

Western School Division

**Minnewasta School
Continuous Improvement Plan
2021-2022**



School Profile

Our school is a passionate school, driven by student engagement and a strong feeling of community. Our school has worked hard to improve/change the way we teach (teacher capacity) to allow a greater opportunity of success for our children. Project Based Learning has become an integral part of our teaching, which allows all students a chance to learn in a multitude of ways. Along with project-based learning, Coding has become an important part of learning experiences for our students, generally in the third and fourth grade settings. Additional pieces of technology including iPads, laptops, and computers have been provided to support our initiatives. Minnewasta also has a school wide intervention plan that is vital to supporting the success of all our students.

Minnewasta School is a Kindergarten to Grade 4 English track school that currently is estimated to have 350 students in 2021-22. Due to the COVID-19 situation, our numbers are lower than anticipated. For next year, we currently have 47 students in kindergarten, 74 students in Grade One, 61 students in Grade Two, 58 students in Grade Three, and 65 students in Grade Four.

Western School Division has an equity policy that allows students at Minnewasta School to enjoy many things that are provided for them. Children that go to Minnewasta enjoy many great things like field trips, the use of technology, project-based learning activities, and fantastic music and physical education opportunities. Our teaching staff also run a variety of extra-curricular activities which includes a running club, school carolling, and organized games in the gymnasium during lunch hour. An additional item to support the culture of the school, Minnewasta has their own school song!

We are a diverse population that can be seen and heard in the classrooms and halls of our building. Children here are given the chance to explore themselves as an individual, as well as the commonalities and differences that make them unique from others. Overall, this school takes pride in student achievement, student safety, and social belonging.

Mission Statement

Learning and Growing Together

The mission of Minnewasta School is to provide a friendly, safe, and respectful place where students, staff, parents/guardians, and community work together to encourage lifelong learning. Minnewasta's staff will use the best available resources to challenge all students in a caring and competent way, respecting each child as an individual.

School Philosophy

Minnewasta School is a centre of learning in which the staff is committed to the development of the total individual. It is our goal to provide a framework in which children, together with parents/guardians, educators, and the community at large, strive for and achieve their highest potential.

Each child's academic and artistic development, as well as physical, social, and emotional well-being are our concern. We strive to provide a quality education for all students through accommodating individual student needs and differences in a safe and enjoyable environment. At Minnewasta we aim to foster a lifelong love of learning through a variety of educational programs and experiences.

A feeling of pride, achievement, and positive self-esteem is essential for success. We promote cooperation and a development of universal morals including respect and appreciation of others. We endeavour to prepare students to become responsible, considerate, caring, and contributing citizens of the community.

Minnewasta School maintains a commitment and dedication to these goals. We believe that a child's success depends on the involvement and support of all members of the child's team – parents/guardians, teacher, school personnel, and community.

Career Development

Our school understands and supports the development of our students as citizens of the world. Through our [Ready for Life](#) document, students are prepared in a variety of ways for success after Grade 12. The initiatives are split between the four phases of Dream, Explore, Experience, and Plan. Minnewasta school primarily works in dreaming and exploring, but in some cases stems to work with experiences and planning.



Our career development opportunities at Minnewasta will be through curriculum, classroom-based opportunities, field trips, and other experiences. In the Dream and Explore phases that will be primarily introduced to our students at Minnewasta, they will acquire skills through play, and be given opportunities to explore a wide variety of careers and professions relevant to their world and interests.

School Admin Team

Our administration/office team consists of a Principal, a Vice-Principal, a full-time administrative assistant, and a part time administrative assistant.

Principal:	Geoff Sutton
Vice-Principal:	Jenn Kroetsch
Administrative Assistant:	Jenelle Strome
Administrative Assistant:	Kathy Neufeld

Staff Complement

Full-time Equivalents	No.
<i>Administration</i>	1.25
<i>Kindergarten Teachers</i>	1.5
<i>Grade 1 Teachers</i>	4
<i>Grade 2 Teachers</i>	3
<i>Grade 3 Teachers</i>	3.5
<i>Grade 4 Teachers</i>	3.5
<i>Counsellors</i>	0.4
<i>Resource Teachers</i>	1.75
<i>Music Teachers</i>	1
<i>Physical Education Teachers</i>	1
<i>Reading Recovery Teachers</i>	1
<i>EAL</i>	0.5
<i>Educational Assistants</i>	11

Programs Offered

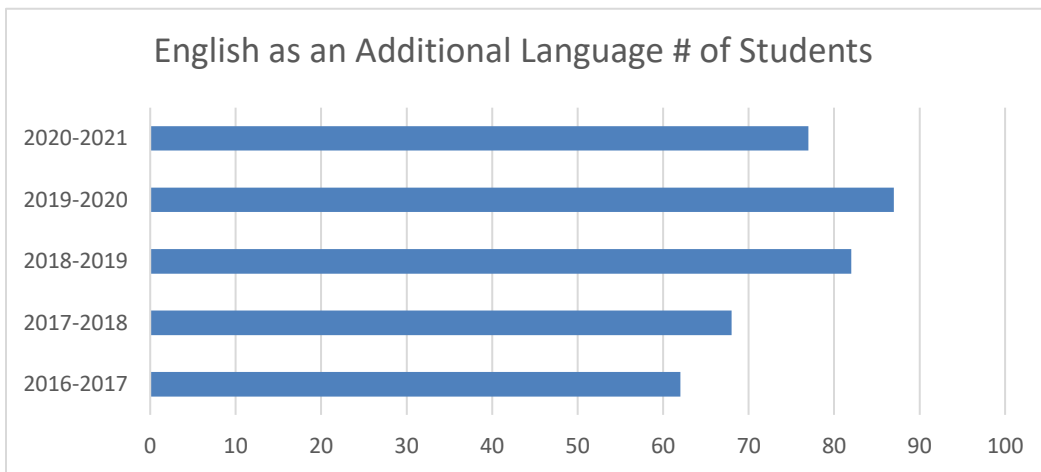
Minnewasta School strives to offer the programming necessary to give all students a chance to succeed not only from Kindergarten to Grade 4 but also enable them with the skills to be set for life after graduation.

Classroom teachers provide instruction in the core areas of Literacy and Numeracy, as well as the thematic units of Science and Social Studies. In our school you will see many different outcomes being worked on simultaneously, for example Numeracy outcomes could be learned through a thematic unit in Science. Classroom teachers also work on Early Start French programming from Kindergarten to Grade 3, and Basic French is taught in all of Grade 4. Throughout these subjects’ children will be working through inquiry based, project based, and teacher guided lessons to enhance student engagement and achievement.

Other program offerings at Minnewasta school include Music, Physical Education, Active Health, Reading Recovery, and English as an Additional Language. These programs are taught by specialist teachers with training in these subject areas.

School Data

Disaggregation	# of Students	% of Student Population
English as an Additional Language	77	26%
Self-Declared Aboriginal	3	1.0%



As shown in the graph above, English as an Additional Language Learners are on the rise at Minnewasta School. There are a lot of families moving into our area from other countries that do not have English as their primary language spoken at home. This year we had 77 students that are considered EAL. This works out to roughly the same percentage of EAL students as last year, which is close to 26% of our total population. Due to COVID we had many students choose to homeschool that would have been considered EAL, and our overall EAL population would have been over 90 total students.

Minnewasta ESD Plan

Our school continues to work towards sustainable development in a wide variety of ways. The key focus of our plan is to become “greener” and to use the sustainable development plans that we have to enrich our student learning. Three years ago, we as a school began a composting program that both our students and staff participate in. Compost has been taken to bins, and then removed to the compost site. This year one of our goals will be to enhance our outdoor spaces by creating planter boxes with vegetables (Grade 3), creating an outdoor learning space that ties to Indigenous Education, and beautifying the front of our building with flowers and other plants.

Along with this program, we also do a variety of other things that fit into our overall ESD plan. Some of the things we have done as a school in the past few years are:

- ✓ Participated in the Global Cardboard Challenge.
- ✓ Planted more trees on the playground.
- ✓ Created window boxes for plants.
- ✓ Developed a Recycling Program (Kindergartens take recycling from classrooms and Grade 4 students collect the recycling from the large bins in the hallway).
- ✓ Beautified the front of our school.
- ✓ Field trips to the water treatment plant.
- ✓ Field trips to the Windmill farm to learn about energy efficiency.
- ✓ Added a water bottle filling station to our school to save the amount of plastic water bottles purchased.

In thinking about what we have accomplished as a school, and where we would like to go, as a school we have come up with a few goals that will serve as our focus for the 2021-2022 school year.

- ✓ Create an outdoor natural learning space and playground that will also enhance indigenous education and perspective.
- ✓ Create a garden space in which students could grow their own edibles (Grade 3 initiative). The refuse from this would be part of our composting program and further the understanding of science curricula.
- ✓ Add rain barrels to collect our own water to use on our plants/vegetables.

Minnewasta Strengths, Equity Issues, & Challenges

Strengths:

- ✓ Culture – You will see as you walk through the halls and classrooms of our school what an amazing culture we have. A sense of community and belongingness is felt throughout our building. This enhances social belonging and the overall well-being of our students. When students feel good at school, they do well in school!
- ✓ Teaching Staff – Our teaching staff work hard each day to make a difference in the lives of our students. They are incorporating new methods of teaching such as inquiry and project-based learning, while focusing on multiple intelligences, to meet the needs of all our students.
- ✓ Students – The students we have at this school are fantastic. Our catchment area pulls in many rural-based students, plus a geographical area within the city of Morden. Our students follow our Minnewasta Code of Conduct and work towards being respectful to all.
- ✓ Diversity – We are a school that has a wide range of diverse students from a large variety of backgrounds and cultures. We learn so much from each other and take pride in providing an invitational building to all individuals. In turn, this gives us greater creativity to promote positive learning environments for the students that come to school here.

Equity Issues:

- ✓ Economic Factors and Poverty – Morden offers cheaper cost of living than most of the other cities in Manitoba. However, because of this, some families have located here for low-skilled factory jobs that do not pay well. This adds stress on school supports and initiatives. Poverty can add stress to families and more specifically, students. This can have a large impact on our student data even though it is not easily observed.
- ✓ Diversity – Morden is growing at a rapid pace with most of this coming from immigration. Sometimes, our community is not as accepting of diversity issues that schools are teaching and should represent. This can cause tension at home, in the school, and in the community.

Challenges:

- Lack of Instructional Space – Due to increased enrollment at our school we are running out of adequate classroom space which enhances student learning. Our school division is in the top three of the lowest instructional spaces per student per square foot. This causes less student to teacher contact time as there are more students in each classroom, and the classroom sizes are on the rise. It was announced that Morden would be getting a new school which is fantastic. Until then, we will be extremely limited on space in our building.

<p>Continuous Improvement</p> <p>Literacy</p>	<p>Literacy Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching literacy in all subject areas. • Improve sense-making and reading comprehension for all students. • Use of the new ELA curriculum in all classrooms. • Using Data/Evidence to guide instructional practices. • Literacy learning through Project Based Learning, Inquiry, Explorations and Play.
	<p>Board Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Student Learning • Provide an Invitational School Culture • Cultivate a Culture of Leadership • Encourage Adventurous Achievers • Community Engagement
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased achievement (percentage) in reading comprehension across all grade levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus will be done to increase the comprehension/understanding of text through multiple avenues (guided reading, individual reading, Fountas and Pinnell). 2. Staff, along with student involvement, will study the comprehension wheel (pictured below) and use each piece during the school year to drive student achievement in each area of literacy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students will work through different activities involving pieces of the comprehension wheel selected by the teacher. Each piece will be a focus for classroom activities at least once during the school year. 	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy learning in all subject areas. • Focus on Higher Order Thinking Skills, metacognition, critical and creative thinking, questioning, purposeful talk. • PBL/RLEs, Inquiry, play/explorations. • Opportunities to demonstrate transfer of learning. • Use of running records and anecdotal notes. • Guided reading, partner reading • Access to a rich variety texts and multimedia. • Provide ‘real-life’ relevant learning experiences. • Response to longitudinal data from a variety of sources. • Comprehension wheel – focus on one piece of the reading comprehension wheel per month (predicting, summarizing, synthesizing, etc.). Area should be visible in classrooms, with clear student objectives each month. • Increase teacher capacity through learning sprints. • Coach to aid in working with grade groups to create progressions (where do we need to get to and how)?
<p>Assessments (Local/Provincial), Data & Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial Grade 3 Reading Assessment • Fountas and Pinnell Data 	

- Report Card Data
- Classroom-based evidence
 - Portfolios
 - Work Samples
 - Observations/Conversations
 - PLC Data

One of our school goals this year is to put focus back on the comprehension wheel as a primary tool to facilitate increased student achievement. The comprehension wheel (pictured to the right) became an integral part of our instruction two years ago where we saw success in most areas of literacy. This year we moved away from using this tool and did not see the increases that we did the year previous. It will be important for us as a school to get back to using the components of the wheel during our lessons and have the students become familiar with the wheel itself and the language associated with it. The levels of thinking, and areas of the comprehension wheel, work hand in hand with the new Fountas and Pinnell assessment tools we are using at all grade levels.



Reading Comprehension Wheel

Minnewasta School has undergone large changes in how we assess literacy in the past few years. Several years ago, the decision was made to move away from PM Benchmark Reading Assessment and to begin using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System to gauge student achievement in literacy, but more specifically reading comprehension. While the evidence (below) supports a downward trend in our student achievement data, the switch from PM to Fountas & Pinnell must be considered as a primary factor. This is to say that both teachers adapting to the new program, as well as students having to adapt, have some sway in the current data that we have. Below is a chart that outlines an October 2019 to October 2020 comparison of reading comprehension achievement data in our school.

Early Years Reading Comprehension Data					
SCHOOL TOTALS 19-20			SCHOOL TOTALS 20-21		
Does not meet	55	27.78%	Does not meet	97	44.50%
Approaching	19	9.60%	Approaching	25	11.50%
Meeting/Exceeding	124	62.63%	Meeting/Exceeding	96	44.00%
	198			218	

As indicated above a comparison from last year to this year shows that our students saw a dramatic shift in “meeting/exceeding” where we have seen close to a 20% dip in achievement levels. Additionally, our students that are not meeting expectations have increased by close to 20%. Our students who are approaching expectations have remained consistent.

To help gain a better understanding of our “target” grade groups and where extra support may be needed to facilitate increased reading comprehension interventions data was broken down into grade groups. It is important to note this data was collected from October. We are anticipating seeing improvements in this data by the end of June but do not have the data currently.

Grade 1			Grade 2		
Does not meet	39	71%	Does not meet	22	44%
Approaching	7	13%	Approaching	5	10%
Meeting/Exceeding	9	16%	Meeting/Exceeding	23	46%
Grade 3			Grade 4		
Does not meet	19	32%	Does not meet	17	31%
Approaching	6	10%	Approaching	7	13%
Meeting/Exceeding	34	58%	Meeting/Exceeding	30	56%

If we look at the data subjectively, and without bias, it is alarming to see that in October of 2020, 71% of our first-grade students are not meeting expectations in Literacy. This is not to say that the grade one teachers are not providing focused levels of intervention for students. Increased support is provided to our students that require the most attention in this area through reading recovery. Questions that come out of this data have formed our goals and strategies for increased literacy achievement in reading comprehension. These include:

- What can be done differently to support the needs of our struggling students?
- What will the data look like in June, as we know Grade 1 generally shows the highest achievement growth in reading comprehension throughout the school year?
- Are there any supports like reading recovery in Grade 1, that can be done to better support students during their year in Kindergarten?

Successes

- ✓ Early Closings, Staff Meetings and PD time spent in vertical groups discussing literacy.
- ✓ Vertical grade group discussions of running records and reading behaviours and F&P data.
- ✓ Continued emphasis on reading for enjoyment and reading with a purpose.
- ✓ Student reading-buddies program.
- ✓ Coding/Robotics – provided an opportunity for literacy across a different platform.
- ✓ Variety of student-published writing (class libraries, Young Author/Illustrator Night, etc.)
- ✓ Literacy Coach.
- ✓ Literacy Learning through all subject areas.
- ✓ Literacy Learning through Project Based Learning and Inquiry.
- ✓ Teaching Sprints on Reading Comprehension in Grade 4 (Simon Breakspear Agile Schools).

Opportunities for Improvement

- ✓ Reading comprehension is based on so many different understandings of text, not only books, but websites, magazines, etc. How are we reaching the needs of all our students through different texts?
- ✓ Consistency in expectations for reading/writing across grade levels - need to continue working in vertical groups to develop stronger understanding of the current ELA curriculum, to ensure that the 4 practices and rich learning experiences are being provided for our students.
- ✓ Further work with the F&P kits and using the questions from there during regular class instruction. Students’ fluency seems to have remained consistent throughout previous years but the comprehension questions, in our new F&P kits, are much more in depth and challenging for students to react to.

<p>Continuous Improvement</p> <p>Numeracy</p>	<p>Numeracy Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching numeracy in all subject areas. • Improved understanding of Key Competencies (Gr. 3 Assessment) at all grade levels. • Use of appropriate, targeted interventions for struggling learners. • Using Data/Evidence to guide instructional practices. • Numeracy learning through Project Based Learning, Inquiry, Explorations and Play.
	<p>Board Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Student Learning • Provide an Invitational School Culture • Cultivate a Culture of Leadership • Encourage Adventurous Achievers • Community Engagement
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased achievement (percentage) of students meeting/exceeding grade level in all strategies relating to subtraction on our divisional numeracy assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong focus on problem solving questions to aid in the achievement of subtraction school-wide. 	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy learning through Project Based Learning, Inquiry, Explorations and Play. • Regular teaching and practice of MM and PS strategies (e.g., not just problem solving after learning a skill/unit). • Opportunities to engage in authentic problem solving (routine, non-routine). • Math Centers and Guided Math • Teaching fact families together (i.e., not + then -). • Practice variety of “start unknown/change unknown/end unknown” problem-solving questions. • Use of open-ended question and parallel tasks to differentiate. • Response to data from various sources • Focus on “Part-Part-Whole” sand level outcome.
<p>Assessments (Local/Provincial), Data & Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial Grade 3 Numeracy Assessment • Divisional Mental Math and Problem-Solving Data • Report Card Data • Classroom-Based Evidence 	

- Work Samples
- PLC Data (i.e., Teaching Sprints)
- Triangulation (conversations, observations, products)

In our previous Continuous Improvement Plan we focused on direct strategy usage with students, for both addition and subtraction. Our goal was increased achievement (percentage) in mental math areas. This was a broad and large goal. For this school year, we are choosing a goal that focuses more on the subtraction/problem solving side of numeracy opposed to both subtraction and addition. This should allow us to provide more stability and increased achievement in this area.

Mental Math - Subtraction Percentage 1 or 2 correct	Subtraction 1 Less	Subtraction 2 Less	Subtraction Doubles	Subtraction Make 10
Grade 2	87%	75%	56%	52%
Grade 3	98%	97%	83%	72%
Grade 4	94%	96%	40%	90%

The above data represents the percentage of students we have achieving with the use of specific strategies in numeracy. As indicated, the data is collected from Grade 2, 3, and 4. The benchmark we have for each area, and hope, is that our grade groups reach a minimum of 85% in these areas. This chart indicates that each grade struggles with at least one specific strategy in numeracy, falling short of the 85% goal that we have for them. In some cases, these percentages even drop below the 60% mark. While we typically teach both addition and subtraction simultaneously, as a school we decided we should focus/target these specific strategies for subtraction due to the lower achievement levels of our students. In addition to this, our staff indicated through “soft data” and conversations that there is a general feeling of students struggling during problem solving type questions. This will be a focus for us as well and will hopefully go hand in hand with supporting growth in subtraction.

Early Numeracy - Meeting & Exceeding	1:1 Correspondence	Stable Counting	Conservation	Abstraction	Order Irrelevance	Part/Part Whole
Kindergarten	71%	60%	65%	62%	68%	42%
Grade 1	86%	84%	70%	61%	60%	54%

Similar to our subtraction data, we saw lower achievement data on our Early Numeracy Assessment this year. We will develop plans in our earliest grades to better support the needs of these students and perhaps provide intervention for those that require it. Note: This data also reflects October achievement, subject to change in the upcoming May/June data.

Successes

- ✓ Early Closings, Staff Meetings and PD time spent in vertical groups discussing Numeracy.
- ✓ Vertical grade group discussions of MM and PS data.
- ✓ School-wide discussion of Key Competencies in the Provincial Grade 3 Assessment.
- ✓ Numeracy Coach/Co-teaching.
- ✓ Coding/Robotics mindset in classrooms – STEAM education.
- ✓ Increased use of manipulatives (Cuisenaire Rods, Digi-blocks, scales, etc.) in numeracy centres.
- ✓ Use of apps “Sum dog” and “Prodigy” to support math learning.
- ✓ Numeracy learning in all subject areas and through Project Based Learning.

Opportunities for Improvement

- ✓ Vertical grade discussions of Key Competencies – Focus on improved results on Grade 3 Provincial Assessment of Numeracy School Wide – this begins with Kindergarten and moves up to Grade 3.
- ✓ Review assessment practices to ensure achievement reflects curricular expectations accurately.
- ✓ Increased improvement reflected in MM and PS on report card.
- ✓ Create more opportunity for numerical learning through coding, robotics, and other modes of technology/science.

<p>Continuous Improvement</p> <h1 style="margin: 0;">French</h1>	<p>French Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy based approach • Simple sentence structures through unit-based learning • Oral competencies
	<p>Board Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Student Learning • Provide an Invitational School Culture • Cultivate a Culture of Leadership • Encourage Adventurous Achievers • Community Engagement
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 90% engagement/attendance during artist presentations. 2. Progress in French oral competencies connected to the thematic units being taught each month. 	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More literacy-based approaches to learning • Performers presenting to the school • Peer and Teacher collaboration on themes • Adding more French books to our school library
<p>Assessments (Local/Provincial), Data & Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performers presenting to the school (90%+ students viewing these presentations) • Support from divisional French Language Coach on themes and units • Log of books being signed out of our school library • Time to collaborate with other staff and students on French themes and oral competencies 	