

January 12, 2021
Hawthorne Public School
Principal's Report to School Council

Truth About Stories Project

Experiential Learning is something we have tried engaging with our students more on over the past number of years. Some of the past things we've been involved in to this end have included:

- Garden at Home (spring 2020)
- Garden Beds in front of school (spring 2021)
- "Unaffected" project (spring 2021)
- Craig Cardiff (musician) workshops (2020 & 2021)
- Re-design of Hawthorne yard (ongoing, started in 2021)
- Creation of Maker Space (spring 2020)
- Pandemic Project (ongoing, started in fall 2020)
- Other class-specific endeavours (e.g. Gr. 5 classroom economy)

The Truth About Stories project is but yet another opportunity for students to be engaged in experiential learning that allows them to explore future career paths and work in ways that both capitalize on their creativity and ideas and link to curricular areas in elementary school.

Our mandala sessions wrap up this week, and they have been a great success. The artist, Claudia Salguero, will be meeting with a group of students in grades 4-8 next Wednesday to discuss their ideas about what they would like to see included in our murals. Murals will include 64 randomly selected mandalas that were done by staff and students in grades K-8. The remaining mandalas: we would like to extend the idea of mandalas as story telling to include these in other spaces in the school. Still working on what this may look like. If you've got ideas we welcome them!

Jamaal the Poet continues with workshops until the March break. Students will have an opportunity to either use the poem they write with Jamaal and/or to write another piece that speaks to their life, lived experience, and family, for their page in our "Humans of Hawthorne" coffee table book. We are working as a planning team on 2 different templates, within the parameters the printer will give us, to provide to students and/or families to do with what they would like in terms of storytelling. Each student will receive a copy of the book. We need your thinking about how to best get this out to parents.....

Craig Conoley has been working with our grade 8s on filmmaking with iphones. He is incredible, and the kids are responding very positively to this initiative. He has them filming each other performing the poems they wrote with Jamaal; last Wednesday I got to watch a few "BRolls" be filmed, and it was pretty incredible. Students are able to name different parts of the camera set up and different takes

they are engaged in. One student said they were considering a future in filmmaking – this is pretty cool!

Student Achievement

SATE (Student Achievement Through Equity) project has begun cycle 1. SATE coaches met with the team of Caroline Owczarek (Gr. 1), Jenny-Lyn Usher (Gr. 5), Cory Huybregts (Gr. 8) and Jon and myself to give an overview of the project. They were impressed with the fact that our school has already done the DIBELS assessment for reading levels school wide; this allows the coaches to start a little further along the line in terms of observations in the classroom and strategies suggested moving forward for students.

Through the SATE project, all students grades 5-8 will be assigned a Chromebook for their individual use throughout the entirety of the project. We are still working with other schools in the SATE hubs to determine best practices for how these will travel between home and school. The Chromebooks are seen as “levelling the playing field” in terms of access to online learning opportunities when students are at home as well as an opportunity for families that do not have that access to gain it in order to support their all around lived experiences at home.

Through SATE, our school, along with other SATE schools, are receiving extra supports around translation to help support with things like high school information nights. We are also going to be involved with a mentor from the Boys and Girls Club who will provide extra in-school support to students who may need it as well as provide connections to community supports for families that request it.

EQAO for grades 3 and 6 will be running this year. The dates we have set for this testing are May 25 – June 3rd.

Student Well-being

We are starting to see limited lifting of restrictions due to COVID. Included in these are:

- As of today, masks are not required outside; however, they are still encouraged where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Contact tracing is over - in every aspect. We will be removing the QR codes around the school, but we will store them should the need arise to reinstall. Staff daily screening attestation continues at this point as does the daily check in with our students that they (and/or their parents for them) have done the screening prior to coming to school.
- Some intramurals can resume for grades 7 and 8 only.
- Limited clubs can resume for grades 7 and 8 only.
- Cubbies and lockers may be opened again; we are working with staff to determine how and if we are going to do this – need to have a solid plan to maintain social distancing

Equity & Anti-racism

- **Get Real Presentations** on Black Excellence and History as well as LGBTQ2S+ have occurred in all classrooms grades 3-8. This year we did both a “primer” as well as a more in-depth workshop around anti-Black racism and homophobia.
- **Indigenous Education:** At the District level, the VP of Indigenous Ed has been increased to a Principal of Indigenous Ed. This is something we have wanted to see for a number of years, and given the scope and responsibilities included in this position, it is great to see that the job classification more closely reflects the work being done. Jody Kokoho (Alexander) will be remaining in the position, which is great news for all of us as she has built strong relationships between community and our District as well as within our District. Hoodies created by a former Hawthorne student have been purchased by many of us; this is a practice in reconciliation in that it supports an Indigenous young person in their art and work.

Facilities

- New window project is complete; heater casings to come, but the PODs are being reopened next Monday.
- New furniture in family welcoming area (office) and student success areas
- Stairwells and gyms have been painted. Next, and last, thing to be painted will be insides of classrooms. This will be a longer project as it requires students are not in the space for a period of time.
- Murals (2) will be designed with student input and will be on display in the library (Truth about Stories project).

Upcoming dates

- Feb. 22-25: Truth About Stories mandala, poetry, and filmmaking continue
- Feb. 28: School Photos
- March 1: Grade 8 Grad Photos
- Feb. 28-March 4: Truth About Stories poetry, and filmmaking continue
- March 7- 11: Truth About Stories poetry, and filmmaking continue
- March 14 - 18: March Break