

# Riverbend Community School

## Report to the Community 2023-2024

This is Riverbend School. This land is a place where we can walk freely. Our school is an important place on Treaty 1 territory. We acknowledge and respect the land of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Ininiwak, and the Red River Métis Nation. We know there were unfair agreements made. We promise to do better on this land. We will share responsibilities with the Indigenous Peoples. We promise to take care of this land.

Written by Jigar Room #10

Ginawind is a powerful word in Aninshinaabemowin meaning “This is us”. As we approach the end of the school year, we reflect on the many learning opportunities both our staff and students have experienced that helped shape who we are and who we strive to be at Riverbend Community School. At Riverbend we focus our planning for student engagement around 3 main ideas- care, community, and curriculum.

The Seven Sacred Teaching of Love, Respect, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom, Truth and Courage are woven throughout our work with students as well as our professional development as a staff. These teachings help guide our lessons, fieldtrips, performances, assemblies, spirit days, sports tournaments, artwork, community celebrations and how we talk to students about Mino-bimaadiziwin (living the good life).



Biboon Ataadiwin Giigizhgan (Winter Games Day)



The Zoo



Cat Tail Lane



Twin Day

# LOVE ZAAGI'IDIWIN



“Love is my family helping me when I am scared and giving me hugs. It is taking care of each other and asking a friend if they are ok. Loving the animals, the earth and bugs is important, even worms! Love is giving a friend a picture, asking if they are ok, and asking them to play. Love is being kind”.

Written by AM & PM Kindergarten Students #1

Thank you to the students in Kira's grade 1/2 class for creating the beautiful Seven Sacred Teaching animals represented in our community report

## Migizi-Eagle

We started the year with a “Welcome Back” family picnic. The rain didn't stop us from having a great time together dancing in the gym, eating pizza, and getting our faces painted! In the New Year our community came together again to share a meal, hot chocolate, watch performances by our Bhangra dancers and Hoop Troop and enjoy some outdoor winter activities by the fire.



Community Events





# ...LOVE ZAAGI'IDIWIN

Across the whole school acts of love could be seen from patrols safely crossing student, birthday celebrations, laughter in the hallways and older students mentoring the younger. The students in Ms. Moskal's class worked on self-love with weekly affirmations focusing on being kind to our bodies and minds and focusing on each students' gifts and talents. Ms. Gagnon's class expressed love using gratitude bags. Each day, a student was chosen, and the class wrote that person a message to show why they were thankful, grateful, or proud of them.



Michelle's students in room #3 made flags that represent who they are to kick off **Pride** Month



In December, staff was shown some extra love with snacks from the holiday treat cart!



Terry Fox Walk



Showing Love for Ms. Alex after the Winter Concert



Students have loved the new recess boxes



Room #25 Day at The Zoo

# RESPECT

## MANAAJI'IEWIN



Manitoba Museum

“Respect is being kind and not mean; you treat others the way you want to be treated. Respect is taking care of the land, taking only what you need, recycling, giving back, saying thank you (miigwech) and offering tobacco (asemaa)”.

Written by students in #7

### Mashkode-bizhiki-Buffalo

Respect is a teaching that includes how we value our gifts, the gifts of others and those provide by the land. At Riverbend we look at respect through the lens of how we treat ourselves, each other, the earth, and all living things.



Observing Worms



A visit from Garry the snail



Respecting the Earth and all living things

“Room #1 Kindergarten students have been looking at respect starting from learning to respect some of our smallest creatures’ worms! “The children have been learning to take care of a vermicompost or worm compost! They learned how to set it up with ripped up wet newspaper, and how to feed the worms scraps of fruits or vegetables. This has been a great way for the kids to reframe something that they previously thought of as garbage, and they were amazed to learn how the worms eat this and then their castings or poop help to make the soil so much richer for plant life! The children have been checking on the worms daily, giving them gentle pats and unprompted words of encouragement such as “I love you worms!”

Mrs. Ennis



# ...RESPECT-MANAAJI'WEWIN



Planting and caring for the beans in room #9 with Ms. Chinchilla

“Students in the Ojibwe program started a “bean tipi” project in March. The goal was to start pole beans inside using the grow kits from the Aki Centre. Students were able to observe how these plants could grow in unnatural conditions using UV light. Students from room #10 and #16 also helped to care for the plants. I also taught about the 3 Sister and indigenous produce. Students will be planting sunflowers, sage and tobacco in the school garden beds.”

Ms. Chinchilla

# HUMILITY DABASENIMOWIN



Ma'iingan-Wolf



“Humility means we have to be humble and use our gifts. We can use our power for good, not for meanness. Humility is to not think too highly of yourself and to always help others! We show humility when we play sports, we do not gloat or show off, instead we are humble”

Written by Room 24

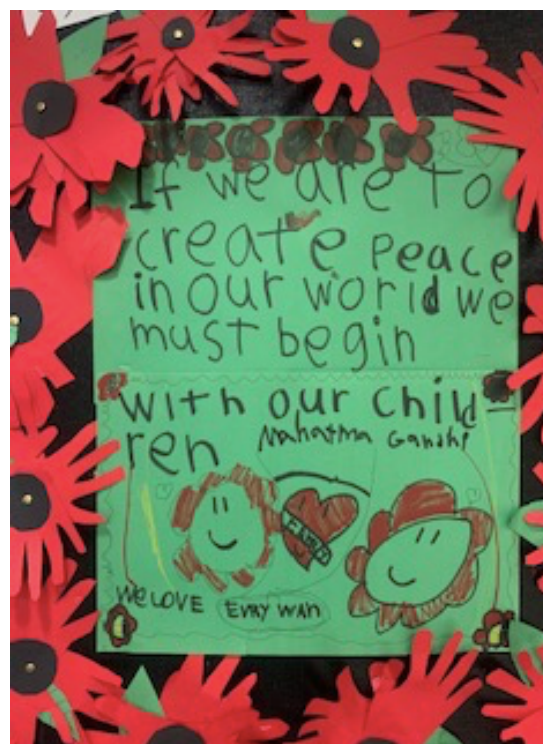
# ...HUMILITY-DABASENIMOWIN



“Grades 4/5 in room 19 spent time learning about Indigenous culture and reconciliation. Students explored Teepee making and Petroglyph art at the Children's Museum (see pictures), explored a program on Residential Schools at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and sang O Canada in Anishinaabemowin, French and English with room 12 at an assembly. “

Mr. Braunstein Room #19

Many classrooms looked at humility through the lens of anti-racism, focusing on how no one person is better than another. For example, Ms. Fredette's (4/5) class researched Jewish and Asian Canadian trailblazers who have impacted Canada.



Aboriginal Veterans Day is a vital occasion for recognizing and honoring the contributions of Indigenous veterans. It promotes awareness, education, and reconciliation, and ensures that the sacrifices and service of these veterans are rightfully acknowledged and celebrated within Canadian society. Room 6 and room 12 collaborated in a joint effort to write thank you letters and poems to the Canadian Armed forces located in Shilo, Manitoba. Humility is evident in their willingness to thank others for their contributions, understanding that their own safety and freedoms are protected by these individuals. Through the process of writing, children learn about the values of service, respect, and selflessness. They come to understand that veterans put the needs of others above their own, often at great personal cost. This understanding fosters a sense of humility in recognizing the greater good beyond one's own immediate experiences.”

Rachel Neil



# HONESTY

## GWAYAKAADIZIWIN



Saabe-Bigfoot

“Honesty is more than never lying; it comes from within. First, we must be honest with ourselves, what we feel and believe. You must have courage to live with honesty. For example, you don't have to laugh at a joke that you didn't find funny, listen to your insides and your own feelings. You do not have to fake your feelings to make others happy. Be true to yourself.”

Students in Room 24



Be yourself, explore your passion, sing, dance and play!

To be honest is more than just telling the truth, it is also about being confident in who you are. This has been shown in how children express themselves at school. This could be reflected in how they dress, the stories they share, the art they create and the clubs they join (many other ways!). A fun way that Ms. Hart's class shows their creative sides is through “Song Request Friday” when children can be seen expressing themselves through song and dance.



Mask making at MTYP



Morning sharing circle and smudge in Ms. Hastings classroom

# ...HONESTY-GWAYAKAADIZIWIN

“This year, Room 25 discovered the power of food. Not only does it help us grow and maintain healthy bodies, but we also discovered how it can bring people together. Through food, we realised how similar (and different) our cultures are and how each culture has made an impact, through food, on our Canadian community. We explored indigenous story telling where we discovered that we each of us has a story to tell, and many of our stories involve food. We spent time sharing and listening to each other’s food stories and made so many connections doing so. Our food stories included baking cookies with Aunties, sharing pizza with our families on Fridays, and roasting marshmallows at the lake with loved ones. Each story involved family, happiness, and food. We ended the year with creating a food story for our classroom family. We made and enjoyed a yummy yogurt parfait along with many wonderful memories.”

Mrs. Smith



Making rangoli for Diwali



Sharing culture



Food Stories



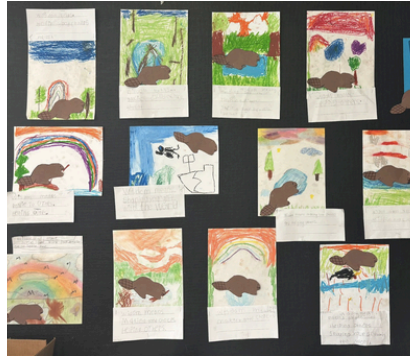
Learning Buddies Room 3 and 7



# WISDOM NIBWAAKAAWIN



Amik-Beaver



**“Wisdom is making good choice, helping others by sharing our unique gift and respecting all living things. Wisdom is understanding what it means to live a balanced and meaningful life.”**

**Written by Room #23**



**When looking at wisdom we reflect on how we can use our own gifts to contribute to our learning community. One way this can be seen at Riverbend is through the variety of clubs and dance opportunities started by students, teachers, student teachers and educational assistances. These clubs included chess club, art club, RRA (Riverbend Rainbow Alliance), photography club, baseball club, soccer club, beading club, Leadership, Patrols, Hop Troop, Pow Wow, Boy’s Drumming, Strong Warrior Girls’ Choir and Bangura Dance.**



**Hannah Yang is a former Riverbend student who came back to share her experiences at school as well as her first published book “The Magical Runner”.**

# ...WISDOM-NIBWAAKAWIN

“Room 10 spent September learning about the election process. We discussed democracy, and how decisions are made in Canada. Students learned about the various levels of government, and how there would be a provincial election happening on October 3rd. Then, students spent time researching about each political party. They looked at all of the candidates running to represent the Riverbend Community of Kildonan River-East. They also looked into the platforms of each party, and the party leaders. After the election was over, we had class discussions about the results. We also had the opportunity to watch the swearing-in ceremony for the new Manitoba premier, and the announcement of the new cabinet ministers. A week later, MLA for Kildonan River-East Rachelle Schott and Board Chair of the Board of Trustees Maria Santos came to visit Riverbend. Students were very excited to have the opportunity to meet the both of them. They asked them questions about their jobs, and even suggestions for what they would like to see happen in the future!”

Ms.Quach



MLA for Kildonan River-East  
Rachelle Schott and Board Chair of  
the Board of Trustees Maria Santos



Room 16's Carnival



Room 17 Building Marble Runs



Room 26's Literacy Centre



Room 25's Math Centre



# ...WISDOM-NIBWAAKAWIN

This year our staff has been reading “The Whole Brain Child” by Siegel and Bryson. This text has helped guide our practice in how to get all parts of the child’s brain working together. Recently our school staff attended a professional development day on Bird’s Hill to learn more about land-based learning. We were fortunate to have members of our own staff be able to share their wisdom. Ms. Karpinsky, Ms. Halldorson and Ms. Gagnon all shared their knowledge and helped learn how to incorporate more outdoor activities to engage our students as well as further emphasizing the value of children understanding what the significance and intentions of land acknowledgements.



Medicine Teaching with Ms.Halldorson



Moss Scavenger Hunt with Ms. Karpinsky



Exploring the Wilderness and Land Acknowledgment with Ms. Gagnon



Oak Hammock Marsh



Aki Centre



Biboon Ataadiiwin Giigizhgan (Winter Games Day)



# COURAGE ZOONGIDE'EWIN

**“Courage means to be brave, stand strong and always do the right thing.”**

**Written by students in room #6**



**Makwa-Bear**



**Learn To Skate**



**Flag Football**



**ONO leadership students teaching Ojibwe numbers**

**When looking at our work through the lens of courage teachers encourage students to feel confidence and strong in mind so that they can achieve their goals and overcome fear. This year we saw many children trying things they hadn't done before. With the addition of baseball and soccer club, children who had not been on a team before came out and gave it a try. Many students joined football and badminton too!**



**Photo Club**

**This year the Oshkiniigiwag-nigaaniwag-ogichidaak (Ojibwe Student Leadership Group) helped run Indigenous sessions at Amber Trails for their Treaty Days. These include hoop dancing, reading to students and presentations about the Bilingual program .**



**Soccer Club**



**Bhangra Dance Group**



# ...COURAGE-ZOONGIDE'EWIN



Many students spoke on their own at our concert for the first time, tried a new instrument, and performed on stage for the first time. Some students began playing the violin for the first time and overcame fears of trying and performing! This year our school Pow Wow club had 175 students join with 104 dancing in the graduation Pow Wow. Thank you to members of the Pow Wow committee as well as our parent/family volunteers for the hours of time they gave to helping sew regalia for the students at Riverbend.



**Winter Concert at SOPAC  
Seven Oaks Performing Arts Centre**

This year our students performed at Arts in the Park. They showed courage when singing and dancing in front of multiple schools.



**Arts In The  
Park**



# TRUTH DEBWEWIN



**Mikinaak-Turtle**

“Truth is the teaching represented by the turtle. It means just because some says something, it doesn’t mean it true. You must be nice to yourself and believe in yourself. We should speak the truth about others and ourselves.”

Written by Students in Room #4

We cannot have reconciliation without first acknowledging the truth. Orange Shirt Day and Red Dress Day are important steps in helping acknowledge the hurts and mistakes of the past while shining a light on where work still needs to be done.



**Red Dress Day walk**



**Orange Shirt Day Assembly**

This year a few students participated in a project called “Arts in Action”. The students collaborated with the artist Jedrick Thorassie to create a mural that will be displayed at Riverbend when it is completed. The mural reflects how language and culture intersect with truth and reconciliation.



**Arts in Action at the Graffiti Gallery**



# ...TRUTH-DEBWEWIN

This year at Riverbend School we had 3 talented student teachers join our school team. In the spirit of reconciliation here are the words of Jenna Myskiw as she reflects on her time at Riverbend School.



The students in Ms. Neil and Ms. Jenna's classroom were featured in a CBC segment showcasing the book "Awasis and the World-Famous Bannock" by Dallas Hunt.

"As a student teacher at Riverbend school for the 2023/24 school year, I had an experience that profoundly shaped my early teaching career. Teaching in the Ojibwe language program at the school allowed me to immerse myself in Indigenous perspectives, where I was able to learn and teach through a holistic lens. It's given me the opportunity to reflect, rethink, and deepen my understanding and relationship as an ally committed to reconciliation by forming unforgettable relationships at the school. For example, I got to be a lead on the planning committee for Biboon Ataadiiwin Giigizhgan (Winter Games Day). This all-day event brought the seven Ojibwe bilingual classrooms together to foster a day filled with community, friendship, art, and land based learning. Students were given the opportunity to learn how to play various traditional First Nations games that have been created, adapted, and used by Indigenous communities across North America. Planning this day allowed me to push myself out of my comfort zone and gain experience learning about the importance of language, and cultural traditions within the Ojibwe community. Getting to work alongside the students, staff and admin in the Ojibwe language program at Riverbend school has left a lasting impact on my professional and personal growth, reinforcing my dedication to the importance of teaching and learning about Indigenous education. This type of work is heart work! Jenna Myskiw Teacher University of Winnipeg B.ED graduate"

These are just a few highlighted stories of what has happen at Riverbend Community School this year, they are all part of building our community and defining "**Ginawind**" This is Us.



Thank you Nancy Deogracias for making Riverbend clothing for staff and students  
[www.thrivethreads.store](http://www.thrivethreads.store)