



LAIDLAW SCHOOL

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Mission Statement

We are part of a community.

We demonstrate our skills and knowledge.

We help each other.

We plan and do things on our own.

Principal
Heather Eby



Board of Trustees Three Expectations for Student Learning

1. All students in Pembina Trails will be personally and intellectually engaged in their learning at school.
2. By the end of grade 8, all students in Pembina Trails will meet the provincial curricular standards in literacy and numeracy, allowing them the greatest possibility for success in high school.
3. All students in Pembina Trails will graduate from high school.

2024-2025 School Plan Priorities:

Laidlaw School has grown immensely over the past three years, not only in our population numbers but in our cultural diversity as we welcome so many new students from around the world. In reviewing our school data, we recognized the need to focus our attention on supporting ALL of our learners and particularly in the area of literacy, focusing on explicit reading and writing instruction. This led us to ask ourselves two important inquiry questions:

Literacy - "How do we create conditions where all students are experiencing success through a comprehensive literacy approach, in order to develop their reading and writing skills?"

Success for all learners - "How can we create inclusive and equitable learning environments that support all learners?"

Along with the data, Laidlaw School built our school plan priorities around our Circle of Courage principles and asking ourselves: "How are we connected to the land?" *Wahkohtowin - the Cree word meaning "in relationship"*. This theme and essential question helped to guide our school plan priorities as we discovered connections with the land in many of our experiences and learning opportunities.

Progress Toward School Plan Priorities:

- **Literacy** — In our second year with Literacy as one of our primary school plan priorities, our early years teachers and EAL support teachers have invested their professional learning and time to study the UFLI program. This program, based on sound research, has developed a scope and sequence to ensure students acquire the skills needed to become proficient readers and spellers. With Christie Petersen (our EY Student Support teacher) taking the lead, two professional learning teams (PLTs) were created and met throughout the year to research, study and better understand how students learn to read and spell using the UFLI program. The teachers in the PLT also read the book, "Language at the Speed of Light - How we read, why so many can't, and what can be done about it," by Mark Seidenberg. This book provided huge insights, deep discussions and cutting-edge research to help them better prepare themselves as teachers of literacy and, ultimately, best support our students in becoming successful readers and writers.

Along with our PLTs, our entire school took part in a full day workshop with Adrienne Gear, a Canadian literacy expert and educator who focused our learning on strategies to support powerful thinking as part of the comprehensive literacy approach to teaching reading and writing as outlined by the division and the province. Our Middle Years teachers continued to support students to reach their ELA outcomes using many of Adrienne Gear's ideas, strategies and philosophies. Along with the implementation of UFLI and Adrienne Gear's work, we had our grade 3/4 classes using a literacy block to group students in targeted lessons to meet their specific literacy goals in the areas of reading and writing. This allowed students to make progress in their literacy development in a smaller group setting. This year, many of our EAL students were receiving literacy instruction using the UFLI system at the early years level, while our middle years EAL learners were working with the Emergent Readers collections to support their comprehension, vocabulary and fluency with high interest topics.

•**Success for all Learners**— We knew our school priority to create an environment that was inclusive and equitable for all our learners was going to be a challenging adventure. We wanted to reduce student absences, relieve some anxiety concerns, reduce the effects of trauma, increase the sense of belonging for our EAL students, develop the school community spirit and continue to strive for personal academic success. To begin, we made this an area of focus for each of our monthly staff meetings as a standing item to discuss, share ideas and deliver intentional professional development in the area of Tier 1 levels of support. These standing items were often lead by our Support Services Team, sharing their expertise in areas of regulation, instruction, literacy and trauma-based practice. We had another group of teachers (one representative from each grade level) along with our Teacher Librarian involved in another PLT (professional learning team) that focused on the inquiry approach to teaching. This type of instruction is deeply rooted in student agency and motivation to learn through personal interest, questioning, predicting, gathering, producing, analysing and reflecting. As a team, the teachers studied this approach and implemented inquiry projects across the grade levels that have access points to allow for success for all our learners. We can share that 100% of our students participated in inquiry-based learning opportunities, including design projects, thematic explorations, land-based learning, coding, robotics, experiments, and problem solving. Along with classroom instruction, our goal to find success for all learners continued to be met through our second year of implementation with our FLEX programming. Our 30 minutes of FLEX time built into our timetable for all classes gr.1-8 continued to address social emotional needs and increase our students' sense of belonging. This dedicated time in the day supports the Global Competencies that are part of our Manitoba Government's Framework of Learning. Students are developing their creativity, connection to self, critical thinking, citizenship, collaboration and communication skills. Several of our classrooms continue to participate in Forest School experiences that connect our students with the land, as well as supporting their mental health, environmental inquiry and allowing them to feel success as a learner!

Progress Toward the Three Expectations for Student Learning 2023-24:

The Circle of Courage continues to be the framework that holds significant meaning for Laidlaw School. It represents the inclusive and supportive environment where every student feels a strong community spirit, can explore their interests and talents, develop their independence, and take responsibility for their learning and personal growth. By embracing the Circle of Courage, Laidlaw School strives to create a nurturing atmosphere, fostering resilience, character and a lifelong love for learning.

All students in Pembina Trails will be personally and intellectually engaged in their learning in school.

- Laidlaw continues to pride itself of building community and strong sense of belonging amongst its stu-

dents, staff and parents. With the global diversity that has enriched our school, Laidlaw celebrated its first ever “Culture Day” where all the home countries of our students were recognized, honoured and celebrated at a schoolwide assembly. Students dressed in traditional clothing, shared some customary songs, dances and music. We also continue to celebrate many international holidays throughout the school year. This year our “I love to read” theme connected us back to the land and our theme for the year, honouring Indigenous voices in literature and our love for the outdoors and the land. Our Indigenous Student Group has continued to meet throughout the school year with our knowledge keeper, Mahihkan, culminating in a special naming ceremony. We recognized Truth and Reconciliation day with unique orange hearts planted along our trail and a memorial walk around our Circle of Courage trail on September 27th that was captured on film by a drone. This year, Laidlaw prioritized Indigenous education by allotting Ms. Gilchrist time in her schedule as “Indigenous Teacher Champion” to collaborate with staff to embed Indigenous education into their lessons and programming.

- The learning at Laidlaw goes beyond our classroom walls. Our dynamic athletics program offered our usual programs of badminton, volleyball, basketball, track and field, and flag football. This year we added bowling, floor hockey, soccer, pickle ball and a new running club for our early years students. Those students with more creative interests in the arts were engaged through our winter concert and our Art and Band shows. We also had our second annual Middle Years Winter activity day where gr.5-8 students were given a choice of activities, from a day of outdoor learning and learning to curl at the Charleswood Curling Club, to downhill skiing/snowboarding at Holiday Mountain. Throughout the year, our students continue to experience wonderful field trip excursions and special guest presenters to enrich their learning.
- Our French Communication and Culture program for the gr.5-8 students (and our Early Years) experienced a wonderful day of Festival du Voyageur again this winter. We had the pleasure of having the Ivan Flett Dancers perform for our students and teach the whole school how to jig. Once again, our French teacher, Mme Marasco, utilized the AIM (Accelerated Integrated Methodology) approach to learning French with our gr. 5/6 classes. AIM incorporates gestural techniques, storytelling and a focus on active, interactive and authentic speaking and writing skills. The students performed a play entirely in French for their parents!!
- The addition of our trail this year as a learning tool for our teachers, and a path to walk during recesses and FLEX time, opened up new opportunities for students to connect to the land and as a school community. Several teachers incorporated this as part of their active start and as a means to impart Indigenous ways of knowing and doing. The newly added story frames will provide another support and tool for teachers to bring their teaching outdoors!

By the end of grade 8, all students will meet the provincial curricular standards in literacy and numeracy, allowing them the greatest possibility for success in high school.

Literacy— With literacy as a targeted goal in our school plan, we were excited to review our literacy data and assessments through Fountas and Pinnell that revealed that 96% of our students have demonstrated progress in their reading this year and are within or beyond grade level expectations.

Numeracy— Although numeracy was not a targeted area for our school plan this year, our report card data for grades 1-8 in our third term demonstrate that 80% of our students are achieving a 3 or 4 (good or very good) knowledge and understanding for mathematics concepts.

Laidlaw School students, parents and teachers continue to set a remarkable example of the true meaning of the Circle of Courage in their demonstration of Mastery, Belonging, Generosity and Independence.