

# THE NORTHERNER

School Committee Conference  
Report Edition 2024



**FRONTIER**  
SCHOOL DIVISION  
Excellence and Experience in Education



45TH ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

# SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER

APRIL 24 - 26, 2024

CANAD INNS DESTINATION CENTRE POLO PARK

1405 ST. MATTHEWS AVENUE

WINNIPEG, MB

# INTRODUCTION



It is always a highlight of the school year to have school committee members from across the division join us in a celebration of student achievement, and to learn and grow in supporting our communities. The Frontier School Division's Annual School Committee Conference was held April 24-26, 2024, and this year was no exception, with comments from our delegates such as "well organized and entertaining" and "keep doing the good job with organizing the conference. Thank you all."

Our conference theme this year was "School and Community Working Together." We recognize that if our students are to succeed, we need not only their parents, but also their community to stand behind them and support their learning.

In planning for the conference, we looked at the needs in our communities and what we could present to the delegates to help them in their role. We focused on parental involvement for our core presentations and delegates were given many strategies to take back to their communities.

Thank you to all who attended. Keep doing the good work you are doing in making our students feel safe and valued in our schools and communities.

We continue to work through our three focus areas, which are the pillars of our strategic plan:

- **Academics:** Every student will obtain the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to achieve success in their education journey.
- **Indigenous Way of Life:** Indigenous perspectives, language, and way of life will be an active aspect of each curriculum.
- **Wellness:** Every school will provide a caring, healthy, safe, and inclusive learning and working environment for students, staff, and community.





*Juried Art Show room final set-up as we prepare for delegate viewing.*



*Delegates and guests previewing the art work of students.*



*Wanipigow School students Elizabeth and Alicia, this year's hosts for Frontier's Got Talent.*



*Delegates visiting the Program and Partner display booths.*

# OUR FOCUS ON ACADEMICS

We are focusing on equity of technology access, academic milestones, and lifelong literacy for all students. We've brought in exciting new initiatives to encourage our students to learn better and participate fully.

Reading is the foundation of all academic subjects taught in school and the means by which we conduct business, science, politics, build relationships; the list is endless.

Three years ago, we made the firm commitment to support a non-negotiable division focus on K-3 early word-reading skill acquisition for all students. We began by partnering with the Learning Bar in a program called Educational Prosperity.

In our first year, 25% of our students acquired foundational reading skills and this year, even with half of the students new to the program, 45% have mastered foundational reading skills.

The development and full implementation of our grades 1 to 9 Frontier School Division Math Benchmarks and online Frontier School Division Math Tool in 2022 has been a significant factor in improving our teachers' access to the tools and resources they need to deliver quality instruction and monitor students' growth.

We are also celebrating increasing student achievement in math because of our investment in our teachers through support they receive from their area math coaches and the targeted grade 6 and 9 Numeracy Empowered Teacher Network, commonly referred to as the Math NET.

Frontier School Division's Math NET is a multi-year professional learning network that develops high-effect instructional practice in our classrooms.

Our Science Fair has a long history of involvement and success. Through the work of our science department, Frontier School Division has gained designation as its own region which qualifies our students to attend the Canada Wide Science Fair.





# OUR FOCUS ON INDIGENOUS WAY OF LIFE

## Frontier School Division is committed to Truth and Reconciliation.

Frontier School Division has responded by expanding our Indigenous language instruction, providing more land-based education opportunities for students, and increasing the presence of cultural knowledge and understanding in all curricula. There are many Indigenous Way of Life department initiatives supporting students and teachers as we continue to advance Truth and Reconciliation.

Our flagship program is the Kihitayak program, which has been a support for the Provincial Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Schools Guidelines and the Mamahtawisiwin Continuum of Elders Supports in Schools.



*"I want to thank the Elders for being here today and guiding us and being in school with our children and grandchildren."*

- These comments were shared by parents.

# OUR FOCUS ON WELLNESS

Recent research indicates that students across Canada are coming to school with ever-increasing unique, complex, and diverse needs. Frontier School Division is no different. Therefore, it is essential that we have a coordinated, division-wide approach to provide a wide range of supports and resources to meet these ever-increasing student needs. Part of our response as a school division is to hire highly qualified staff that have the training and skills to help students flourish.

To meet these student needs, the Student Services and Wellness department has launched a division-wide plan to implement Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning's protocols for Appropriate Educational Programming in Manitoba Schools and Supporting Inclusion Modification and Individualized Programming in Manitoba Schools. That is a long title, but in one sentence it means we will ensure our students receive the support and resources they require to succeed and flourish at school.



# WINNERS OF THE 2024 FRONTIER JURIED ART SHOW

## Drawing, Grades 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** APRIL MERASTY,  
Grand Rapids School,  
*"Life After Death"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** ELI SEMPLE,  
Berens River School,  
*"My Class Portrait"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** BEN ALBERT,  
Jack River School,  
*"Postal Dude"*

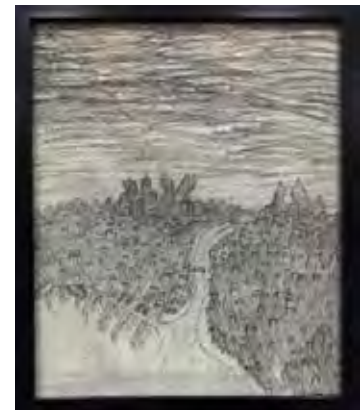
## Drawing, Grades 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** JOAQUIN VARELA,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Self Portrait"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** JAMES CHRISTIE,  
Falcon Beach School,  
*"Fallen God"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** JAMES CHRISTIE,  
Falcon Beach School,  
*"Wreckage of the World"*

## Drawing, Grade 11 - 12



**1<sup>ST</sup>** TRISTAN MOWATT,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Home"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** IVAN TURNER,  
Frontier Collegiate,  
*"Medicine Wheel"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** TRISTAN MOWATT,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Drip"*

## Mixed Media, Grade 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** JANAYA OUSKUN,  
Ministic School,  
*"Church"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** JARED OLSON,  
Peonan Point School,  
*"The Summer Tree"*



Mixed Media, Grades 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** DEVINE BLESSING  
C. CABANG,  
West Lynn Heights School,  
*"Medusa"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** DEVINE BLESSING  
C. CABANG,  
West Lynn Heights School,  
*"Space Whale"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** CHERISH HART,  
West Lynn Heights School,  
*"Batim in Space"*

Mixed Media, Grades 11 - 12



**1<sup>ST</sup>** JESSE APETAGON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Tempest"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** KAYLA HERIY,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Flower Valley"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** AVRYL BEARDY,  
Frontier Collegiate,  
*"See My Heart"*

## Painting, Grades 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** NITANIS HART,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*'Friends'*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** NOELLE DUCHARME,  
Grand Rapids School,  
*"Magical Mist"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** FAITH HUDSON,  
Grand Rapids School,  
*"Grandma's House"*

## Painting, Grades 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** JOAQUIN VARELA,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Winter Path"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** JOAQUIN VARELA,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Owl"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** EDMOUND BEARDY,  
Thicket Portage School,  
*"The Barren Grounds"*

## Painting, Grades 11 & 12



**1<sup>ST</sup>** KIERA FLAMOND,  
Minegoziibe Anishinabe  
School,  
"Memigwa"

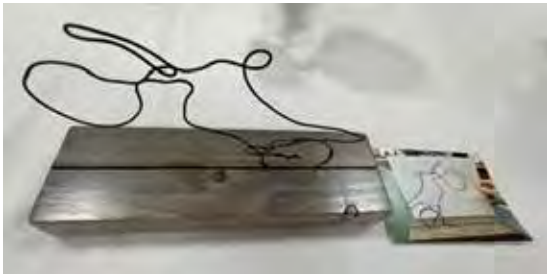


**2<sup>ND</sup>** JAQUELINE KNIGHT,  
Frontier Collegiate,  
"My Thunderbird"



**3<sup>RD</sup>** KARIS BIGHETTY,  
Frontier Collegiate,  
"Tiger"

## Pottery/Sculpture, Grades 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** ZACHARY OLSON,  
Peonan Point School,  
"Wheelie"

*"Very Beautiful showcase,  
very very talented students."*

## Pottery & Sculpture, Grade 11-12 & Adult Ed



**1<sup>ST</sup>** LILLY ANDERSON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
"Mask"



**2<sup>ND</sup>** THEO CARDELL,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
"Mask 2"



**3<sup>RD</sup>** THEO CARDELL,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
"Mask 1"



## Crafts, Grade 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** EMMERSYN DA MATA,  
Falcon Beach School,  
*"Passion Blooms"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** JACOB MUSWAGON,  
Jack River School,  
*"North Star"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** CARSON SWAIN,  
Berens River School,  
*"Hat"*

## Crafts, Grade 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** GABRILLE COLOMB-DUMAS,  
West Lynn Heights School,  
*"Untitled"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** SAGE DUMAS,  
West Lynn Heights School,  
*"Courage"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** MADDEN DA MATA,  
Falcon Beach School,  
*"Tree of Frontier"*

## Crafts, Grade 11 - 12



**1<sup>ST</sup>** LILLY ANDERSON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Sun"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** THEO CARDELL,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Cherry"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** LILLY ANDERSON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Pink Rectangles"*

## Digital Photography, Grade 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** LEONNA SUMNER,  
Dauphin River School,  
*"Exotic Flower on a Screen"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** LES SIMPSON,  
Minegoziibe Anishinabe  
School,  
*"Black Hole"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** KENDYNN PARENTEAU,  
Minegoziibe Anishinabe  
School,  
*"Reflection of a Tree"*

## Digital Photography, Grade 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** ZACHARY OLSON,  
Peonan Point School,  
*"Woody"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** TESSA WALKER,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Water Fountain"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** LOWEN NEPINAK,  
Skownan School,  
*"Apples"*

## Digital Photography, Grade 11 - 12 & Adult Ed



**1<sup>ST</sup>** AVA ALBERT,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Water"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** AVA ALBERT,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Island"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** ASH MCKAY,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Wildflowers"*



## Enhanced Photography, Grade 7 - 8



**1<sup>ST</sup>** GRAYDEN SIE-MERRITT,  
Falcon Beach School,  
*"The Storm"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** SHAYLYNN OUSKUN,  
Ministic School,  
*"Technology Art"*

## Enhanced Digital Photography, Grade 9 - 10



**1<sup>ST</sup>** TESSA WALKER,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Sun Rise"*

## Enhanced Digital Photography, Grade 11 - 12 & Adult Ed



**1<sup>ST</sup>** JOSHUA ANDERSON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"New York 3"*



**2<sup>ND</sup>** AVA ALBERT,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre  
*"Ice"*



**3<sup>RD</sup>** GREYSYN WILSON,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*"Falls"*



People's Choice



*“Beautiful to have visuals of what our children do in schools.”*

JOAQUIN VARELA,  
Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw  
Education Resource Centre,  
*“Self Portrait”*



# FRONTIER'S GOT TALENT

Our 12<sup>th</sup> annual student showcase, celebrating the diverse talent of our students.

Frontier's Got Talent is open to students of all ages and showcases the diverse talents of our communities. Students gain confidence and self-esteem when given the opportunity to perform for the delegates and dignitaries.

In the fall, a call went out to the schools requesting submissions for all forms of entertainment. The selection committee was then tasked with selecting from the incredible talent from across the division. The committee was pleased to present such diverse talent for an excellent show! The show was livestreamed so that many could enjoy the students' performances.

This year we were fortunate to have students from Frontier Collegiate welcome delegates and dignitaries to the evening's festivities. The Young Cree Drum Group and the Deadly Aunties Drum Group provided a wonderful welcome with their drumming, singing, and dancing!

Music teacher, Roy Duffenais from Wanipigow School, provided us once again with his expertise to ensure the show went on without a hitch.

The Frontier Fiddlers, along with their instructors, provided entertainment at the closing of the conference, sending us home with their toe-tapping performances.

*"Always amazed at the incredibly talented Frontier Students. Our educators are to be commended for bringing out talent in our kids."*





# DIVISIONAL RECOGNITION

We are proud to present the 2024 award to Dr. Courtney Leary.

Each year at our conference, we are proud to recognize the people who have inspired us by the outstanding contributions they make in their communities.

The Frontier Achievement Award was established in January 1998 to recognize and honour the achievements of Frontier's graduates, as well as those who have attended a Frontier school.



Since the age of 12, Courtney Leary aspired to be a doctor. She had to leave her home in Norway House to make her dream a reality. She is now the Chief of Staff of Norway House Hospital and a Primary Care Physician at Ongomiizwin Health Services. She is the first First Nation physician from Norway House.

Dr. Leary presented the keynote lecture for Manitoba CMHF Laureates in 2019 and the keynote for the "Lighting the Fire" conference 2023.

She was the recipient of the 2023 Medal of Excellence from Doctors Manitoba and the 2023 Indigenous Health Care Award from Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance.

Dr. Leary is a prominent figure in the community, involved in numerous initiatives. She developed a program to introduce Traditional Indigenous Healing Practices into the curriculum for medical learners who visit Norway House. She is the Women's Health Day coordinator, arranging for food and prizes to encourage women in the community to attend breast and cervical cancer screening clinics.

She is also actively involved in our schools, doing numerous presentations on mental health, wellness, birth control, and addictions. In 2022, she started monthly ADHD clinics and wellness clinics in both schools.

She is truly an inspiration!





# RECOGNITION AND SERVICE AWARDS

## School Committee Outstanding Contribution Award

The Outstanding Contribution Award is presented to school committee members who show truly outstanding participation and personal investment. Criteria includes volunteerism, executive duties and responsibilities, meeting attendance, long service, and responsiveness to community and school concerns.

This year we are proud to announce Tanya Friesen from San Antonio School Committee as the recipient.

Tanya Friesen has been a member of the San Antonio School Committee since 2006. She is currently the chairperson of the committee, Area Advisory representative, and has been a Trustee for nine years.

Tanya is a dedicated school committee member who has been an active volunteer in the school, as well as in the community.

*“Tanya provides a cohesive environment for us to work together...Her continuous devotion and commitment to our school, supporting the staff in it, and ensuring that the children in this community are receiving a good education has been inspiring.”*



## Long Service Awards

We are pleased to present long service awards to the following individuals for their dedication to their schools and communities:

### 10 Years

Melissa Daigneault from Gillam School Advisory Committee  
June Chu from Mel Johnson School Committee  
Mary Spence from Barrows Junction School Committee  
Rachel Delaronde from Barrows Junction School Committee  
Jason Gabriel from Skownan School Committee  
Corrine Whiteway from Berens River School Committee  
Stacey Courtney from Duke of Marlborough School Committee  
Virginia Whiteway from Matheson Island School Committee  
Don Gowans from Joseph H Kerr School Committee  
Rena Apetagon from Norway House School Authority  
Chris Clarke from Norway House School Authority

### 20 Years

Robyn Hall from Wanipigow School Committee  
David Williamson from Norway House School Authority

### 25 Years

Marilyn Sanderson from Waterhen School Committee  
Dennis Buck from Frontier Mosakahiken School Committee

### 30 Years

Hilbert Mosiondz from Mel Johnson School Committee  
Lynn Dubois from Cranberry Portage Elementary School Committee

### 35 Years

Esabelle Genaille from Cormorant Lake School Committee

### 40 Years

Isaac Laponsee from Brochet School Committee  
Graeme Montgomery from Thunderbird School Committee

### 45 Years

Marion Pearson from Cranberry Portage Elementary School



# PRESENTATIONS

## Parent Engagement

Dr. Debbie Pushor was the first keynote speaker of the conference. Dr. Pushor is currently Professor Emerita in the Department of Curriculum Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. She worked in public schools for 20 years as a teacher, consultant, principal, and central services supervisor.

Dr. Pushor led us through three sessions in total on parent engagement. She talked about the importance of creating welcoming spaces at the school for parents to feel comfortable and valued. She shared ideas in creating a culture of collaboration with parents so that the children benefit from a multi-level approach to education. The table conversations around the room were focused on new strategies to try within our schools.

*“Learned about other ways of including parents in the schools.”*



## The Journey of Self-Discovery

In his presentation, Blain Constant shared his personal journey of addictions and how he has worked on the road to recovery.

Blain is an Indigenous motivational speaker and business owner. He spoke of his struggle with addictions and life on the streets of Winnipeg. He kept the audience engaged with his honest account of how his life had gone from bad to worse, until the time he realized he needed to stop the cycle of drugs and drinking.

Blain is also a talented fiddle player and entertained the audience with a lively tune to end his presentation. He is an inspiration to all!

*“Highly recommend he attend all schools or communities.”*  
*“Inspirational. Very honest & heartwarming. One of the best motivational speakers that I have the privilege to listen to.”*



# BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

## **Join the Herd! Welcoming Indigenous Students on Campus.**

Desiree Morrisseau-Keesick, Indigenous Student Recruitment and Community Relations, from the University of Manitoba, shared information on how the university supports incoming students.

*“U of M presentation was awesome!  
Good insight of what is available for  
our Indigenous youth coming from the  
north.”*



## **Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Children and Youth, An On-Reserve Mental Health Resource for Schools.**

Lori Middendorp, Child and Adolescent Treatment Services Shared Health, Mental Health and Addictions, provided a summary of community-based mental health services available for schools and communities.

*“The MATC (Child/Adolescent Treatment Services) presenter was engaging and on point. She kept her audience engaged and I enjoyed her slideshow.”*





## Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Students and Their Loved Ones

Dene Guillas, Rainbow Resource Centre, shared information on how to gain a better understanding of the five aspects that can make up an individual's identity: gender, sex, expression, attraction, and culture.



*“Rainbow Resource Centre – EXCELLENT speaker! Great information to have and share. Wish it could have been longer.”*

## Teaching Community Food Systems

Morgan McCurdy and Myles King, Food Matters Manitoba, shared information on the programs offered under the Food Matters Manitoba portfolio, including Traditional Harvesting, Harvester Programs, Medicine & Ceremony Supports, Gardening, and Winter Roads.



*“The food matters is important and is very good for people to learn in their communities.”*

## Mental Health and Addiction, School-based Services

Meghan Smith, Kristy Rubenchuk, and Candy Burke, Shared Health Manitoba, presented on school-based services supporting mental health and addiction, and how to access supports.



*“I really liked learning about the mental health supports & how they accommodate for Northern areas (not just Wpg.)”*



*Delegates enjoying the Frontier Fiddlers performance including dance lessons.*



*The Deadly Aunties Drum Group performance.*



*Conference Opening and Celebration welcome included various dance performances.*





*Dr. Debbie Pushor's keynote presentation.*



*Blain Constant shares his journey.*



*Chairperson Linda Ballantyne and trustees (seated) as the Frontier School Division Board of Trustees provide their report to delegates.*





[FSDnet.ca](http://FSDnet.ca)