

June 2024

the torch



Peter Martin Receives *In Appreciation Award*



Transcona resident, Mr. Peter Martin, was recently awarded a River East Transcona School Division *In Appreciation Award* for his yearly commitment to educating students on the importance of Remembrance Day.

Mr. Martin has demonstrated an outstanding contribution to the division and exemplified a commitment to building partnerships between

the school division, individual schools, and the Transcona Legion by coordinating and organizing *No Stone Left Alone* and Grade 6 class visitations. Mr. Martin's volunteer responsibilities include visiting each of the Grade 6 classes in the Transcona schools to prepare them for the event at the Transcona Cemetery. More importantly, he teaches them the purpose and importance of Remembrance Day, including how veterans gave their lives so that we could be free.

No Stone Left Alone is dedicated to honouring and remembering Canada's veterans. The ceremony provides students with an experience that creates knowledge, understanding and appreciation of those who serve and of the sacrifice of Canada's fallen. Every military gravestone is paid respects by one or more students, who also give a salute to veterans as part of the ceremony.

"Mr. Martin is an outstanding choice for this award. He exemplifies what it means to be in service to the community and those around you. Mr. Martin gives so very much to the students of River East Transcona School Division, and we are honoured to work in partnership with him each year," said Board Chair Colleen Carswell.

Established in 2004, the *In Appreciation*

Award provides the Board of Trustees with the opportunity to publicly show their gratitude to individuals and organizations who have made a significant impact on the division and its community. Developing and showing appreciation for valuable relationships such as these provides the Board with opportunities to maintain meaningful contact with its community and see some of the results of their efforts at improving student achievement.



RETSD Commits to Accessibility for All

River East Transcona School Division believes that ensuring accessibility for all individuals within our school community is morally and ethically imperative and it also aligns with and advances our division's purpose, mission, and values.

In December 2013, the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law. Since that time, the Government of Manitoba has been developing accessibility standards to address

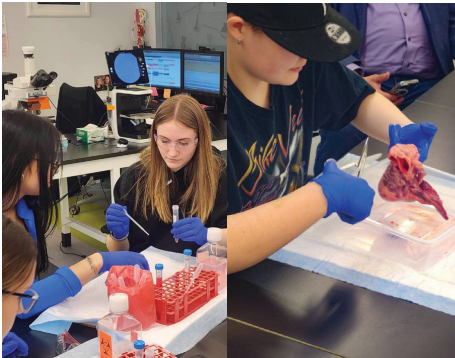
barriers for Manitobans.

In response to the Act, the division created an accessibility committee, and in December 2016, the committee developed a plan whose purpose is to demonstrate the division's commitment to moving towards equitable access and participation for people with disabilities. In accordance with the AMA, the division is fully compliant with the first three accessibility standards:

- Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation
- Accessible Employment Standard Regulation
- Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation

As additional regulations are introduced, we will continue to ensure the division maintains its commitment to being accessible to everyone.

Internship Giving Indigenous Students Valuable Health-care Experience



River East Transcona School Division and St. Boniface Hospital have collaborated to offer a meaningful experience for Indigenous students.

A newly developed internship program is providing 12 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in Grades 11 and 12 with the

opportunity to explore careers related to health care. Students have been spending one day a week at the hospital and have the support of an RETSD teacher and the St. Boniface Hospital Truth and Reconciliation specialist.

By participating in this 17-week internship through the province's Career Development Internship credit, students will have the opportunity to earn up to two high school credits for an unpaid internship.

The program was suggested to the hospital and school division by Clayton Sandy, a board member at St. Boniface Hospital and knowledge keeper with RETSD.

Some of the main benefits of this internship include hands-on experience in a variety of medical disciplines, being individually paired with a mentor who will support them throughout,

and the opportunity to network with health-care professionals.

"Having Indigenous students take part in this program has provided them with valuable experience as they make decisions around their future education. We want students to know there is no limit to what they can achieve, and they can accomplish anything."

"This is reconciliation in action. We need to do more than talk about making change and providing opportunities; we must act." said Trustee Rod Giesbrecht.

Not only does the internship allow these 12 students to explore career options in a field where workers are in great demand, it also allows the school division and hospital to come together to support the potential next generation of health-care professionals.

RETSD Introduces Carpentry Intensive Program



In recent years, RETSD has seen an increase in requests for technical-vocational programming at its senior years schools. So, for the 2024–25 school year, the division plans to pilot a new program-delivery model for the Carpentry

Intensive Program, aiming to assess whether this approach can support expanded access to more interested students in all our technical vocational programs.

Historically, the division has tried to ensure that students across the division have access to these programs through a divisional program application process. However, as enrolment increases, it is becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate students in all their required courses at the two schools who have technical vocational labs, Kildonan-East Collegiate and

Murdoch MacKay Collegiate.

The new model, The Carpentry Intensive Program, will be offered to students at all six senior years schools. Students who do not attend Kildonan-East or Murdoch MacKay will remain enrolled at their community school and attend one of these vocational schools for two semesters, while receiving other credits and graduating from their community school.

If this is something you think your child may be interested in for the 2025–26 school year, please speak to your principal.

Students Pilot Drones for Sustainability



Bernie Wolfe School was buzzing on April 26, as 25 students from five RETSD high schools piloted drones around a room on the school's second floor.

The students were taking part in a four-day workshop called the SEAR Program, which stands for Science Experiential Aerial Research. The program is designed to engage students in future career technologies and scientific discovery and give them the knowledge to develop solutions to local sustainability issues.

Specifically, the students went over the details of drone technology, piloting, and machine learning to be able to use drones to identify Dutch elm disease in Winnipeg.

"Giving our students the opportunity to learn and use some of this advanced technology is a testament to the innovation of our teachers and leaders. It's not only the learning, but the difference this project will make on the tree canopy in our city as Dutch elm disease is identified." said Trustee Susan Olynik

Advanced Placement Being Offered at All High Schools

River East Transcona School Division is very excited to announce that, as of the 2024–25 school year, all senior years schools across the division will offer Advanced Placement courses. This addition is due to our ongoing efforts to provide equitable and accessible programming that prepares students to reach their potential through multiple pathways.

Advanced Placement gives students the chance to tackle university-level work while still in high school with the potential to earn university credits. Students may choose one or more Advanced Placement courses, depending on their interests. This is a great opportunity for students to seek out greater challenges and build additional skills. There may also be financial benefits for students who are successful on the Advanced Placement exam given the potential to receive university credit.

Advanced Placement courses and corresponding exams are offered at the Grade 12 level. To prepare students for the extensive curriculum, courses identified as “Advanced” will be offered to Grade 11 students planning to enter Advanced Placement courses. These Advanced courses will be beneficial, but are not necessary for students who wish to take Grade 12 Advanced Placement courses and who may also choose to write the exam.

“The decision to offer Advanced Placement at all our senior level schools will ensure equitable access for any Grade 11 or 12 student who want to pursue them. It is important that students, no matter their senior years catchment area, are able to take advantage of these exceptional academic classes,” said Trustee Brianne Goertzen

Advanced Placement courses are only offered by the College Board in English. French immersion students have the option of taking Grade 11 Advanced courses in French, and then complete the Grade 12 Advanced Placement course and exam in English. Schools will continue to monitor credits to ensure students meet the provincial requirements for a French immersion diploma.

Course offerings may vary from school to school based on student interest. The six senior years schools formed a committee to review the course offerings and ensure a broad, equitable slate of courses. These courses will be reviewed each year by the committee and may change based on demand.

If you or your student are interested or have questions about the Advanced and/or Advanced Placement offerings, we invite you to reach out to the appropriate school.

RETSD Students & Staff Recognized at Yes I Can! Awards



Congratulations to the RETSD students and staff who were honoured by the Manitoba Council for Exceptional Children on February 29 at their annual Yes I Can! Awards ceremony.

The awards were created to acknowledge the achievements of children and youth with

disabilities and to overcome barriers caused by disabilities or public misconceptions.

This year, seven RETSD students were presented with awards. Frodo Crow, from Murdoch MacKay Collegiate, received a self-advocacy award. Connor Stewart, also from Murdoch MacKay, received an award in the category of athletics. Nicholas Werner Wolowich, from River East Collegiate, received an award in the category of transition. Ryan Pow, from Dr. F.W.L. Hamilton School, received an award in the category of advocacy. Ostap Lavryshyn, from Emerson School, received an award in the category of self-advocacy. Cayden MacDonald, from Wayoata School, received an award in the category of academics. And Amany Otvari, from Murdoch

MacKay, received an award in the category of athletics.

Several of our educational assistants were also recognized for their work and dedication. Collège Miles Macdonell Collegiate’s Christine Holowich was named educational assistant of the year! Other educational assistants were honoured with certificates of recognition—Sharon Szabo from Wayoata School, and Nelia Resendes-Marques, Danielle Hendren, Debra Bouwman, and Jill Kuhlman from River East Collegiate.

“We are very proud of the accomplishments of these award recipients and hope they enjoy this well-deserved recognition,” said Trustee Sheri Hanson.

Maple Leaf Patrols Receive Top Honours



Congratulations to the Maple Leaf School patrol team who were awarded 1st Place Citywide at the annual Winnipeg Police Service School Safety Patrol Awards! The team also earned 1st Place in RETSD.

Afterwards, three Maple Leaf patrol captains, along with principal Jamie Evans, were interviewed by Richard Cloutier for CJOB Radio—an exciting experience for the students.

Congratulations, as well, to the Angus McKay School patrol team who were awarded 2nd Place in RETSD and the Westview School patrol team who were awarded 3rd Place. These are wonderful accomplishments.

Board Meeting Recordings Available Online

May 7, 2024, was a historical meeting for the Board of Trustees. It signals the start of video recordings of all regular board meetings. You can now find video recordings with the official minutes of regular board meetings on the division website at [rets.d.mb.ca](https://www.retsd.mb.ca)>YOUR RETSD>Board of Trustees>Past Board Meeting Recordings.

"In the spirit of open and transparent communication with the public, we wanted to make these recordings available online, so they are more accessible to our community," said Trustee Brenda Bage.

Thank You Bus Drivers, for Going the Extra Mile



It's not an easy job to transport 4,038 students to and from school daily, but the 102 school bus drivers working in our division wake up every morning and do just that. Every school day, our drivers collectively travel 6,072 km to safely transport students to and from school.

The Board of Trustees would like to thank all our bus drivers for their dedicated service and the thoughtful care they take in transporting students.

Community Forum Yields Results

As a result of the Board Priority on Communication—Conduct a review of the current communications plan and develop additional strategies to enhance internal and external communication and increase community engagement—the Board held a Community Education Forum on November 18, 2023, that was attended by more than a hundred

students, parents, and community members who came together to discuss the theme of the forum, *Creating Student Success: What Does This Look Like To You?*

"It is important to give our community opportunities to be heard, and a forum is one way of doing that." said Trustee Shannon Hiebert.

It was a great success and we would like to thank everyone who took part in the forum. We are delighted to share the results of the hard work and collaboration. More information can be found on the division website at <https://tinyurl.com/42bm48h9>

Your River East Transcona School Division Trustees

Ward 1

Colleen Carswell (board chair)
204.222.1486
ccarswell@rets.d.mb.ca

Sheri Irwin
204.223.5079
sirwin@rets.d.mb.ca

Ward 2

Rod Giesbrecht
204.391.8225
rgiesbrecht@rets.d.mb.ca

Sheri Hanson
204.915.7313
shanson2@rets.d.mb.ca

Ward 3

Brianne Goertzen
204.955.6782
bgoertzen@rets.d.mb.ca

Keith Morrison
204.795.3357
kmorrison@rets.d.mb.ca

Ward 4

Susan Olynik (board vice-chair)
204.661.6440
solynik@rets.d.mb.ca

Brenda Bage
204.221.2951
bbage@rets.d.mb.ca

Ward 5

Shannon Hiebert
204.771.8435
shiebert@rets.d.mb.ca

The Board of Trustees meets the first and third Tuesday of each month. You are welcome to attend, either in person or online. For more information about the Board of Trustees, visit: www.retsd.mb.ca > Your RETSD > Board of Trustees