



Making a Difference Together Together

November, 2003

Saskatchewan Community Schools Association

President's Report

The executive of the Saskatchewan Community Schools has participated in a strategic planning process under the guidance of Faye Moen of Saskatchewan Learning. As more schools in our Province become designated community schools, it is becoming more difficult for a volunteer association to continue to be effective and inclusive. Conference planning is a huge undertaking now for delegates from 100 schools. The Backpack Program funded by Weyerhaeuser has become logistically impossible to continue off the side of a busy community school coordinator's desk. The newsletter and other in-service opportunities become a mammoth task for the volunteer executive to continue.

It is now time for a change for our Association in order to be effective. The executive made recommendations that would serve as a guide to future SCSA activity and involvement of partners. The executive presented the recommendations to the larger SCSA membership for approval.

One of the recommendations was to hire a part time staff person to manage the work plan set out by the Association. Financial resources need to be sustained for this purpose.

Recommendation No. 2: SCSA form a support group that will answer questions pertaining to SCSA and community education.

Recommendation No. 3: SCSA create three provincial zones to facilitate mobile executive meetings.

Recommendation No. 4: SCSA strive to host a provincial conference.

Recommendation No. 5: SCSA Executive strive to clarify the roles of the Association by stating clearly and sharing the vision, goals and objectives.

The Executive of SCSA has a lot of work facing it in the near future. SCSA has had a positive and successful history and has developed respect among Saskatchewan Learning and many provincial partners. It is imperative that this work continue.

The executive for our Association for 2003-2004 is as follow:

President	Maureen Strawson
Vice President	Delphine Melchert
Secretary	Margaret Mourot
Treasurer	Dawn Deets
Newsletter	Nina Henry
Membership	Luanne Price
Regional Reps:	
Region 1	Shelley Sargent
Region 3	Harvey Bitternose
Region 4	Dean Brooman
Region 5	Vacant
Region 6	Reg Megyesi
	Mary-Lou Hamoline
Northern Region	Vacant

Anyone interested in becoming involved with the Association can contact me at (306) 683-7686 or e-mail strawsonm@spsd.sk.ca.

Maureen Strawson

Maureen Strawson, President

Weyerhaeuser Announcement

Mr. Wayne Roznowksy, Public Affairs Manager of Weyerhaeuser announced at the Annual General Meeting of SCSA on October 18, that Weyerhaeuser will continue the partnership with SCSA, with particular emphasis on the Readiness To Learn Backpack Program which has already had impact on over 80 Pre-Kindergarten Programs throughout the province. This exciting announcement of the continued partnership will enable our Association to continue with a program that has become very successful.

 **Weyerhaeuser**
The future is growing™

Early Learning Programs In Saskatchewan Community Schools

Editor's Note

I'd like to thank everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to submit an article to the newsletter. This year, we will continue to focus on themes. Our first newsletter will highlight Early Learning Programs. Our second newsletter, to be published in February 2004, will focus on Nutrition Programs and our third newsletter, to be published in May 2004, will feature New Partnerships and School^{Plus} Developments.

If you have any comments or questions about the newsletter, or would like to submit an article, please contact me at (306) 683-7822 or send an e-mail to henryn@spsd.sk.ca.

Nina Henry

Nina Henry, Newsletter Coordinator

Kamsack Comprehensive Institute

Our Pre-k program with the partner Sunrise Health Region will host a Speech Language Session for parents.

The Pre-k family Fridays have given parents and family members positive school experiences as well as opportunities to take part in new activities. A couple of the activities they have done together are cooking up colorful playdough and creating dream catchers. During school picture day the PreK teacher and associates saw this as an opportunity to create an "ALL ABOUT ME BOOK". Parents measured, weighed and recorded other details about their child and inserted the photo into the booklet.

Every year the students and parents have taken a trip to a local farm to learn about farm animals and their habitat. This excursion is the first school bus ride for the three and four year olds.

We are very excited that a partnership with the community Kids Korner Pre-School has begun. This community organization has provided early education for our children ages 3&4 for over 15 years. The organization is run by nine parent board members and they have one supervisor and one assistant supervisor hired. The program follows the school

calendar and runs four afternoons a week. They now share the Community School Pre-K classroom. This partnership allows children, parents and families to come together in one building and share many ideas. Most of all the shared responsibility for the well-being of our children is welcome.

Andrea Verigin, School^{Plus} Co-ordinator
Kamsack School Division

Weyerhaeuser Backpack Program A Huge THANK YOU from St. Michael Pre-Kindergarten

Thank you very much Weyerhaeuser for the terrific Theme Kits that you gave to the Pre-Kindergarten Program. I am a new teacher to the Pre-Kindergarten Program and have just sent out my first set of kits. The students were tremendously excited about getting to take home such a big package of stuff. The parents were also very excited to try the kit. Our first set of kits should be coming back in a week. I look forward to letting you know how the first adventure out with the kits went this year. Thank you again for your generosity.

Carla Thorson, St. Michael Pre-Kindergarten
Saskatoon

T.D. Michel Community School Weyerhaeuser Backpack Program

We had an orientation session for parents and children before we sent the backpacks home. We explained the purpose of the backpacks to the parents and then let them explore the contents with their child. Both parents and children were very enthusiastic. We exchanged backpacks after about twenty minutes each parent and child were able to look at three backpacks during the session. Following the play time, we provided lunch. Last of all, we read the dinosaur story that was in the backpack and made dinosaur fossils from the activity guide.

Mrs. Tamara Sundby, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
T.D. Michel Community School, Big River

The Students and Kids Centre: An Innovative Program at Nutana Collegiate

The Students and Kids Centre is located in the heart of Nutana Collegiate. It offers support programming for the student parents who attend Nutana. This Program was created in 1995 and has been funded each year by the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC), a Health Canada Project. It is supported by a visionary Board, the Saskatoon Friends of Students and Kids Inc. (SAKs) and has two staff members, Pat and Lynne. The SAKs Program is part of the Integrated School-Linked Service Model (ISLS) at Nutana, and works in partnership with all of the other ISLS Services, including Millie's Early Learning Centre Daycare, the sister program also created by the SAKs Board.



The services offered daily from the SAKs Centre are counselling, support, advocacy, information, and referral services as well as social activities and formal programming. The SAKs Centre is also a place for the student parents to gather informally, to get to know each other, to share information and to form supportive friendships.

Over the years, patterns have emerged in the Centre that have created the need for other support services and programs. The increase in the number of student parents at risk for not completing their education brought about the creation of the LEAP Program at Nutana. This is an Academic Readiness Program for the most high risk student parents. The SAKs Centre was also part of a community team that developed Pleasant Hill Place, a cooperative Home Project that addresses the need for safe, affordable housing in Saskatoon for five students parents and their children. The increase in the number of pregnancies in young women, even thirteen years of age, brought about the need for pregnancy prevention work and the STOPP (Supporting Teens on Pregnancy Prevention) Committee. STOPP is a sub-committee of the Saskatoon Action Circle on Youth Sexuality of which SAKs has been an integral part. The first conference was held in May, 2001 and the second is scheduled for May, 2004.

The highlight of each year in the SAKs Centre continues to be the graduation ceremonies as we see the number of student parents that graduate, continue to grow. They not only walk across the stage to receive their diplomas, but also to carry away with them numerous and significant awards and scholarships.

We believe the Students and Kids Centre is able to make the difference between watching student parents dream of success and seeing them actually achieving this success.

Lynne Cornish-Braun
Nutana Collegiate, Saskatoon

Social Skills Success Story Confederation Park Community School

Confederation Park Community School has been fortunate in the past to receive support from the Early Skills Development Program to assist children in the acquisition of social skills through a Social Skills for Success Program. At school, staff saw improvements in student behavioral skills in the target child, and also in the other children selected to be in the small pull-out group. Recognizing the potential for reaching a larger number of students, our administration made it a priority to train Teacher Associates, as well as teachers, so that our school could begin to instruct the skill groups ourselves. Teachers submitted student names for consideration and parents were contacted and invited for lunch to learn about the program. At that time, parents were provided with skill cards and other materials so that they could participate and support the program at home. Once Teacher Associates began pull-out groups, teachers began large group instruction in the class. The Social Skills Program involved students from Kindergarten to Grade 4. The children enjoyed going to "club", they displayed improved student behavior and, therefore, enjoyed greater success back in the classroom.

Jean Currie, Kindergarten Teacher
Confederation Park Community School, Saskatoon

Sacred Heart Community Preschool

At Sacred Heart Community Preschool we have a wonderful partnership with Pioneer Village Seniors Home. Each month the seniors and preschool children have a fun filled two hours with each other. We sing, dance, make crafts, and share some special stories together. The seniors really enjoy the children and visa versa. The understanding and love between these two groups is truly uplifting, and we encourage other preschools to incorporate their own programs of this nature.

Denise Zuck, Community School Coordinator
Sacred Heart Community School, Regina

"A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every passerby leaves a mark."

Source Unknown



Family Fridays Holy Rosary Community School

Friday mornings are known as Family Fridays for the Pre-Kindergarten families at Holy Rosary Community School. This special day is planned to develop a positive relationship between the families and school in the early years of their child's education. A different event is scheduled once or twice a month where families can spend time getting to know their teacher, community school coordinator and the other families within their child's class. This also gives the parents the opportunity to see how their child works in a supportive learning environment.

The families have an opportunity to take part in a variety of activities on these special days. Home visits are planned for some of these days to give the teacher and community coordinator an opportunity to see the child in his/her home environment. The families have responded warmly to the home visits, and have found it to be a great opportunity for them as well. Other Fridays are spent at Connaught Library for a literacy program. Here the parents learn how to spark their child's interest in reading through different methods of story telling. The parents learn how to tell stories through rhyme, song, actions, and by using different tones of voice. This helps to engage the child and develop their interest in reading at an early age. The families also visit certain places in the community that the children have been learning about in school. One Friday was spent touring a Regina Fire Hall after the children learned about fire safety in school. The families also celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day with a tea and picnic.

These events help to connect the children and their families to the school. Warm and comfortable relationships are developed and the families are playing an active role in their child's education. The parents feel confident in the school and in addressing any concerns with their child's teacher. By building these strong relationships with the new students and their families, the school is able to work cooperatively with parents to ensure students needs are being met at home and at school. This contributes to the idea of families and communities working together with their school for the betterment of their children's education!

Heather Bregenser, Community School Coordinator
Holy Rosary Community School, Regina

Pleasant Hill Community School PreKindergarten

Pleasant Hill Community School Pre-Kindergarten has had a busy fun filled fall. Early in September our Pre-Kindergarten Parents organized and started to operate the school Clothing Depot. The Clothing Closet receives donations from other schools and various community organizations. Our Parents get together and sort and organize these donations. Twice a week the community members are welcomed by our parents to come and select items their family may need.

In October our students partnered with our care partners and parents to enjoy a pumpkin carving party and a visit to the Dutch Growers Pumpkin Maze. We celebrated Halloween with a carnival. We were joined by our parents, care partners and the Kindergarten Class. Seventy-three parents and children attended along with thirty-one additional volunteers. Many staff members, City Police, community volunteers and our Pre-Kindergarten Executive Director celebrated this exciting event with us.

Dental students visited our classroom twice this month and introduced our children to the wonderful world of the dentistry. They helped the children understand what a visit to the dentist would be like and why it is so important to take care of your teeth.

Our Weyerhaeuser Backpacks have been circulated to all our Pre-Kindergarten families. The families have really appreciated having an opportunity to share in the theme-based activities offered in the backpacks.

We have also started a lending library in our classroom. The children are given a numbered bag to transport the books. These books have been donated from other schools in our city, and from various organizations who recognize the importance of books for learning. The Weyerhaeuser Backpacks and our lending library have both been a huge success this fall. Have a great year everyone.....

Mrs. Elsie Mills, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Ms. Patti Starzynski, Teacher Associate
Pleasant Hill Community School, Saskatoon



"Like a snapshot you develop.
Unlike a snapshot you never stop."

Source Unknown

Saskatoon Student Child Care Services and Royal West Early Learning Centre

Saskatoon Student Child Care Services is a non-profit registered charity. The organization opened the Mount Royal Child Care Centre in 1988 and the Royal West Early Learning Centre in August 2002.

The Royal West Early Learning Centre is located in a new high school program, the Royal West Campus. The children attending the Royal West Early Learning Centre range in age from 18 months to 5 years old. We are licensed for 20 preschoolers and 5 toddlers. To date we are full, but we do have a waiting list that people can put their name on. The centre's goal is to support young parents in their effort to complete their high school education and transition to post-secondary education and/or the work world.

Both Royal West and Mount Royal Child Care Centres facilitate the order and delivery of the Good Food Boxes (through C.H.E.P.), the Salvation Army hampers (through the Salvation Army) at Christmas, and Scholastic Books. We offer Cooking Club on a monthly basis where parents can go and enjoy lunch, while their child is in daycare, and then work together to prepare a meal to take home for supper. We offer a Time Out for Moms on a monthly basis as well. This is an organized activity that the parents can participate in and get to know each other in a relaxed environment. This is done on days when children are in daycare but there are no classes.

A Behavioral Consultant visits both centres on a monthly basis. A Speech and Language Pathologist comes weekly. Both consultants observe children and make referrals when necessary. They work with the staff and parents to develop programming and skills for interaction that further assist the child's development.

Our organization is governed by a Board of Directors. We have a Parent Advisory Committee that meets on a regular basis with the Daycare Program Coordinator and together they bring matters forward that they feel need to be addressed.

An independent research study of the Mount Royal Child Care found a positive relationship between our daycare use and school achievement.

- Mothers using the daycare for at least one semester had a graduation/retention rate of 85% compared to 38% for parents not using the daycare.
- The dropout rate for teens using other child care arrangements continued to be 50 - 70%.
- The dropout rate for teens using our centre has never been higher than 33% and on several occasions has been 0%.

Kathie Sider, Director
Royal West Early Learning Centre, Saskatoon



Father Gorman Community School

The Pre-Kindergarten class at Father Gorman Community School is off to a great start! Parents are very enthusiastic when it is their help day. On their help day the parents and child go to our school library to choose library books to enjoy together at home. We make it a very special time and the children can't wait until it's their turn to take mom or dad to the library! Along with the Weyerhaeuser backpacks, our class also has a turn at taking home a family activity backpack. The theme this month is Halloween. A few of the activities include: counting little plastic spiders into plastic film containers, a matching activity, drawing faces on a laminated pumpkin with a washable marker, a puzzle, a story book with a cassette and a book for someone to read. Parents are encouraged to write in a booklet about what they enjoyed and the children are able to draw a picture that we show everyone the next day! In the pictures there are a couple parents in Pre-K reading in the classroom and enjoying the literacy backpacks.

Cindy Bender, Pre-K Facilitator

This fall, in partnership with Lloydminster Learning Council, we are offering I-2-3 Rhyme With Me and Books for Babies.

Father Gorman is in its 3 year of running a "Cooking up a Story / or Cooking up a Fraction" Program for students in preschool to Grade 3. This has been an excellent way to bring early literacy, math, cooking, nutrition, and physical activity together. We have been focusing many of our family activities around the "In-Motion" initiative. Getting Saskatchewan Moving!

We are thrilled to announce we will be running the F.A.S.T. (Families and Schools Together) program in the New Year at Father Gorman. Our F.A.S.T. team will be trained early January, with program to follow. This has been a long process and we look forward to being part of a program which we have heard so many wonderful things about.

Alison Bruneau, Community School Coordinator
Father Gorman Community School, Lloydminster

Maggie's Child Care Centre for Teen Parents

Maggie's Child Care Centre is a unique Day Care Centre located in the basement of City Park Collegiate. Maggie's continues to provide excellent childcare and support for teen parents and their children. We strive to offer programs which reflect the changing needs of our families. Therefore, we are continually developing and implementing new programs as additional needs are identified. The Parent Program offers many educational, social and recreational activities throughout the year. Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program, collective kitchen, breakfast and lunch programs and Parent Day are a few of the activities offered to parents. Maggie's has spaces available for infants and toddlers. For More information, please call Irma at 665-5721.

Irma Fuentelba, Director
Maggie's Childcare Centre



Dr.Brass Prekindergarten Rainbow Salad

At Dr. Brass Pre-Kindergarten in Yorkton we learned our colors by using a Rainbow Theme. We did various rainbow activities. These included reading rainbow books, creating rainbow crafts and singing rainbow songs. As a grand finale to our theme, we made a class booklet called Rainbow Salad. We talked about the different colors of fruit in the booklet. Then, we put each kind of fruit in bowls on a table. Each child had a turn to move along the line and create their own Rainbow Salad. It was a yummy ending to our Rainbow Color Theme.

Dianna Kozak, Community School Coordinator
Dr. Brass Elementary School, Yorkton

Saskatoon Community Schools Pre-Kindergarten Board. Inc.

The Saskatoon Community Schools Pre-Kindergarten Board (SCSPB) oversees Pre-Kindergarten Programs in designated Community Schools in the Saskatoon Public School Division. During the 2002/03 school year, SCSPB offered Programs in nine Community Schools: Caswell, Confederation Park, King George, Mayfair, Pleasant Hill, Princess Alexandra, Westmount, W.P. Bate, and Vincent Massey. A total of 256 spaces were available to Pre-Kindergarten aged children. Due to transience, over 340 children and their families were served throughout the year. Some highlights from last year include:

- Sound field systems were purchased for each Pre-Kindergarten;
- Speech and Language Services were provided to "Kids First Communities" (those with the highest identified need). This year, Speech and Language Services will be provided in all of the Pre-Kindergarten Programs. The funding for these services comes from Saskatoon District Health and the "Kids First" Initiative;
- The Department of Community Resources and Employment continues to provide funding for nutrition programs and consumable supplies;
- A local Otolaryngologist and Audiologist conducted a hearing screening clinic for 27 children. This clinic resulted in further referrals for a number of children;
- Christmas gifts were provided for all of the Pre-Kindergarten children through the efforts of the Sears "Tree of Hope" campaign and the Saskatoon Preschool Foundation;
- The Literacy Theme Box Project expanded again. Last year, two themes were selected and theme boxes were created for teachers' use in the classroom;
- The "Share a Story" literacy project provided books to each of the Pre-Kindergarten Programs to create a lending library for children and parents;
- Teachers and Teacher Associates took part in strategic planning sessions which resulted in the production of a powerpoint presentation which outlines the strategic plan, goals and philosophy of the Pre-Kindergarten Programs overseen by SCSPB;
- Finally, Family Friday Activities were planned involving parents, guardians, grandparents and extended family members in special events, excursions, crafts, literacy programs, holiday meals, entertainers and guest speakers.

The above activities were available for all Pre-Kindergartens under the umbrella of SCSPB. Each individual Pre-Kindergarten also had unique programs to address the needs of its children, families and communities.

Laurel Clarke, SCSPB Executive Director
Nina Henry, SCSPB Treasurer

Caswell PreKindergarten

Our program does a variety of cooking projects throughout the year. We enjoy learning in the kitchen as a group and with family members. We cook theme related items such as: apple crisp, cowboy cookies, pumpkin cake, cookies, perogies, friendship fruit salad, seashells and sand just to name a few. We are proud to have three of our student's art work appear in the Pre-K display at the Mall at Circle and 8th. The art work includes "Pigs in the Mud" and a corn on the cob print from our fall themes.

Rhonda Wacker, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher
Caswell Community School, Saskatoon

Bishop Roborecki School

Bishop Roborecki School deems academic excellence as a priority for our students. This focus is the same for our Prekindergarten program. We use the Prekindergarten program as a unique opportunity to welcome parents into our school. Although this program is relatively new to our school, we have already seen positive results with our students. This tremendous growth can be attributed to many things.

We have taken the knowledge that the majority of learning occurs when a child is at the Prekindergarten level and we have incorporated this into structured center activities. These centers have a strong focus on language development and mathematical skills. We present materials with the alphabet and numbers. It is not mandatory that they learn this information, and if frustration is demonstrated we do not proceed. Some students are ready, and if they are not, they will at least be familiar with the material. Students' progress is recorded with checklists and pictures taken with a digital camera.

Another such contributing factor is the home visits. The first home visit is done in the spring when we are meeting potential Prekindergarten families. Parents have expressed their pleasure in our interest and the students enjoyed meeting their teacher for the first time. This makes their first day of school a little less intimidating for both the parent and the child. We collaborate with our parents to make a program that is relevant to the needs of our community. Parents are made to feel welcome in our school by encouraging them to volunteer and to contribute to our program.


We make as many home visits as we can on our Fridays. When visiting a family on a Friday we use a book-in-a bag program we have developed. Parents come to the school and assemble a bag with books, activities, puppets, homemade coloring books, poems, finger plays, crafts and a tape with the parent reading the story and singing songs. All materials are provided and the items that go into this package are entirely

up to the parent. This encourages parents to invest an interest in their child's education, and it meets the needs of the child based on what their parent deems as valuable. Later on in the year we bring this package to their home. We go through the various activities with both the child and the parent. This program has recently been supplemented by the Weyerhaeuser theme backpacks.

Fridays have been valuable to our program and they have been used to the fullest extent. Fridays are used for our various school trips to the local library, forestry farm, and various other exciting locations. We have also had our Christmas and Halloween celebrations on Fridays. These days are also used for many Come-and-Go teas. This allows us to welcome parents and families into our school. Parents can form a peer group with other Prekindergarten parents and the students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.

We foster academic growth by encouraging parent interest through the many venues mentioned above. The Prekindergarten program is an excellent opportunity to create strong relationships between the school and it's surrounding community. Bishop Roborecki works hard to achieve this. We have successfully created an environment that is both safe and welcoming to families.

Blair Ostertag
Bishop Roborecki School, Saskatoon



S.C.S.A.
Annual Professional Development Gathering

BUILDING COMMUNITIES From The Inside Out

Thursday, January 15, 2004
8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Western Development Museum
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Guest Speaker: **Dr. John McKnight**

The Saskatchewan Community Schools Association is pleased to host this annual professional development gathering. Our speaker, Dr. John McKnight will focus on community development. An invitation is extended for up to four people (staff, students, parents, community members and school division personnel) from each Community School to register. There is no cost to attend and lunch will be provided.

For more information
Contact Maureen Strawson at
(306) 683-7657

Understanding The Early Years Project

Saskatoon is one of thirteen communities in Canada involved in the Understanding the Early Years Research Project. The research focuses on children under the age of six. The study has found that:

- The behaviour of children in Saskatoon is a major weakness - about one-and-a-half to two times national norms.
- While young children in Saskatoon do better in social competence, communication skills, general knowledge and maturity, they are weaker in the areas of language and cognitive development than their peers across the country.
- Saskatoon scored low on indicators of positive parenting and maternal mental health.
- Saskatoon provides strong social supports and high levels of neighbourhood quality for families across the city.
- Family income, the level of the mother's education and whether the father was working outside the home were the most important variables influencing the physical health and well-being of children.
- Despite good overall development, children in Saskatoon would benefit from efforts to improve their language and cognitive development and their behavioral outcomes.
- Improving parenting skills, decreasing levels of maternal depression, greater use of available resources and providing interventions for children experiencing problems prior to starting school are all seen in the report as areas for the community to work on.

For additional information about this project, please contact Sue Delanoy, Saskatoon Communities For Children, 956-6147. To receive information regarding newly released community mapping projects, please contact Brian and Loretta Hartsook, Research Coordinators, at 934-2520 or 221-8704.

Reprinted from Saskatoon Communities for Children
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"Improving parenting skills, decreasing levels of maternal depression, greater use of available resources and providing interventions for children experiencing problems prior to starting school are all seen in the report as areas for the community to work on."

Planting Dreams Weyerhaeuser Partnership

"Planting Dreams is a community-based partnership between Weyerhaeuser in Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Community Schools Association that was established in 1999-2000. The program is committed to helping children who are most in need through the community schools concept.

For every seedling, Weyerhaeuser province-wide, makes a donation to the Planting Dreams Fund. On average, Weyerhaeuser plants six million spruce and pine seedlings a year in northern Saskatchewan. The funds from these donations are used to support programs in community schools in Saskatchewan. Special emphasis is placed on pre-kindergarten initiatives as well as cultural awareness and other special projects.

Since the creation of the Planting Dreams Program, Weyerhaeuser has donated approximately \$100,000 annually. Weyerhaeuser has been very cautious and played an appropriately passive role in the early operation of the program. The program has been administered by teachers and school administrators through a committee stabilized by SCSA.

Aside from general funding provided, the major initiative that has had significant impact is the "Readiness to Learn Backpack Project". This project lets children borrow backpacks filled with books, toys, games and other activity materials that support early learning and pre-literacy skills. Each backpack has a theme including insects and spiders, letters and numbers, farm animals and nutrition.

The reported response to the backpack project has been very positive. Demand exceeds supply. Not only do teachers report the high education content of the backpacks, but also they offer the change of greater interaction within families. The project reaches beyond the few hours of the day the children spend in pre-kindergarten, but makes an impact at home, where children spend most of their time. "

Reprinted From: Community Schools Review and Business Case Study, prepared by Dean Garnet Garven.

The Pre-kindergarten Backpack program continues to grow and be successful. This program has been modeled in other jurisdictions in the province and beyond. The Community Schools Review and Business Case Study indicates that the Planting Dreams Program appears to have met or exceed the expectations for most stakeholders.

Two recommendations from the above Case Study include:

1. Weyerhaeuser Saskatchewan should maintain its support for community schools through the Planting Dreams Program.
2. SCSA will endeavor to increase the awareness of the Planting Dreams program.