

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROGRAM REPORT

OCTOBER 2014 TO DECEMBER 2015

SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

BY

**THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS UNIT
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION DIRECTORATE
MANITOBA EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Introduction

In December 2013, *The Community Schools Act* received Royal Assent, embedding the community school philosophy and approach into legislation. Core features of the legislation include the:

- Establishment of The Community Schools Program incorporating the 29 schools that were previously part of the Community Schools Partnership Initiative.
- Establishment of Deputy Ministers' Committee on Community Schools to provide overall direction to the program, including working collaboratively around a common agenda and providing more timely responses to emerging issues, more effective policy and program alignment, and efficient uses of resources
- Formation of a Community Schools Unit to provide support to the Community Schools Program, Network and Deputy Ministers' Committee.
- Creation of a Community Schools Network to provide any public school interested in exploring the community school philosophy and model of practice with access to planning information, tools, study sites and a range of professional learning and training events and activities.
- Formation of a Community Schools Advisory Committee to provide advice and guidance to the Deputy Ministers' Committee on program planning and the identification and provision of resources and assets.

Establishment of the Community Schools Unit

In March 2014, The Deputy Minister's Committee on Community Schools held its initial meeting to review and begin to act on the community schools legislation, including the formation of The Community Schools Unit. The unit was formally established within Manitoba Education and Training's Aboriginal Education Directorate. It began formal operation in October 2014 with the appointment of a unit coordinator. The unit is comprised of four staff: the Assistant Director of the Aboriginal Education Directorate, the unit coordinator, the coordinator of community engagement and an administrative assistant.

As part of *The Community Schools Act's* legislative requirements, The Community Schools Unit is required to prepare a report on activities of the Community Schools Program including a summary of

- (a) the performance of the program with reference to the performance measures established by the Unit
- (b) the consultations carried out by the unit.

Furthermore, the Minister is to make the report available to the public by posting it on the department's website and by any other means the Minister considers advisable.

This report is intended to fulfill the reporting requirements of the legislation. It covers the Community Schools Unit's first year of year operation from October 2014 to October 2015.

Over the initial year of its operation, the Unit carried out a number of activities in support of the Community Schools Program, including fulfilling all of the requirements outlined in The Community Schools Act.

Performance Measures

To help monitor and assess impact of Community School Program, the unit established a baseline of key indicators students of performance based on five year averages. These indicators include:

- Grade 3 Assessment Results – percentage of students who met expectations in each competency
 - a. Numeracy
 - b. Reading in English (English and Immersion programs)
 - c. Reading in French (Français and Immersion programs)
- Middle Years Assessment Results – percentage of students who established student engagement competencies and percentage of students who met mid-grade performance in each numeracy/literacy competency
 - d. Student Engagement
 - e. Number Sense and Number Skills
 - f. Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing in English (English and Immersion programs)
 - g. Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing in French (Français and Immersion programs only)
- Credit Attainment in Grade 9 core courses by first-time Grade 9 students during the Grade 9 year.
- Pass Rates in Grade 12 Provincial Tests
- School-reported attendance rates
- On-time graduation rate of first-time Grade 9 students (September 2010 to June 2014)

These performance measures will be complemented by information obtained through school site visits and from annual school reports submitted to the Community Schools Unit. Annual reports provide an overview of and participation rates in various before and after school, evening and summer programs and services that community schools offer to families and students.

Consultation Meetings

Over the course of its initial year of operation, the Community Schools Unit held consultation meetings with a variety of organizations including:

- The Aboriginal Circle of Educators
- Bookmates
- The Council of School Leaders
- Frontier College
- Manitoba Association of Parent Councils
- Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
- Premiers' Advisory Council of Poverty, Education and Citizenship
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority—Caring for Health

Formation of the Community Schools Advisory Committee

The *Community Schools Act* calls for the establishment of an Advisory Committee to advise the Minister, the Deputy Ministers' committee and the coordinator matters relating to the community schools program and network, including providing assistance in identifying services, programs and activities that may achieve the aims of the community school philosophy and model.

Committee members were appointed in June 2015 in accordance with the legislative requirements that at least nine members be appointed, the majority of whom are to represent schools participating in the Community Schools Program. Appendix A provides a list of committee members.

The initial committee meeting took place October 16, 2015 at which members appointed a Chair and Co-Chair. Committee members also began work on a draft a terms of reference.

Community School Site Visits

During the initial year of its operation, the coordinator of the Community Schools Unit visited 24 of the 29 community school sites across 14 school divisions in urban, rural and northern Manitoba. The visits are intended to provide logistical support to schools participating in the program and help community connectors access provincial and community resources that support students, families and schools. In cases where site visits were unable to be arranged, contact and support was provided over the phone, by email or through meetings at the March 2015 Community Schools Gathering.

Community School Unit Presentations

Between October 2014 and December 2015 staff from the Community Schools Units made presentations to the following organizations

- Native Addictions Foundation
- Manitoba Association of Parent Councils
- Premiers' Advisory Committee on Poverty, Education and Citizenship
- Villa Rosa
- Women's Resource Centre

Community Schools Network

During the unit's initial year of operation, school divisions and schools were invited to join the Community Schools Network. Fifteen schools from eight school divisions joined the network prior to and after the March 2015 Community Schools Gathering. This included nine schools from five school divisions that were previously not part of the Community Schools Program.

The Community Schools 2015 March Gathering

The Community School Unit organized and hosted a Community Schools Gathering on March 16, 2015 in Winnipeg. The session was the first in a series of professional development sessions and workshops intended to support schools participating in the Community Schools Program as well as the Community Schools Network. The gathering helped to fulfill several of the recommendations of an external evaluation of the former Community Schools Partnership Initiative. The evaluation report entitled, *Reflection and Renewal*, was undertaken by Dr. Michael Tymchak, Professor Emeritus and former Dean of Education, University of Regina and Phyllis Fowler, Coordinator, Integrated School-Linked Services, Nutana Collegiate, Saskatoon Public Schools. The report emphasized the need to provide professional training to principals and community liaison staff serving community schools.

Over 110 school principals and community connectors and support workers participated in a eight workshops related to a variety of topics including integrating school linked services, mobilizing partnerships and resources, volunteer management, engaging Indigenous families, promoting mental health and well-being, supporting the community school approach and building authentic community school partnerships.

Participant feedback was quite positive. Participants welcomed the new format and focus on professional development. They indicated that the workshops provided valuable information that would better support their work with students, families and communities.

Professional Development Workshops

Over the course of its initial year of operation, the Community Schools Unit organized several workshops to further support the identified needs and interests of community schools. A two day training session for community support workers on the Handle with Care Program, which was developed by the Regional Health Authority, was held October 2015 in Winnipeg. Thirteen community connectors participated in the workshop.

The Community Schools Unit also organized a series of three full-day workshops delivered by Proactive Information Services Inc. to assist schools better plan, implement and evaluate their programming as well as prepare funding proposals. A three-day series of workshops was planned for Thompson and two others for Winnipeg. Fifty school principals and community support workers attended the data workshops.

Both workshops were open to members of both the Community School Program and the Community Schools Network.

Moving Forward

For the coming 2015-16 school year, the Community Schools Unit continues to identify, plan and organize professional development workshops for both program and network schools. A Community Schools Gathering is being planned for November 2016.

The unit will continue to support the work of the Deputy Ministers' Committee on Community Schools and the Community Schools Advisory Committee as well as support program and network schools with site visits.

Work is underway to review the roles, responsibilities and working arrangements of community connectors or liaison workers participating in the Community Schools Program and to update the community connector guidebook.

For the 2015-16 school year, the Community Schools Unit will also work to support the implementation of a Family Outreach Coordinator pilot project across a cluster of three schools in two school divisions. These projects will help to increase the portfolio of resources and services available to targeted families in each of the designated schools and support core educational goals related to child wellbeing, school readiness, attendance, student success and transition.

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Community School Parent Councils	Representative
Brooklands School - St James SD	Teresa Olsen (Chair)
Dufferin School - Winnipeg SD	Helen Sinisalo
New Era School - Brandon SD	Shirley McArthur
Oak Lake Community School - Fort La Bosse SD	Kim Williment (Co-Chair)
Sister McNamara School - Winnipeg SD	May Corpuz
Wapahnok School - Mystery Lake SD	Catheen Helgason

Educational Organizations	Representative
Aboriginal Circle of Educators (ACE)	Alison Cox ACE member
Community Education Development Association	Tom Simms Executive Director
Council of School Leaders	Maxine Geller Chair, Council of School Leaders
Manitoba Association of Parent Councils	Nina VanDrunen Board Director-Thompson
Manitoba Association of School Superintendents	Karin Seiler Inner City Superintendent Winnipeg School Division