



# NEWS FOR MEANINGFUL PARENT INVOLVMENT

THE OFFICIAL MLES PAC NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS

February 2024

Vol.2

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## Hot Lunches: Feb 8



PAC is planning for our first hot pizza lunch on February 8 for all students grades 1-4. Dominoes has offered to cover any additional cost for families who are unable to participate for financial reasons, and offer gluten free options as well as delivery free of charge so we hope that this will allow for more inclusivity in this event!

### How can you help?

We know that families have lots on the go and we want to respect your valuable time; it's our hope that many hands will make for light work.

For our hot lunch events, we will aim to have a minimum of 9-10 volunteers to serve. We will also require volunteers to assist with planning, tallying, shopping, and getting the word out. The more the merrier!

For more information about how to become a volunteer please contact the Western School Division and they would be happy to assist you with this process, which includes a criminal record check, child abuse registry with vulnerable persons, and safe in schools course certificate (about one hour). We look forward to serving hot meals at MLES with you!

# February is “I Love to Read” Month



PAC has teamed up with the teacher’s “I Love to Read” Committee to help with a few upcoming events. These hardworking teachers want to share their excitement about reading with kids during “I Love to Read” month.

## Cuddle Up and Read: Feb 5

This year’s Cuddle Up and Read event snacks will be brought to you by PAC with the generous donation from Co-op Morden/Winkler. Popcorn will be popped by our PAC team at Westside Community Church, as they have kindly lent us their popcorn machine.



**BROUGHT TO YOU BY:**



WITH THE  
GENEROUS  
DONATION  
FROM



Join us at 6:30PM on February 5, we will have volunteers read books like, "I in Kind" by Julia Cook and "Daddy Goes to Police Training" by Grace Keeling. There will be a bulletin board mural of how to sign language "Be Kind" and we will also share some videos CBC kids.

## National Pink Shirt Day & Book Swap Day: Feb 28

The purpose of National Pink Shirt Day is to raise awareness about bullying in schools and online, as well as raise funds to support programs that foster children’s healthy self-esteem.

The movement began in Berwick, Nova Scotia in 2007, a small town of 2500 people. A was bullied for wearing a pink shirt, two grade 12 students bought 50 pink shirts and encouraged their friend to wear pink. From this one kind gesture, the national Pink Shirt Day was born.

You can show your support by encouraging your children to wear pink on National Pink Shirt Day but also explaining where this story came from.

Book Swap day will also take place on February 28. Students will have the chance to trade books during school hours. Talk to your teachers about how you can donate books before the event!

# Morden School Aged Programming Committee

In early January 2024, Morden School Aged Programming (MSAP) Committee conducted a survey to get a better understanding of the local needs for summer and before/after school childcare. What did they find? That there are many dual working parents who are struggling to meet ends between work and picking up children from school. The impact is not only on dual working parents but family members juggling childcare over the summer as well.

The survey was posted on Facebook page’s “Morden in the Know” and received over 160 respondents. The situation has caught a great deal of public attention concerning the need for school aged programming after school hours. The community has responded by reaching out to put the story in local newspapers and the radio in the Pembina Valley region. Stay tuned for links to the story. The results of the survey will be analyzed in early February 2024.

MSAP Committee will conduct a meeting and work through action steps, hopefully for the summer of 2024. Right now, the committee is volunteer-run and will likely include fee-based programs, however, with

donations, support, and sponsorship, there could be a possibility of affordable before/after school care in the years to come. The vision for this program is to have programming available on-site at École Discovery Trails, Maple Leaf Elementary School, and Minnewasta Elementary.

Would you like to see options for programming for your community? Reach out to your MLES PAC team or contact [Mordenschoolagedcare@gmail.com](mailto:Mordenschoolagedcare@gmail.com).



MLES PAC background story featured on [Pembina Valley Online](#), “Grassroots efforts form to solve childcare shortage in Morden”.



Source: <https://www.pembinavalleyonline.com/articles/grassroots-efforts-form-to-solve-childcare-shortage-in-morden>

# Discovery Toys - Fundraiser, continuation into January

In January, PAC gifted toys from our Discovery Toy Fundraiser in December. Mme.Kroeker's class tested their fine motor chopstick skills with their new Ramen Noodles toy. These kindergarteners also learned how to form shapes into letters with another educational toy. We still have the opportunity to receive more FREE toys through our fundraiser into February.

<https://www.discoverytoys.com/Pws/turl?id=18677285298146376305700646652>



# Children's Business Market: Coming Spring 2024



PAC is joining forces with teachers to implement a Children's Business Market (CBM), an event designed to give children the experience of selling and buying goods/services.

We are excited to spark a culture of creativity, innovation, teamwork, and independence through a Children's Business Market. This event was made possible by the Western School Division's generous donation of \$2,500 for the Innovation Project Grant 2023-2024.



The funds will go towards start-up fees for students, an award system, and secret shoppers but we are reaching out to parents and businesses for sponsorship, volunteering, and support to make this happen for children aged 5-17.

Participation will be voluntary and workshops will be held at MLES for their students for off-hands coaching. The project is still in the early stages, more details will be shared in the next few weeks. If you would like to take part in organizing the CBM, contact [gracieankeeling@gmail.com](mailto:gracieankeeling@gmail.com).

# Meet Our PAC Team



**Natalie Friesen**  
Co-Chair  
Hot Lunch Committee

Natalie has a Bachelor Degree in Social Work with experience involving individuals living with complex needs, disability, crisis, mental health, brain injury, and family safety. She is currently home with her four children (two who attend MLES). Natalie was a part of the 500 Stephen Street task force team who worked together to get Morden's community centre up and running, as well as currently serving on several committees at Westside Community Church. She is passionate about people and connection.



**Jaylyn Dyck**  
Co-Treasurer  
Hot Lunch Committee

Jaylyn has owned a small business called Bennett & Rose for over 3 years and is a stay-at-home mom. She previously worked at a Credit Union for over five years and which has helped her gain a further understanding of the finance world. You can find her enjoying a good book, sewing or curling. She has three children, aged 6, 4, and 2. She is also a board member at the Morden Family Resource Centre. Instagram: [bennett.and.rose](#)



**Grace Keeling**  
Co-Chair  
Children's Business Market Committee

Grace is a stay-at-home mom of three children, aged 5, 2, and 10 months. Her career experience has been in human resources and social services work in gerontology. She has a special interest in HR Analytics, psychology, digital art, and crocheting.. She is new to Morden and has recently joined as a board member with Pembina Valley Child Care Centre (PVCCC) and Morden After School Programming Committee.



**Pam Nelson**  
Member  
Hot Lunch Committee

A Licensed Nail Technician for 15 years and a Small Business Owner for 10 years. Pam has been on Vocational Bible School (VBS) Committees for many years helping plan and volunteering. She also works in Marketing and helps plan events at Westside Community Church (WCC). Pam has been volunteering at MLES for six years inside the classroom. She has three children - two of them are at MLES and one has moved on to middle school.



**Courtenay Winning**  
Marketing Coordinator

Courtenay has three kids, three dogs, one rabbit, two guinea pigs, a bunch of chickens and one husband. She has a background in employment and career counselling and has had the privilege to sit on a variety of parent councils as well as various community boards, through the years. She currently has a child in high school, one at the middle school and one here at Maple Leaf; all three children are in french immersion. In her spare time she enjoys gardening, reading and photography.



**Parent Advisory Council**  
They are a group of volunteer parents who are committed to advocacy for children, providing connection, and improving the well-being of those in the community.



# Meet Our PAC Team



**Carla Wiebe**  
Vice-Principal/Student Services Administrator

Carla began her teaching career in 2006 and moved into the role of resource teacher in 2016. Carla became a half-time vice principal at Maple Leaf School in 2022 and supports Western School Division’s student services teams as Student Services Administrator half-time. Through collaboration with the student services team, students, their families, and relevant outside agencies, she strives to support the planning and coordination of effective, appropriate and inclusive learning opportunities for all students in Western School Division. She enjoys spending time with her family, golfing, and being outdoors.



**Cindy Dyck**  
Principal

Cindy has been a dedicated teacher and principal for over 30 years. She has served as a principal at a K - 8 Charter School in the USA, principal at Maple Leaf School previously, and a teaching principal at Roland Elementary. Cindy has her master’s in Educational Leadership, Bachelor of Education, and Level 1 and 2 in Administration. She is proud mother of two grown children and three grandchildren residing in Morden. During her free time, she enjoys reading books her daughter has written and spending time with her family.



**Andrei Marli**  
Kindergarten/Vice-Principal/ Behaviour Support

Andrei has been working as a kindergarten teacher for over a decade, and now he’s donning the hat of Vice Principal, balancing French immersion mornings with afternoons of school leadership at Maple Leaf School. Andrei also sits as co-social justice chair for our local teacher executive, and as a Catalyst teacher, assisting everyone with treaty education. Fun fact, Andrei tied the knot this past summer, proving he’s not just helping little ones learn new things at school but also mastering the art of learning new things at home!



## Help Wanted:

Some of you are moving to École Discovery Trails in September. You can still contribute to PAC at Maple Leaf. We are slowly building a new foundation for our council. We plan on having two leading coordinators per subcommittee; one coordinator to represent the future École Discovery Trails PAC and the other coordinator to represent Maple Leaf PAC. This prepares us for the split off in September. We can stay rooted with our connections and resources moving forward.

# Future PAC Meetings

Any parent or guardian is welcome to attend the PAC meetings to keep informed or to share their opinions. **You do not need** to become a volunteer or participate in any responsibilities. You may also join virtually! Keep on the look out for our email reminders.

- Monday, February 12th 7:30 pm
- Monday, March 11th 7:30 pm
- Monday, April 8th 7:30 pm
- Monday, May 13th 7:30 pm
- Monday, June 3rd 7:30 pm

Need childminding while you attend a PAC Meeting? We want to make these meetings as accessible as we can. We are working on a plan to have childminding so that you can take part in PAC. Contact us for details.



Can't make it? That's ok. We are recording our meetings and we will be uploading them on the website, on the agendas, and on the newsletter. Here's a recording of our meeting on January 15 at 7:30pm.

 **YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcYP1bAU5tg>



January 15 meeting minutes (PDF):  
<https://www.westernsd.mb.ca/school/mapleleaf/Newslettersandmore/HomeandSchool/Pages/default.aspx#/=>



Join us on Whatsapp!  
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/L3f7DXV42AwA3UQWDthhUP>



# HELP WANTED

## CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

**APPROX. 2 HRS/MONTH**  
with greater time commitment  
leading up to the special events

**APPROX. 4-6 HRS/MONTH**

**ONLY A FEW TIMES PER YEAR**

### Hot Lunch

#### Committee Member

Organizing lunches several times per year, coordinating between parents and local restaurants or grocery stores for orders.

### Special Events

#### Committee Member

Plan, budget, and execute outdoor activities, volunteers, order event food and drinks, coordinate rent of equipment or space, advertise, work with local businesses or entertainers, and find sponsors or donors.

### Fundraising Committee Member

Raise funds to insure the financial viability and stability PAC, coordinate between committee chairs and administration.

### Children's Business Market

#### Committee Member

Expected Launch: TBD. Plan, organize, implement a market with potentially 40 vendors outdoors or indoors; coordinate with local businesses and other stakeholders for partnerships, sponsorships, and donations; collaborate with teachers and students during lunch workshops.

### Co-Treasurer

Oversees all financial transactions and fundraising efforts going in or out of an organizing committee. Their primary duties include budget planning, financial reporting, record-keeping, and managing incoming and outgoing funds.



### Administration Coordinator

Creation of meeting agenda, taking meeting minutes, organizing posters or communication to all stakeholders, responsible for managing email inbox and delegating tasks to appropriate committee members.

### Health & Safety Committee

#### Member

Promote a greater safety culture by working to help MLES and students create and maintain a safe and healthy environment through the creation of policy and procedures. Estimated volunteer commitment time: a few times per year dependent on special circumstances

### Event Volunteers

The occasional helper who can commit to a few events per year these tasks range from student supervision, serving food/drinks, greeting and directing participants, set up/take down of events, issuing tickets or receipts, handing out supplies or equipment. Estimated volunteer commitment time: a few times a year, minimum 1 hour per chosen event.

## What's in it for me?

- ✔ Add it to your resume.
- ✔ Professional development.
- ✔ Help create the environment you want your child to grow up in.
- ✔ Make friends. Have fun! Get to know who's in your community.
- ✔ Giving back to kids can be very rewarding.

