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Making a Difference Together Together

Jan. 2012

Saskatchewan Community Schools Association

President's Message

Greetings Everyone,
January is always a time of reflection as we look back at the year that has just faded into history and anticipation as we look at the year unfolding ahead of us with all of its' promise and possibilities.

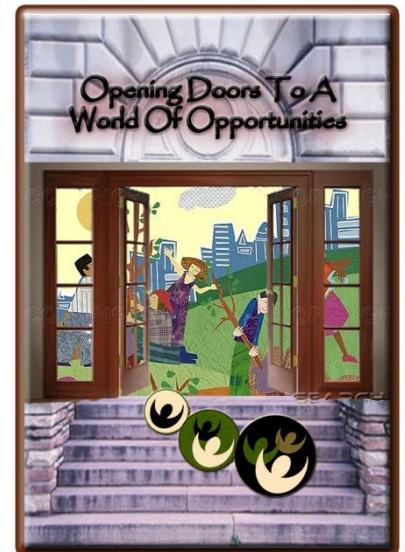
On behalf of the Saskatchewan Community Schools Association, I would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication to Community Education as you help improve the lives of many in your schools and communities. The year ahead will hold many challenges, but also many rewards as we continue to grow in our learning communities.

The SCSA is pleased to provide opportunities for you to network, learn and share your knowledge and experience with others through our In-service & Planning Day, Annual Conference, Website, Newsletter and regular updates through your Regional Reps.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions, ideas to share or special events to promote through our website, www.communityschools.ca

Best Wishes for a wonderful year ahead!
Margaret Marsollier, SCSA President

Saskatchewan
Community
Schools



Leading The Way In
Community Education

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Engagement and Attendance- Antecedents to Academic Success

Submitted by Ron Nowlan, Vice-President of the Canadian Association for Community Education

During the past several years there has been increased attention to academic achievement and the existence of an achievement gap. There has been numerous education reform approaches utilized to address the issue of low performing schools and students. Much of the effort has been focused upon assessment, curriculum and instruction. Of course it makes sense to find out if the teaching strategies and curriculum are up to the grade in helping students achieve. Ultimately a poorly designed curriculum and ill advised instructional strategies will impede student achievement; especially for those students who are living in vulnerable circumstances. Alternatively there are others who suggest that the means to change the results being experienced in school may be as simple as changing the approach used to support student achievement.

As part of the Canadian Association for Community Education renewal strategy we have been doing research on the barriers to teaching and learning. In our search we have found a number of excellent resources related to improving outcomes through high standards in supporting student learning. The UCLA Center for Mental Health has proven to be a treasure trove of research on the topic. Today I am sharing an excerpt from the Fall 2011 newsletter. The main idea of the excerpt focuses on the concept that individual relationships and school results have a more strong relationship than quality of curriculum and instruction. The evidence they provide argues that results are related to *emotional engagement* that encompasses positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, academics, and school and is presumed to create ties to the school and influence the willingness to do the work necessary to achieve at a high standard.

The following is an excerpt from the UCLA Center for Mental Health in School Fall 2011 newsletter (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newsletter/Fall11.pdf>).

What Researchers' Report

Positive school environment and school connectedness are reported widely as associated with positive academic performance and less risky adolescent behaviours; not surprisingly, all this is associated with positive interpersonal relationships between students and school staff. Strong achievement levels also are reported for classrooms perceived as having greater cohesion and goal-direction and less disorganization and conflict. Conversely, findings suggest that experiencing school climate as negative can have long-range adverse effects (e.g., students dropping out, teacher burnout, mental health problems). Implications for practice emphasize strategies that enhance perceptions of safety, school connectedness, feelings of self determination, positive interpersonal relationships between students and school staff, a psychological sense of community among stakeholders, and more.

As Wang and Holcombe (2010) report,

We found that teachers can best promote students' positive identification with school and stimulate their willingness to participate in their tasks by offering positive and improvement-

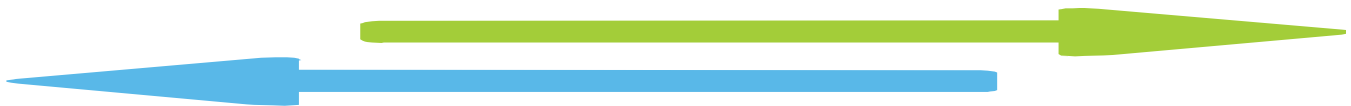
based praise and emphasizing effort while avoiding pressuring students for correct answers or high grades.... Conversely, results from our study demonstrate that the presence of competitive learning environment decreases school participation, undermines the development of a sense of school belonging, and diminishes the value students place on school.... Students who are competent but either alienated from school or less intrinsically motivated may need more autonomy support in the form of more interesting and relevant activities and decision-making opportunities in order to become engaged with learning. On the other hand, students who are passive or anxious about exercising autonomy or attempting novel tasks may need more structured scaffolding of tasks, more guidance, and more explicit instruction in effective strategies before they fully engage with classroom learning.... We found that students who reported being encouraged to interact and discuss ideas with each other in class reported higher levels of school identification and use of self-regulatory strategies. **Moreover, students are more likely to participate in school and bond with school when teachers create a caring and socially supportive environment....**

It is important to note that some research suggests that the impact of classroom climate may be greater on students from low-income homes and groups that often are discriminated against. At the same time, some findings suggest that broad-band strategies for improving school climate may be insufficient for engaging and re-engaging struggling students, especially those from low income homes and groups that often are discriminated against. As Jennings and Greenberg (2009) stress:

Emotionally challenging events that teachers typically face often involve interactions with students who are not emotionally well regulated, including those caught in anger, anxiety, and sadness. These students, at highest risk of developing behavioural disorders and emotion regulation difficulties, are the very students in greatest need of a supportive relationship with their teacher.

In addition to enhanced social and learning supports, a range of specific school and classroom climate strategies probably are needed to reach students who struggle academically, act out, and experience confrontational relationships with school staff and peers.

For more on the research, see the Center report: *Designing School Improvement to Enhance Classroom Climate for All Students* -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/climate.pdf>



SCSA In-Service & Planning Day

You are invited to attend the SCSA In-service & Planning Day, Tuesday, **January 17 at the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon - 9:30 am - 3:00 pm**. The theme for the day is "Attendance - Links to Engagement". We know from your feedback that this is an area of great importance and concern to all schools in Saskatchewan, especially those dealing with more mobile populations. We will be hearing from schools that have done some interesting work in this area and will also have time to find out what is happening and what the concerns are across the Province.

We will also have **Ministry representatives** there to update us on the re-organization, **funding for community education** and vision for supports for learning within the new branch. Please contact wdmelchert@shaw.ca if you want to register - deadline is Friday, January 13th.

SCSA Conference May 3 & 4, 2012 - University of Regina

Registration is now open for the conference. Please visit the website www.communityschools.ca for the conference overview, agenda and information on the Keynote Speakers, Dr. Anthony Muhammad and Neal Hughes. The conference theme is: "Creating a Culture of Success" We look forward to seeing you there.

SCSA Membership is Due

SCSA membership has been opened to include all Saskatchewan schools. Fees are \$50/year per school or partner organization, school division office, regional office, provincial association, etc. You will receive all SCSA updates on events, matters of interest to community educators, conference notices, etc. Your membership supports the work of the SCSA in producing the communication tools, advocating for community education, and providing in-service and networking opportunities for members. Please see the membership link on our website (see below)

SCSA Website Upgrades

We are currently working with a company to make our website more useful to our members. Please go to www.communityschools.ca to see the following links:

1. **Click your refresh** button to make sure your settings are up to date
2. **Click on "Contact Us"** you will notice that you can now submit a question to the SCSA. When you submit a question, we will respond to you and also post the answer on FAQ section of the Bulletin Board.
3. **Click on Resources** - you will see information on grants that are currently available. We will also be posting web links to information, listings of where to find resources, etc. Please send us any information that you would like to share in this area.
4. **Click on Bulletin Board** - You will see the link to Frequently Asked Questions where we will post answers to the questions that you ask. There is also a link to Announcements - we currently have the In-service and Planning Day invitation posted there. If you have an announcement you can submit it on the "submit an announcement" link under bulletin board. Please use this opportunity to share your upcoming events and information that you want to share.
5. **Click on Literacy and Backpacks** -you will see all of the information, background, application forms and final report forms for the Legacy Grant as well as links to the Saskatchewan Literacy Network.
6. **Click on Newsletter** - you will see links to our latest newsletter and archives of later editions - you will also see the latest call for submissions and the forms that you can print off if you need permission forms for posting pictures, etc with your newsletter submission.
7. **Click on Meetings** - you will find minutes of the latest SCSA Executive meeting and archives of later minutes. We have also added a section for meeting announcements.
8. **Click on Membership** - you will find forms to submit SCSA annual membership fees and the latest edition of the SCSA Community School Directory. It has been updated to January, 2012.
9. **Click on About Us** -This is currently being updated, but will contain information on our Executive members, constitution, history, etc.

Engagement Process to Improve Attendance

St. Michael Community School
Saskatoon



It is commonly believed and well supported by research that students who attend school regularly are more successful than those who do not (Moore, 2005; Phillips, 1995; Reid, 2005; Roby, 2004). Each day that a student does not attend school is a day of missed knowledge through a lack of contact with his or her teachers. Missed time in school may lead to poor grades and further absenteeism, leading to a vicious cycle that is a major concern of all educators (Phillips, 1995).

A number of schools across Saskatchewan are faced with the issue of managing and reducing school absenteeism. The challenge for these schools is to develop and implement effective strategies that meet the diverse needs of their unique community. Kouri, et al. (2000) suggested that it is the people in each community that are in the best position to understand the issue of absenteeism and to create solutions based upon their strengths and resources. Furthermore, by working together in an inclusive, collaborative process, a sense of shared ownership for the problem and a shared responsibility for solutions is nurtured. Thomas Jefferson said it well:

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society, but the people themselves; and if we think of them not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion (as cited in Moore, 2008, personal communication).

Research supports the link with community to improve attendance. Sheldon (2007) compared attendance initiatives in elementary schools that developed school-wide programs of school, family and community partnerships with the attendance of students in schools that did not develop the programs. Analyses showed that in schools working to implement school, family and community partnerships, student attendance improved an average of 5%, whereas in comparison schools, rates of student attendance declined slightly from one year to the next.

With this in mind, St. Michael Community School in Saskatoon decided to tackle the issue of irregular school attendance in the community in which she served. The staff recognized that there was no rule book, simple strategy, or quick fix and that they definitely couldn't solve the problem alone. The staff needed to involve and engage their community. More specifically, they needed to directly seek information from students, parents, grandparents, staff and community partners and include them in decisions that would improve attendance at St. Michael School.

Working effectively with communities and community members was not simple; however, the staff was determined to view the issue through the lens of community development. The Saskatoon District Health Community Development Team (1999) defined community development as "an incremental process through which individuals and communities gain the power, insight and resources to make decisions and take action regarding their well-being". Four principles were established that would guide the school's work with the community. These were:

1. Students, parents and staff would have an opportunity to meaningfully influence the strategies necessary to improve attendance.
2. Students, parents and staff would educate and be educated in learning about and understanding the impact associated with irregular school attendance.
3. The community development process would be open to a full range of action strategies to work toward *long term* improvement in attendance.
4. The diverse interests and cultures represented at St. Michael Community School would be incorporated in the process and strategies.

Through the lens of community development and the aforementioned guiding

principles, the staff of St. Michael Community School was ready to journey through a community planning process in which absenteeism and the related serious lifelong consequences would be reduced. In Figure 1, Frank and Smith (1999) have created a framework to assist in community planning. Recognizing that there was no one size fits all approach in community planning, the staff felt that *The Seven Steps in a Community Planning Process* would offer a guiding structure. The following diagram illustrates the community planning that occurred and each step of the process.

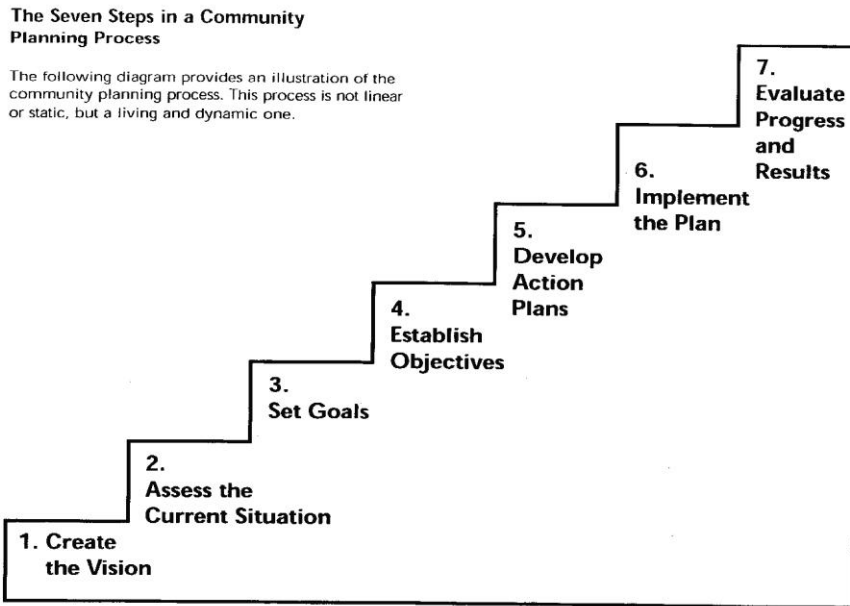
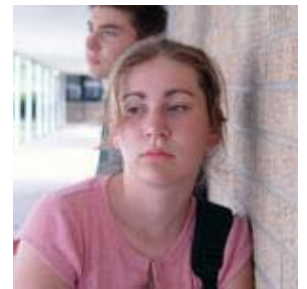


Figure 1. The seven steps in a community planning process. The seven steps were carried out over the year. Each step included a number of initiatives and further information can be obtained by calling the school. The end result was an Attendance Improvement Toolkit, complete with a plan consisting of number of initiatives.



Missing School

Missing Out!

The success of St. Michael’s Attendance Improvement Plan is an unfinished puzzle. However, with the continued support of an engaged community, further pieces of the puzzle will be put together to effectively respond to the issue of absenteeism. The reasons for students not attending school are very complex and there is no simple rule book, or quick fix. However, windows of opportunities do open when communities, such as St. Michael, work together to improve the lives of children. Policies and regulations cannot be the only fix to the problem, but rather individuals working together, pooling their courage, innovation, wit and energy to improve the lives of children.

St. Michael community recognized that further work is still needed to seek interventions that research has suggested to increase student attendance and engagement. Some of these involve early interventions, especially with elementary students and their families, targeted interventions for students with chronic attendance problems and strategies that increase engagement and personalization with students and families that can affect attendance rates (family involvement, culturally responsive culture, mentoring, advisory programs, maximization and focus on learning time and service learning) (Railsback, 2004).

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

Attendance Incentives

Responses from students, parents, grandparents and staff indicated that Attendance Parties and other incentive seemed to be strong motivators for students. The principal and the Home Liaison Worker met and established a plan for the remainder of the school year. These initiatives will be reviewed in June 2008 and considered for the following year if they prove successful.

Monthly Incentives (February – June)

Highest Classroom Percentage Attendance

Movie Party (Popcorn, drinks, movie and treat bag)

Most Improved Individual

Lunch with the Principal at McDonalds

Perfect Attendance Individual

Assembly on the last Monday of February – prizes for students with perfect attendance

Most Improved Family

Gift Certificate for Extra Foods

Attendance Parties are held for the classroom with the higher percentage of attendance during a month. This is displayed near the entrance of the school



Building Community Awareness

Posters and Slogans

Following a classroom discussion, students came up with the idea to make posters to stress the importance of attending school regularly. Three classrooms brainstormed catchy slogans and created posters. The posters were put up throughout the school.



Newsletters

The principal chose relevant information from research and literature to include in the biweekly newsletters to inform parents and grandparents about issues related to regular/irregular attendance.

School Community Council

In future Community Council meetings, the principal will invite further conversation and ideas regarding the issue of absenteeism at St. Michael Community School.

**Come to School
Be Cool!**

Attendance Zones



Weekly Assemblies

During weekly assemblies, students from the Builders' Club (Student Representative Council) will be asked to share relevant information about the importance of regular attendance. The principal will assist students in selecting and or writing information on this topic.

Student Mentorship

St. Michael Community School is fortunate to have a number of volunteers spend time with the students. The principal invited three teacher candidates from the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan to work closely with some students who were finding it difficult to attend school on a regular basis. During their volunteer hours, the teacher candidates are encouraged to build relationships and engage in some motivating activities.

Belonging Quilt

During the engagement process, many responses stressed the reason they come to school is the sense of belonging. To capitalize on this theme, a classroom teacher and principal designed a template for all students, families and staff to complete. Each "patch" will include the individual's name, family members, place of origin and gifts. This quilt will be displayed in the entrance of the school. Each piece would be laminated and joined with the others to form a *St. Michael Community Quilt*. As the patches are collected, an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of each family will be recorded. These talents, in turn, will be utilized for community building purposes



Sharing Our Stories

Guest Community Presenters

During the engagement process with a single mother of four children, the mother shared her story of the struggles she had while attending school when she was young. The principal asked if she would feel comfortable to share her story with some of the students. She agreed to speak to the students in early March. This *sparked* the idea to bring further members of the community in to share their stories. Four further speakers were then scheduled. Those being the owner of the neighboring Tim Horton's Restaurant, a grandmother, our School Resource Officer and another elder outside of our school

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Building Partnerships in our Community School

**Central Park Community School
Nipawin**

In Nipawin, at Central Park Elementary School we have continued to offer after school clubs this year for students in grade one to grade three. We find this is a great opportunity for all students to become part of a club where they can enhance their social skills, be physically active and have fun with their peers. The club is held weekly; it is free and is immediately after school so parents are only responsible for transporting them home. We have partnered with employees from Kelsey Trail Health Region, and have had high school students come volunteer at our clubs which helps to make them so successful. There are opportunities to participate in various activities such as sports, crafting, and cooking.

This year we held our open house night in September, where a free barbecue supper was enjoyed by all. It was an evening where families, community member's staff and SCC worked together to provide an opportunity for everyone to feel welcome at our Learning Center.

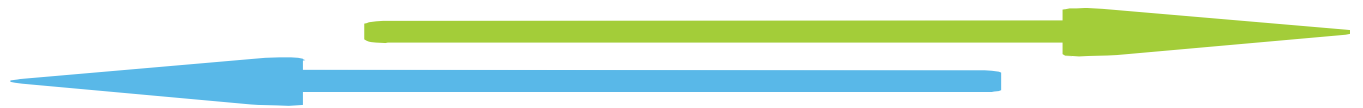
An Information Night in October for families allowed them an opportunity to learn more about the new report cards, Response to Intervention, Inclusion, Partnerships with families and the new curriculum. At our student – led conferences in November childcare was provided to our families at no charge as our SCC sponsored babysitters. This allowed many to attend who may not have if this barrier had not been removed. Our pre-kindergarten family days also allow us to work with other agencies such as Kids First and KTHR, Cumberland College to provide guest speakers and childcare.

Once again we held our Coats for Kids Sale In November. Our Outreach worker had requested donations from the public for coats, jackets, ski pants, boots, mitts, etc. and then had an evening where we sold them for 0.25 each. By providing this opportunity to families we are helping to ensure they are dressed warmly for the cold winter season that is approaching us. Families have indicated to us that without winter coats they would not be able to send their children to school.

Our school will be hosting their 2nd annual Christmas Bingo in December. This is a partnership between the school and our SCC. Prizes have been donated by local businesses and our staff which makes us able to offer this event free to families. This is a great opportunity for all families to spend a night with one and other, for our staff to build relationships with families and for families to possibly go home with a free turkey!!

For the rest of the school year, we are also planning a Literacy Night for January in celebration of Family Literacy day, a school dance, and bike rodeo and of course there are monthly assemblies that we always welcome our families to attend.

We are always working on building relationships with community partners and our families and these are some of the ways we have been able to be successful at this goal.



Emily Thomas-Asiniwasis
May 4, 1951 – December 4, 2011
Ecole Connaught Community School, Regina
An appreciation
By Patricia Elliott

The first time I saw Emily Thomas-Asiniwasis she wasn't doing anything special, just standing in the hallway talking to some students. But something about her posture – her essence – exuded a rare combination of strength and warmth. The children seemed delighted to see her. I asked someone if she was a teacher or parent, and learned she was the school's community coordinator.

At the time, I was worried about my son moving from a small parent-managed preschool to the more institutional setting of a busy urban school. I didn't speak to Emily that day, but her presence reassured me that École Connaught Community School was home-like and welcoming.

Over the next nine years, I got to know Emily as the touchstone between school, families and neighborhood. Our school board has a policy that keeps teachers and administrators on the move from place to place. Emily's genuine, welcoming smile could be counted on to greet students every September.

When the school day was done, Emily's was just beginning. She stuck around the schoolyard because it was the place to connect with students and parents in an informal setting. She made sure there were evening activities, such as craft nights and the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program. She ran a powwow dance group, and I recall how transformed and proud the girls looked in their jingle dresses, a great gift of self-esteem. Emily promoted First Nations culture as an

experience beyond the walls of classroom learning. When she coordinated a community feast, it was an invitation for the whole community to learn protocols and traditions.

Never one to say no to a community need, when parents wanted family gym nights, it was Emily who cheerfully volunteered to be attending staff member. She joined our neighborhood potlucks, and encouraged parents to take part in the activities she was involved in, such as the alternative measures program. She went to people's homes, and helped solve many a problem chatting with community members in the aisles of our neighborhood grocery store. When there was a near-fight between two groups of youth at the Community Centre, she was the one I turned to for advice. Her knowledge of kids, families and neighborhood dynamics was invaluable. She was never off duty.

Recently I met our school's first coordinator, Lizabeth Nicholls, who described this approach as 'managing by walking around.' Lizabeth herself recalls many hours spent on people's front steps, drinking tea and talking. By learning about life's barriers, such as older girls staying home to take care of toddlers, she was able to draw students back to school, achieving a 96 per cent attendance rate for aboriginal students. Lizabeth set the bar high for other coordinators, and those who followed served the school well.

Emily was last in the line of Connaught coordinators. After a family health crisis took her to Edmonton three years ago, we learned she wouldn't be replaced. There was no opportunity for proper good-byes and thank you, and we parents didn't know how to address the decision to not replace her. When we did try to raise the issue, more than a year later, the question that came back to us was: what exactly did a coordinator do that couldn't be done by a social worker or other professional? It was impossible to explain. Social workers and psychologists likely fill out reams of paperwork for every encounter, providing bushels of reports and measures. When Emily solved problems in the Safeway aisle, no one thought to stop and write up a report, or to measure outcomes. That would be absurd. But problems were solved, no doubt about it. Emily was like glue, making the neighborhood feel a little safer, centered and cared-for.

To me the starkest illustration of the loss was that, in our first year without a coordinator, a new rule asked children to leave the playground after school. Reportedly there'd been scuffles, and frightened students were coming into the school building 'bothering' the staff. In the past, this was our community connecting time, with Emily at the Centre, chatting with parents and easing tensions between students. A lot of good things happened in the first 15 minutes after the bell. But who thinks to remark on something so natural and organic?

Today my son attends a large high school. During orientation, we were introduced to software that tracks students. Parents who own computers and have the skills and wherewithal can log in to monitor attendance and test scores. If my son misses school, a robotic voice will speak to our home answering machine. While such technology is convenient for some, I wonder at what cost.

The latest 'magic bullet' solution doubtless spits out reports and graphs to prove its dollar value. Only parents can speak to the worth of a community coordinator, and often we don't know what to say, or who to say it to. In many ways, the bond is inexpressible. Thinking back to the first time I saw Emily, it was her simple presence that made a difference, something that defies a job description.

In closing, I knew Emily only as our school community coordinator. At her funeral I learned she was much more than that to others. Friends, Elders, chiefs and politicians praised her work, from helping Regina youth, to working in Ottawa with the National Indian Brotherhood, forerunner of the Assembly of First Nations. Even while gravely ill with cancer, she remained a rock to a wide circle of family and friends. Emily was deeply respected – and loved – across the province and, indeed, the country. Our school was lucky to have been one small step in her life journey.

Patricia Elliott is a past member of the École Connaught School Community Council, and current chair of the École Connaught Centennial Committee.





EAL Initiative

W.P.Bate and Westmount Community Schools
Saskatoon

Chrissy Armstrong EAL Teacher, W.P. Bate Community School

As a joint venture, W.P. Bate and Westmount Community Schools wrote a grant to receive funding to initiate a literacy program aimed at helping the Karen families, who attend our two schools, build literacy skills in their first language. Thanks to the SCSA, we received funding through the Family Literacy Weyerhaeuser Legacy Grant.

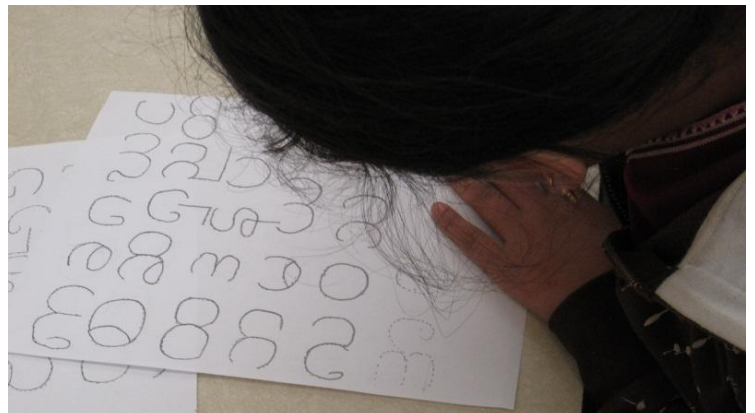


Over the last few years, a large number of Karen refugees have settled in our community due to the ongoing persecution of their people and culture in their homeland of Burma (Myanmar). Because they were forced to flee their homes to live in refugee camps along the border between Burma and Thailand, many of our Karen students were not able to learn how to read or write in their first language. Furthermore, studies have shown that literacy skills in students' first language greatly enhance their ability to become literate in a second or third language. These facts along with Saskatoon Public School's literacy initiative, led to the formation of our first ever Karen literacy class.

With an average of 35 participants at each class, both adults and children, it was apparent that there was a strong desire to create and maintain a community of learning. Utilizing money from the Family Literacy Legacy Grant, we were able to hire an interpreter to teach the Karen language classes. Lucienne Boonpeng was hired. We had established a relationship with her through the interpretation services she had provided for our families through Saskatoon Open Door Society. Lucienne is passionate about the importance of education for her people, and proved to be a charismatic and effective teacher for the wide range of ages and abilities present in the class.

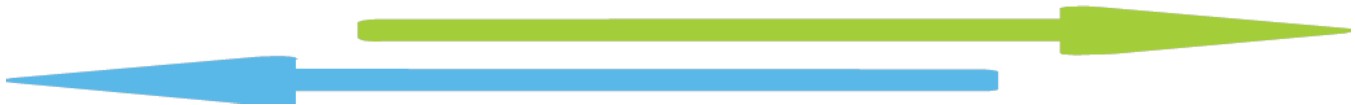
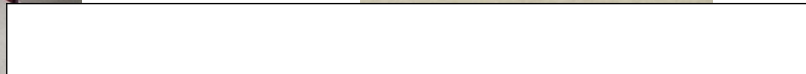
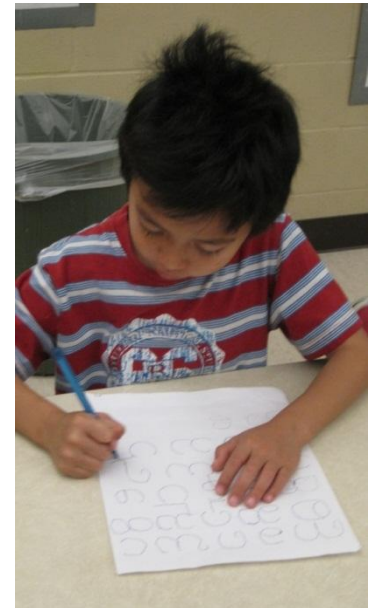
There are often unforeseen changes that occur when beginning a new initiative. One change that motivated learners to attend was the addition of an English language class for the parents who were literate in Karen, but required practice communicating in English. As a teacher at the school in charge of facilitating the program, I volunteered to provide these adult learners with the materials and activities they needed to improve their skills. I felt that, as a new teacher in the school, it was a great way to connect with the families and build a culture of learning that I hope will positively impact the growth of my students.

Money from the grant also enabled us to provide a nutritious snack each week, and to give students a small gift of soaps and lotions as a 'congratulations'



for their hard work and commitment to the program.

The program was well attended and extremely successful in terms of fostering a community of learning for our Karen families. There is definitely a desire for this program to become an ongoing venture as many of the participants have requested that it continue in the new year. We are grateful to the Saskatchewan Community Schools Association for providing us with the financial means to operate this program and hope to work together again in the near future!



Collecting Attendance Data

Caswell Community School
Saskatoon
Lauren Sawatsky

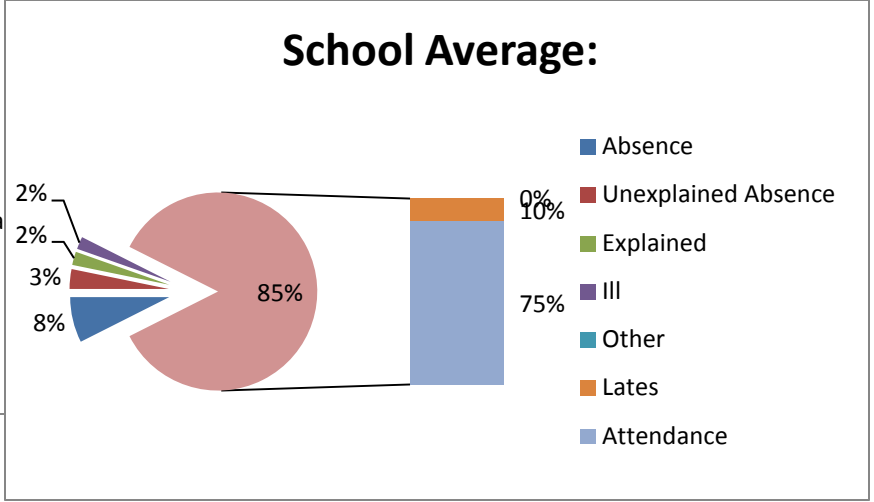
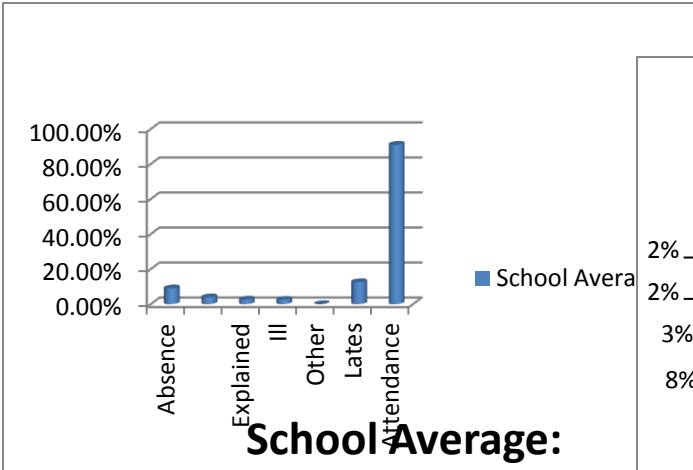
In the Saskatoon Public School Division community school coordinators, along with our school staffs, have been collecting data to help support the learning program for our students and families. One specific type of data collected is on student attendance in school. We know that regular attendance has a significant impact on a student's progress through school.

Caswell Community School, Caroline Robins Community School and Vincent Massey Community School have all been implementing very similar data collection procedures for attendance. We take into consideration overall attendance and target those who are consistently late. Some schools have also been collecting individual classroom attendance data. This data helps us focus on a classroom's overall attendance rates and allows us to specifically target individual students. When we are concerned about a student's attendance and lates, we can access their individual student records where we can colour code their lates and absences with the reasons for absence. We can use this data with the student in conversations with administrators, coordinators and parents. Sometimes a home visit is necessary.

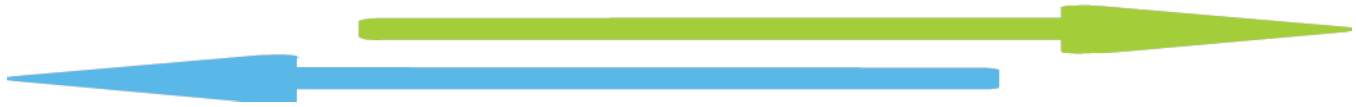
August					September					October					November				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31									
December					January					February					March				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31									
April					May					June					July				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31									

Classroom attendance data is broken into: class overall absences for the month, the unexplained, explained, ill, late, and overall attendance. All this data is put into a monthly/daily chart for each

classroom. Some schools do an overall average graphically for both students and teachers. This visual aid allows teachers and students to see their own overall attendance in their own classrooms. Supportive conversations about attendance and its importance can be had with students and teachers. Suggestions for improvement can be suggested and implemented.



Attendance concerns are always regularly discussed with the school administration. In addition, some school coordinators discuss the data with the whole staff.



**Conference
Overview**

Saskatchewan Community Schools Association

May 2nd-4th, 2012
Regina, Saskatchewan
University of Regina



“CREATING A CULTURE OF SUCCESS”

This conference will provide insight and information necessary to address the needs of our community school students while still maintaining a climate of high expectations.

Keynote Speaker: Anthony Muhammad, May 3rd, 9:00 a.m. University of Regina



Anthony is one of the most sought after educational consultants in North America. As a practitioner of nearly twenty years, Dr. Muhammad has served as a middle school teacher, assistant principal, middle school principal, and high school principal. His tenure as a practitioner has earned him several awards as both a teacher and a principal. His most notable accomplishment came as a principal at Levey Middle School in Southfield, Michigan, a National School of Excellence, where student proficiency on state assessments was more than doubled in five years and he was named the Michigan Middle School Principal of the Year in 2005. Dr. Muhammad and the staff at Levey used the Professional Learning Communities at Work (PLC) model of school improvement, and they have been recognized in several videos and articles as a model, high-performing PLC. As a researcher, he has published articles in several publications in both the United States and Canada. Dr. Muhammad is the author of the book *Transforming School Culture: How to End Staff Division* (2009) and a contributing author to the book *The Collaborative Administrator: Working Together as a Professional Learning Community* (2008).

Keynote Speaker: Neal Hughes, May 4th, 10:30 a.m. University of Regina



Neal is in his seventh season as a running back for the Saskatchewan Roughriders and was a member of the 2007 Grey Cup Championship team. He played college football with the Regina Rams and in his senior year was named a Canada West All-Star. Neal was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan. He is of Métis ancestry, a graduate of SUNTEP, and an educator. He makes his home in Regina year-round and has been involved with numerous charity and community events across the province of Saskatchewan. He has also been a presenter and coordinator for the Fine Foods Community Youth Challenge school program. This is a community program that involves traveling to schools throughout the province of Saskatchewan and talking with youth about issues such as bullying, making healthy choices, literacy and the importance of staying in school. Neal also volunteers as an ambassador for Kid Sport Saskatchewan, which enables him to travel across the province to different communities helping raise money so economically challenged youth can play sports.

Overview of Breakout Sessions

<u>Breakout Session #1(Thursday, May 3rd, 10:45 -12:00 p.m.)</u>					
<u>School Reform (Dr. Muhammad)</u>	<u>Substance Abuse and Addictions</u>	<u>White Privilege</u>	<u>Education and the Law</u>	<u>Tagging and Graffiti</u>	<u>NASP</u>
This presentation will focus on School Reform 101: Turning Around a Struggling School.	This presentation will provide an understanding of substance abuse and addictions, observable signs and behaviours, and programs for prevention and support.	This presentation will examine racism as a concept of "White Privilege".	Information for staff/parents about the rights and responsibilities of students and schools.	This presentation will explore who is responsible, the reasons for, and methods of prevention.	The National Archery in the Schools Program claims it can change students lives "One Arrow At A Time".
<u>Breakout Session #2 (Thursday, May 3rd, 1:00 - 2:15 p.m.)</u>					
<u>School Reform (Dr. Muhammad)</u>	<u>Suicide TALK</u>	<u>White Privilege</u>	<u>Heroes Program</u>	<u>Gangs</u>	<u>Tagging and Graffiti</u>
This presentation will focus on School Reform 101: Turning Around a Struggling School.	This presentation and discussion will examine the myths surrounding suicide, how to talk about it, and how it may affect someone thinking about suicide.	This presentation will examine racism as a concept of "White Privilege".	A middle years' program with a vision to see teens filled with confidence, hope, character, respect, and passion, instead of fear, anger, or apathy.	Understanding why youth are drawn to gangs, signs of gang affiliations, and steps for prevention.	This presentation will explore who is responsible, the reasons for, and methods of prevention.
<u>Breakout Session #3 (Thursday, May 3rd, 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.)</u>					
<u>Elders in Schools and Teaching Treaties</u>	<u>Self-Harm</u>	<u>Circle of Courage Overview</u>	<u>Heroes Program</u>	<u>Gangs</u>	<u>Grants</u>
The presentation will focus on First Nations and Métis Elders and the role they play in the classroom. More specifically the use of First Nation and Métis Elders with relation to the topics of First Nations and Métis content; specifically, treaties, storytelling, and traditional teachings.	This presentation will examine why people self-harm, the secrecy of it, and the potential for suicide.	The Circle of Courage model is encompassed in four core values: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The central theme of this model is that a set of shared values must exist in any community to create environments that ultimately benefit all.	A middle years' program with a vision to see teens filled with confidence, hope, character, respect, and passion, instead of fear, anger, or apathy.	Understanding why youth are drawn to gangs, signs of gang affiliations, and steps for prevention.	This presentation and discussion will examine grants available to Community Schools in Saskatchewan. Learn how St. Augustine Community won a \$90,000 Indigo Love of Reading Grant and how to enter your school.
<u>Breakout Session #4 (Friday, May 4th, 9:00 - 10:15 a.m.)</u>					
<u>Elders in Schools and Teaching Treaties</u>	<u>Substance Abuse and Addictions</u>	<u>Early Literacy Programs</u>	<u>Education and the Law</u>	<u>Media Violence and Its Effect on Schools</u>	<u>Self Regulated Learning</u>
The presentation will focus on First Nations and Métis Elders and the role they play in the classroom. More specifically the use of First Nation and Métis Elders with relation to the topics of First Nations and Métis content; specifically, treaties, storytelling, and traditional teachings.	This presentation will provide an understanding of substance abuse and addictions, observable signs and behaviours, and programs for prevention and support.	This session will provide an instructional sequence for teaching phonological awareness skills, assessment tools, and suggestions for large and small group activities suitable for both classroom and intervention settings.	This presentation will offer information to educators and parents on schools, students and the law.	The presentation is a summary of studies on the effect of media violence on developing brains and results of this in schools.	The purpose of this presentation is to (a) model universal classroom strategies (b) demonstrate how to invite self-regulated learning in the classroom, and (c) foster a greater understanding of environmental affordances to support student engagement.

Please visit www.communityschools.ca for poster, registration, and agenda