are living our mantra of “Accomplish Anything.”



Kathleen McMillan
Chair, Board of Trustees



Ted Fransen
Superintendent of Education/CEO

**“When we reject the single story,
when we realize that there is never
a single story about any place,
we regain a kind of paradise.”**

– CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

Building Pembina Trails Together

Our Board of Trustees

Nine locally elected representatives make up the Pembina Trails School Division Board of Trustees. This group strives to ensure our schools offer education, programs and services that meet the need of our growing communities.

Resilience An ability to recover from or adjust easily to adversity or change

Grit Firmness of mind or spirit: unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger

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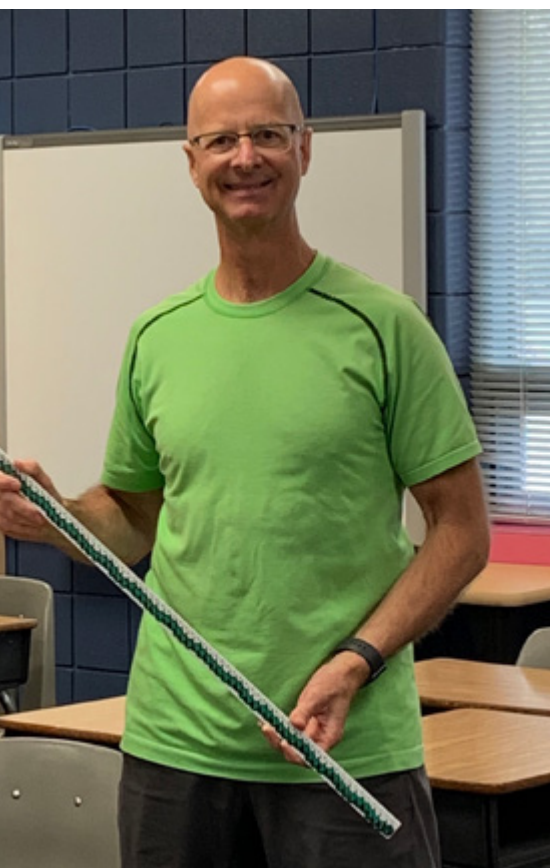


Cindy Nachtigall
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Our Students and Staff

Pembina Trails School Division is a community of 35 schools stretching from Charleswood to Fort Richmond. Our elementary, middle year and high schools comprise a variety of UNESCO certified, vocational, French Immersion and alternative learning institutions.

Principals/Vice Principals	63	Early Years	5,450
Teachers	999	Middle Years	4,716
Consultants/Clinicians	49	Senior Years	4,778
Educational Assistants	457	Total students	14,944
Clerical Schools	110	English	11,510
Caretakers	105	French Immersion	3,434
Others	123	Indigenous self-identified	947
Total staff	1,906	ESL/EAL students	3,996





Building a **TIMELINE**

The pandemic brought about an abrupt change to the ways we taught and connected during 2019/2020, but change can build new roads to new destinations.

This timeline gives a glimpse into how Pembina Trails has adapted to this ever-changing pandemic.

March 23



Classroom learning is officially suspended by Manitoba's Minister of Education

July



Senior administration and our board continue to work through the summer to plan and prepare for all scenarios come September

September 8



Students are welcomed safely back to school



Our staff support students learning remotely at home



April/May

Students are invited back to school for at least one visit per week



June 1

Creative graduations ceremonies are safely held across Pembina Trails



End of June

Staff return from summer break early to ensure all our schools are following health and safety protocols



August



Building a **NEW** NORMAL

As soon as the Province of Manitoba determined that all in-school classes would shift to remote learning after Spring Break, Pembina Trails School Division began to delve into ways to teach our 15,000 students using a multitude of technologies and strategies. Our team of educators rose to the challenge like never before by leveraging virtual meetings, online teaching platforms and socially distanced celebrations.





“Teachers always strive to give 100%.

However, we need to remember to be gentle and reasonable with ourselves and others as we venture on this new journey.”

Sanjeeva Louis,
Teacher at General Byng School

As the journey began, educators had the difficult task of creating lesson plans that delivered the curriculum virtually and in a fun and exciting way. Sanjeeva Louis, a teacher at General Byng School, found creative ways to maintain engagement from her remote learners. She helped students connect with one another by introducing blogging through an online educational platform and hosting Spirit Week over virtual class meetings. Louis also realized her expectations of what she could provide needed to be realistic as her new working circumstances continued to change.

“Teachers always strive to give 100 per cent. However, we need to remember to be gentle and reasonable with ourselves and others as we venture on this new journey,” said Louis.

Ryerson School organized a more literal journey through the community by way of a car parade. Principal Kathy Bru and nearly 30 staff initiated a cue of cars past Pembina Trails family residences to connect in an upbeat, positive manner. The creative gesture, geared towards community, ended up benefiting everyone involved, including Bru.

“The car parade was a highlight of my education career. It demonstrated how important school is to our students. The sheer joy on the faces of the students and their parents when seeing us drive by, and the goosebumps I and many on our staff felt, speaks to the importance of connection and community.”

To honour all that staff across the division had accomplished while classroom learning was suspended, Pembina Trails School Division CEO Ted Fransen and Jaime Glenat, who was Chair at the time, set out to bike to all 35 schools in the division. Facing strong winds and rain, they managed to visit 23 schools, and the appreciation message remained the same.

“Our goal was to show gratitude towards school staff who are supporting learning at home during COVID-19. We are inspired by the dedication we have all witnessed over the past five weeks,” shared Glenat.

Building Support Systems

At the start of the pandemic, our Learning Information Technology (LIT) team was put in charge of providing digital platforms throughout the division much sooner than had been anticipated. It was an ambitious task to make these resources available for teachers and students so quickly. With 6,000 more requests than usual since March, the LIT team accepted the challenge, answering support requests while at the same time updating older laptops for students and purchasing new equipment and technology that will have a shelf life well beyond the end of the pandemic.

The urgency and required support for remote learning was high and will ultimately benefit everyone as the school year moves forward. Jean St. Godard, LIT Director, explained: "I am hoping that the pandemic helped everyone learn how to leverage technology in the classroom. This is a change that generally takes time, [and] the pandemic didn't allow us that time, pushing us all into unfamiliar territory and opening the doors to so many possibilities."



Number of IT Requests

2019 **8,879**

2020 **14,841**

School	Year	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Count
Count	2019	924	1032	1020	862	210	780	2209	1438	404	8879
Count	2020	1493	1727	1359	1579	391	1148	3464	2792	888	14841

"I am hoping that the pandemic helped everyone learn how to leverage technology in the classroom."

Jean St. Godard, LIT Director





Building Mental Health Strategies

The mental well-being of our students and staff has never been more of a priority than during our current global pandemic. In preparation for September, every Pembina Trails employee had the opportunity to take part in a session called Trauma-Informed Schools: Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 and Building Resilience. The wellness workshop aimed to prepare and equip staff for this unprecedented time. The focus was to share ways each staff member could support students, colleagues and themselves. Sebastien North, a school psychologist in the Clinical Support Services department of Pembina Trails who was involved in the delivery of this event, highlighted that “[t]eam members have and continue to acknowledge that students need to feel safe and cared for before any teaching and learning can occur. I can say with certainty that those committed to the wellness and mental health of our students have not wavered in their commitment.”

Pembina Trails has supported this commitment by offering additional resilience webinars for staff throughout the school year.

Fostering student well-being and well-becoming, Pembina Trails employs:

- 8.5** School Psychologists
- 11** School Social Workers
- 53** School Counsellors (44 full-time)

Keys to Supporting Resilience in Students:

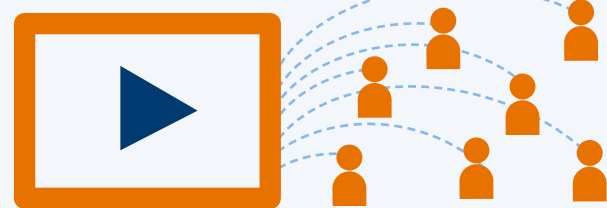
- Connection, connection, connection
- Helping children develop emotional skills to navigate uncertainty
- Providing students with routine and structure
- Modelling problem-solving and positivity



Building Memories

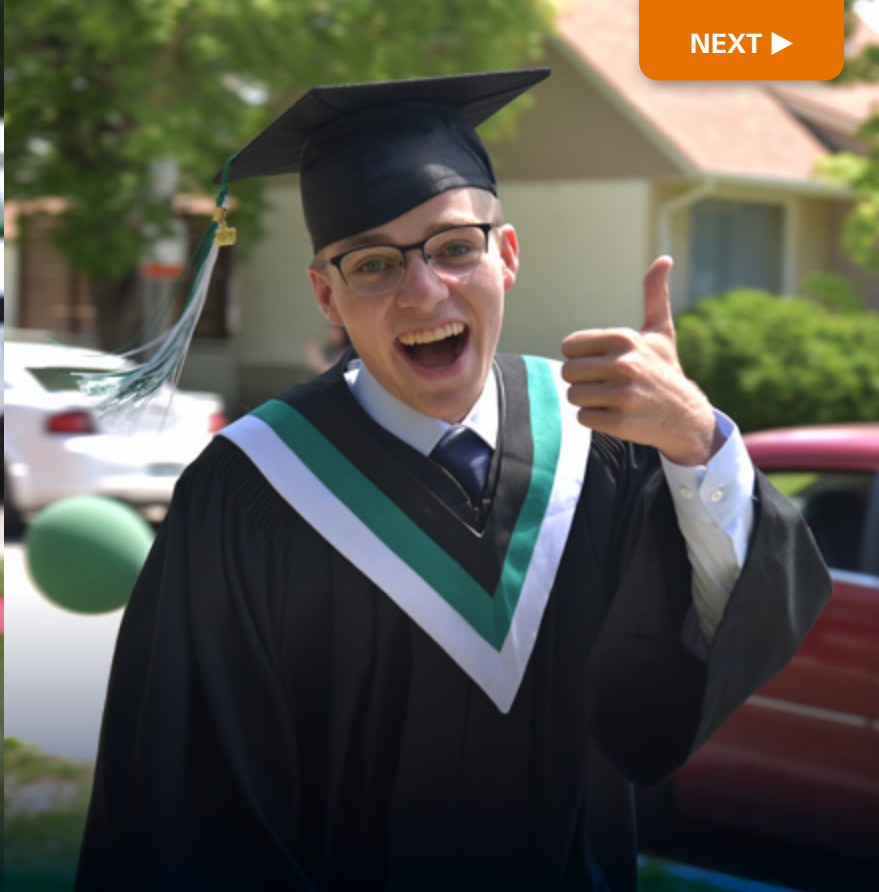
With convocation and grad celebrations being the highlight of the Grade 12 year, it became abundantly clear that marking this major milestone for our grads would be a unique experience. The accomplishments and sheer determination that the students exhibited through their last semester needed to be celebrated.

Institut collégial Vincent Massey Collegiate would normally have used the aisles of the Centennial Concert Hall for convocation, but in June 2020 they used the front sidewalk of the high school. In small groups throughout the day, students walked down the sidewalk to claim their diplomas while their families participated from a car alongside them, with music playing and teachers cheering. Vice-principal Lise Denis said, "It was a celebratory event, more so than in the past, because the environment lent to it by being outdoors. It was the first time students saw teachers and each other since the end of March and that in itself was celebratory."



At École secondaire Oak Park High School, student Lauren Cogan channelled her disappointment of not having a formal convocation into a Class of 2020 graduation video that went viral. The project featured fellow classmates from Oak Park, as well as 80 students from around the world who shared inspiring messages to each other. With the help of classmate Reis Best, the footage was posted online and received close to **6,000 views**.

Despite the adversity, Cogan says there was a silver lining.



"I believe that facing COVID-19 during my senior year has instilled in me the resilience to adapt to uncertainty, which is crucial in a world where innovation is happening faster than ever before."

Lauren Cogan, Oak Park High School student

Pembina Trails School Division Graduation Numbers

412 Fort Richmond Collegiate

167 Shaftesbury High School

École secondaire Oak Park High School

167 English 39 French Immersion

Institut collégial Vincent Massey Collegiate

220 English 99 French Immersion

40 Pembina Trails Alternative High School

Photo Credits: Kristian Budowski, Joanne Goodwin, Orysa Stein, and Brian Henson

Rebuilding the Classroom

For Landon Gibson, Grade 5 teacher at École Viscount Alexander, a favourite part of her year is setting up her classroom in the summer. A firm believer in creating a natural and inviting space for children to learn, she would implement garage sale finds, stools, lamps or houseware items to make the classroom feel more like a living room. With new social distancing measures in place, her set-up became more traditional, with desks lined up in rows rather than in groups. Despite the challenging experience of now having to teach children in a more rigorous and structured environment, Gibson says her students made do, accepting the “new normal” far more quickly than she did. “The students continue to impress me with their adaptability and resilience,” she notes. “As a learning community, despite being spaced apart, I feel that that our ‘togetherness’ is stronger than ever.”

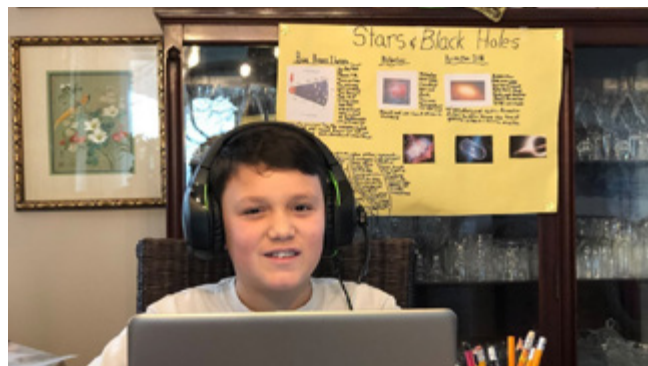


“The students continue to impress me with their adaptability and resilience.”

Landon Gibson, Teacher at École Viscount Alexander

Building In-Home Learning

PembinaTrails@Home was launched in the fall of 2020. A team of seven teachers is responsible for 138 students who opted to learn at home if they, or a family member, are immunocompromised. This full-year online learning experience began with a virtual parent information night created by the Learning Information Technology team and the Divisional Curriculum Consultant Team, which offered parents the opportunity to virtually interact with superintendent Ted Fransen and assistant superintendent Janet Tomy.



The structure of PembinaTrails@Home is built on alternating blocks of live teaching sessions and independent work time. Julie Cordova, Principal of Curriculum, explains: “The students are working hard to keep up with their learning responsibilities while transitioning through this very new way of ‘doing school.’ As we continue to move forward, we will work to inspire and empower every student.”

Building a Beat

Many schools in Pembina Trails came up with ingenious ways to teach band and music classes this year, allowing students to continue to flex their creative muscles in their elective classes. An unseasonably warm fall provided Derek Fraser, band teacher at École secondaire Oak Park High School, the opportunity to teach his students outside until late October. Even as the weather turned, alternate-day schedules meant fewer students in the school, so the fledging musicians were able to participate in physically-distanced band classes in the music room. Wind and brass instruments are still not allowed to be played inside the building, so Fraser has come up with other solutions such as purchasing ukuleles, drumming on pails, and teaching music history lessons to continue to instill music community and education.

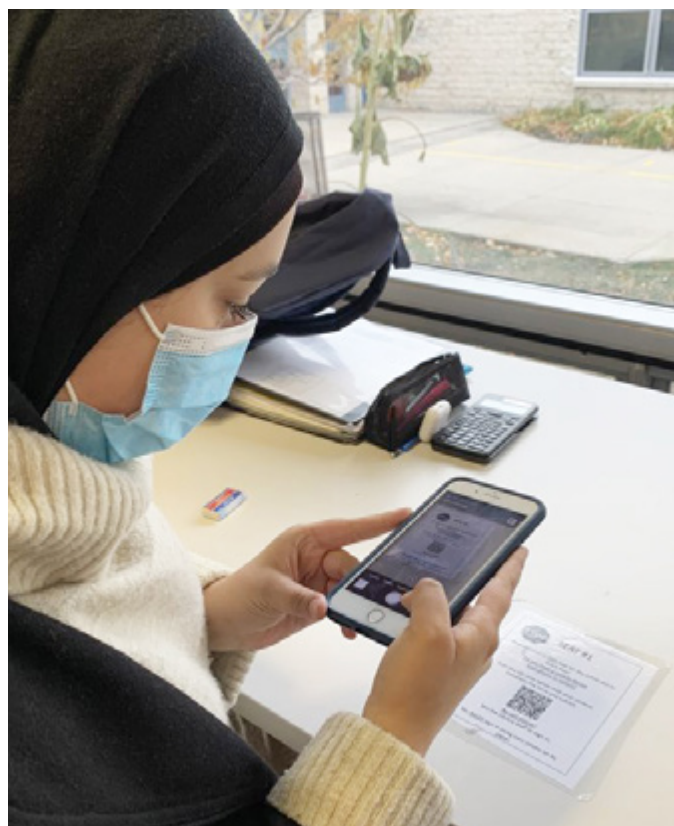


Building Innovations

A visit to a restaurant in the summer of 2020 gave Fort Richmond teacher-librarian Chantal Rochon the idea of using QR codes to track students' movements in the school. They scan a QR code with their phones upon entry to the cafeteria, weight room or library and that student's information is then stored in an Excel spreadsheet for future use in case there is a positive COVID-19 case.

"I noticed various restaurants using the technology to access menus, and I thought this could work at schools. Kids are constantly using phones, and when I get an idea I run with it," said Rochon.

The contact tracing proved so easy and valuable that other schools adopted the same method in the division. Oak Park High School had a positive COVID-19 case where the contact tracing was put to the test, providing the information gathered by the QR code to public health officers. This innovative safety system made headlines across Canada.





Building **SAFE SCHOOLS**



Added measures and investments for 2020/2021:



860

webcams supplied for classrooms to support remote learning

HIRING NEW

Teachers,
education assistants,
transportation
supervisor, remote
learning consultants,
human resources
officer & casual
custodians.



New security fob
system for schools



Creating a large
pool of qualified
substitute teachers.

**More than
500 hired**

Preparations for the new school year began long before September 8, 2020, with divisional staff implementing new policies and protocols related to the pandemic.

Our human resources department embarked on a hiring campaign for new substitutes, janitorial staff implemented new safety and hygienic standards, transportation staff reorganized bus routes and capacity numbers, and administration and teachers worked on cohort logistics, entrance and exit plans, and classroom reconfigurations. Three personal development days were added to the work schedule prior to the first day of school, funded by the Province of Manitoba, to help acclimate and prepare for the year.



Building a **BUDGET**

Budgeting from the past

2020 presented challenges for not only the classroom but also for the divisional budget. Unexpected and new requirements meant that budget needed to be realigned, reviewed and rebuilt. Property taxes were adjusted, yet the revenue streams and consistent growth of Pembina Trails School Division remains the same, so efficiency is

key with respect to the financial framework. Maintaining innovative teaching standards, hiring highly trained employees, and adhering to provincial curriculum have continued, while being fiscally responsible with tax payers' dollars is always our priority.

Budgeting for the present

We are continuing to meet the needs of our 15,000 students and their families while working within our budget. In 2020, the average homeowner experienced a 1 per cent increase in school taxes

(approximately \$22), despite Pembina Trails being the fastest-growing school division in Winnipeg. We continue to abide by the Province's spending and taxation caps.

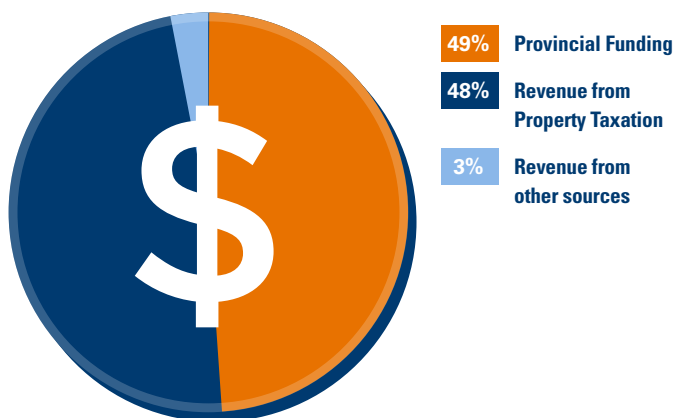
Budgeting for the future

We asked the community for your thoughts on the strongest recipe for success for Pembina Trails students going forward to the 2021-22 school year, and the most popular results from 1,000 participants were:

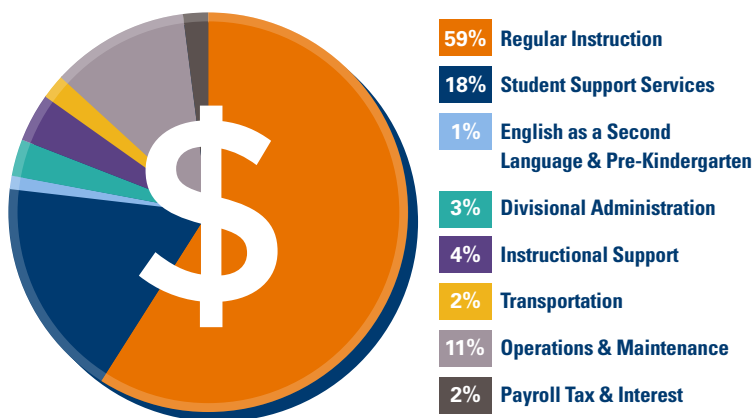
- Manageable class sizes
- Adequate support for at-risk students
- Increased funds for more staff & supplies

We value your feedback on how we can best serve our community of learners. We will continue to invite your input at our virtual town halls.

Where the Revenue Comes From



Where the Revenue Goes



Building a Bridge

RESILIENCY

CONTINUES



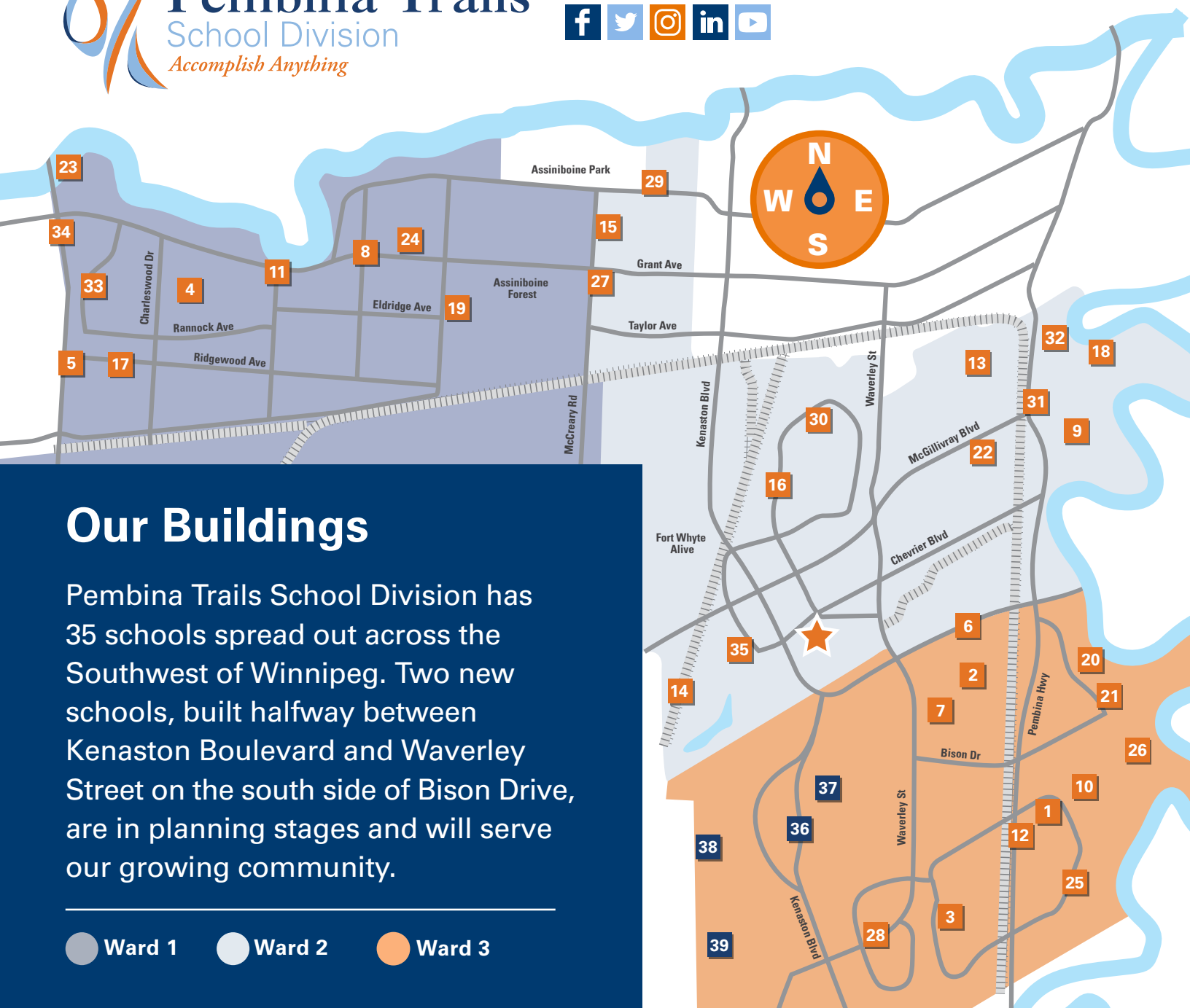


Even in a pandemic, efforts have still been made to embark on new and engaging projects, like the creation of a Star Blanket at Westgrove School. Indigenous Student Success teacher Shawna Nagler came up with the idea of a school-wide inquiry project investigating the school emblem of the star as a way to teach inclusion and to infuse Indigenous perspectives into learning activities. Through the sharing of traditional Star Stories, lessons were taught by Knowledge Keeper Andrea Redsky (Shoal Lake 40 First Nation) on how to exist with each other and with all our relations in creation.

The project is one of the many ways we continue our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. It carries a strong and fitting message for a challenging year, one that resonates well beyond Westgrove School and can be used to inspire our entire community.

“The Star Story teachings we learned as part of our inquiry project also echo in the Star Blanket, reminding us all that just like the individual diamonds in the blanket, as a community of individuals we can come together to support, protect and show that Westgrove Stars are Kind, Respectful and Resilient.”

Shawna Nagler, Indigenous Student Success Teacher



Our Buildings

Pembina Trails School Division has 35 schools spread out across the Southwest of Winnipeg. Two new schools, built halfway between Kenaston Boulevard and Waverley Street on the south side of Bison Drive, are in planning stages and will serve our growing community.

● Ward 1 ● Ward 2 ● Ward 3

★ Pembina Trails Division Office

1. Acadia Junior High School
2. Arthur A. Leach School
3. Bairdmere School
4. Beaumont School
5. Beaverlodge School
6. École R.H.G. Bonnycastle School
7. Chancellor School
8. École Charleswood School
9. École Crane
10. Dalhousie School
11. École Dieppe
12. Fort Richmond Collegiate
13. General Byng School

14. Henry G. Izatt Middle School
15. Laidlaw School
16. Linden Meadows School
17. École secondaire Oak Park High School
18. Oakenwald School
19. Pacific Junction School
20. Pembina Trails Alternative High School
21. Pembina Trails Early College (PTEC)
22. Ralph Maybank School
23. River West Park School
24. Royal School
25. Ryerson School
26. École St-Avila
27. Shaftesbury High School

28. École South Pointe School
29. École Tuxedo Park
30. École Van Wallegghem School
31. Institut collégial Vincent Massey Collegiate
32. École Viscount Alexander
33. Westdale School
34. Westgrove School
35. Whyte Ridge School
36. Site of the future K-8 School
37. Site of the future High School
38. Site of promised future K-8 School
39. Site of promised future K-8 School