



École Morden Middle School

## **SCHOOL PLAN**

**2021-22**

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### **OUR MISSION**

"École Morden Middle School is committed to providing children with experiences to help them develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially and morally. These experiences will take place in a caring, nurturing environment created and supported by a partnership of parents, students, educators, and the community. We are working to develop attitudes and abilities that will enable children to continue their education and learn skills for independent living. Through the shared responsibility of all the partners, the children are expected to acquire a sense of respect for self and others, a responsibility to the community and a lifelong desire to learn."

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Est. 1996

## School Profile

ÉMMS is a dual track Middle School (Grades 5-8) with an enrollment of approximately 610 students and 43 teachers. There are typically 5-6 English language classrooms at each grade level and 1-2 French Immersion classrooms. For the 2021-22 school year we will be operating three split classrooms (two at the 5/6 level and one at the 7/8 level). Overall, there will be 29 operational Homerooms in the school, accompanied by specialist teachers (Physical Education, Music, Basic French, Home Economics, Industrial Arts, Band, Art, Drama) and support teachers (Resource, EAL, Guidance) to round out the teaching staff.

The facility includes a Gymnasium, Music Room, Cafeteria, and five Portable Classrooms which each house a Homeroom class. There is a designated Art/Drama room and one computer lab while the Multi-Purpose Room is utilized for the Sensory Gym and Robotics, as well as an overflow cafeteria.

ÉMMS typically offers Grade 7/8 Options and Exploratory classes (Coding, Robotics, Creative Technology, and others depending on the year). This programming is being adjusted to account for the reality that kids did not get to participate in 2020-21 to ensure everyone has a chance to experience each offering. ÉMMS has been home to an International Education program that hosts 3-10 students from around the world each year.

The school offers a full range of Middle Years extra-curricular programming in Athletics and the Arts. There are also a wide variety of Clubs in the building, ensuring that students can get involved and make connections at the school.

## Student Composition

ÉMMS has approximately 90 EAL students enrolled. This number continues to climb with rapid immigration growth in the city of Morden. In response, The Western School Division and ÉMMS are continuously evaluating EAL programming to ensure success for all our newcomers. EAL students show achievement rates in Literacy and Numeracy below the overall school average.

Approximately 8% of the student population identifies as Indigenous with a recent, seemingly random, increase in numbers. This is reflective of the general community population. Students in this demographic show achievement rates in Literacy and Numeracy below the school averages. They have also self-reported higher degrees of anxiety and depression and lower self-esteem in previous years.

## School Strengths

The three greatest assets ÉMMS has are a vibrant, committed, and talented professional staff, a tremendously diverse student body, and a supportive community of families.

The teaching staff at ÉMMS are reflective about their work, invested in best practices, and get involved in student life by volunteering to coach and lead programs and clubs throughout the

year. The Resource Department and Guidance Department show leadership and are well respected in the building for their work to help students succeed. During the pandemic year, staff were remarkably adaptable and managed to endure a tremendously stressful year while providing students with meaningful learning opportunities along with the chance to socialize with their peers in a safe but “normal” way.

The diversity of the student body promotes a broad worldview and offers all students a simple way to explore and understand various cultures and perspectives within the context of their learning. Our diversity represents a great opportunity for learning at all grade levels and in all activities.

The relationship between the school and its families is built on open communication and a deep respect for the importance of education and social development for children. The tone of communication is historically respectful and leads to productive discussion and an understanding of various perspectives. Even during this difficult and divided time in our communities, conversations have been respectful and measured in tone.

Along with these established strengths, a growing strength at ÉMMS has been our ability to engage the community through social media platforms. Through Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok, and Twitter we have been able to connect with our community, increase communication, and promote the many great things our students and staff are doing. As a result, our profile in the community more accurately reflects our commitment to learning, our connection to students, and our sense of fun than it has in past years.

### **School Challenges**

The number one challenge ÉMMS faces again this year is the fallout from the pandemic. Our students have had an educational experience that has no precedent and raises many questions about the overall impact on student learning and well-being. It is imperative that we re-engage our kids in experiential, collaborative activities that will develop skill sets critical to functioning in the modern world. The pressure to focus solely on reading and math “recovery” activities is likely to be intense and it will require intentional effort to avoid such singular focus. This school plan, and our Recovery Learning Plan are reflective of that objective.

Space at ÉMMS remains limited with extra stress on ancillary spaces that allow for important programming flexibility. The Resource programs, Music/Band programs, and Phys. Ed. programs are especially short on space. With many bodies in a relatively small area, students can become more anxious and dysregulated if they are uncomfortable around people. Finding room around the school to alleviate this anxiety can be a challenge. There are now five Portable classrooms on the school site, which help with space but create other challenges for teachers and students.

The looming 4<sup>th</sup> wave of the Pandemic also hangs over ÉMMS as it does for every school in the nation. Generating momentum on major school improvement initiatives is difficult as time and energy are focused on ensuring safety and implementing provincial initiatives.

## Recent Initiatives

Over the previous years, the school has centered its planning on Literacy, Numeracy, and French Immersion programming. In each of these areas, great strides have been made but revisiting some or all the following initiatives will be necessary:

- Adoption and implementation of the 5 Cs framework for school planning.
- Implementation of Fountas and Pinnell Running Records at all grade levels. This allowed for important data collection but was done with the intention of influencing and informing instruction.
- Participation in the Manitoba Rural Learning Consortium Numeracy Project at all grade levels. This created a focus on pacing instruction and on using results from student assessments to inform instruction.
- Building connections between classrooms and the Literacy and Numeracy Coaches as well as the French Language Coordinator. This process ensured reflective practice in all classrooms and informed instruction.
- Implementation of Western School Division “Ready for Life” Career Development document. This includes offering “Career Development” options courses as well as a variety of exploration and experiential activities for students at all grade levels.
- Staff exploration of “Visible Learning” as a foundational model of understanding instructional design and practice.
- Creation and implementation of BLAZERS acronym for school spirit to highlight our values and honour our belief in holistic growth and development.

During the 2020-21 school year, emphasis was placed on the four core academic subjects as well as Phys. Ed. and Music. As classes spread out to meet physical distancing requirements, the Gym and Music Rooms were occupied by homerooms, forcing this programming outdoors and/or rotating through the building. School administration believes that the continuation and expansion of this programming was vital to positive student experience. Students were able to increase their physical activity and continue exploring their creativity when restrictions made it difficult to do so outside of school or in a regular classroom. The decision to persist with and expand these programs is viewed as a major success within the school community.

## School Plan Framework

The ÉMMS plan is using the “5 C’s and S.O.S. of Positive Youth Development” model as a framework for school planning. This model is based on resiliency research done over the past 25 or 30 years and has the broad goal of helping youth make the transition to healthy adulthood. The 5 C’s are as follows:

**Competence:** Positive view of one’s abilities and actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational.

**Confidence:** The internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; positive identity; and belief in the future.

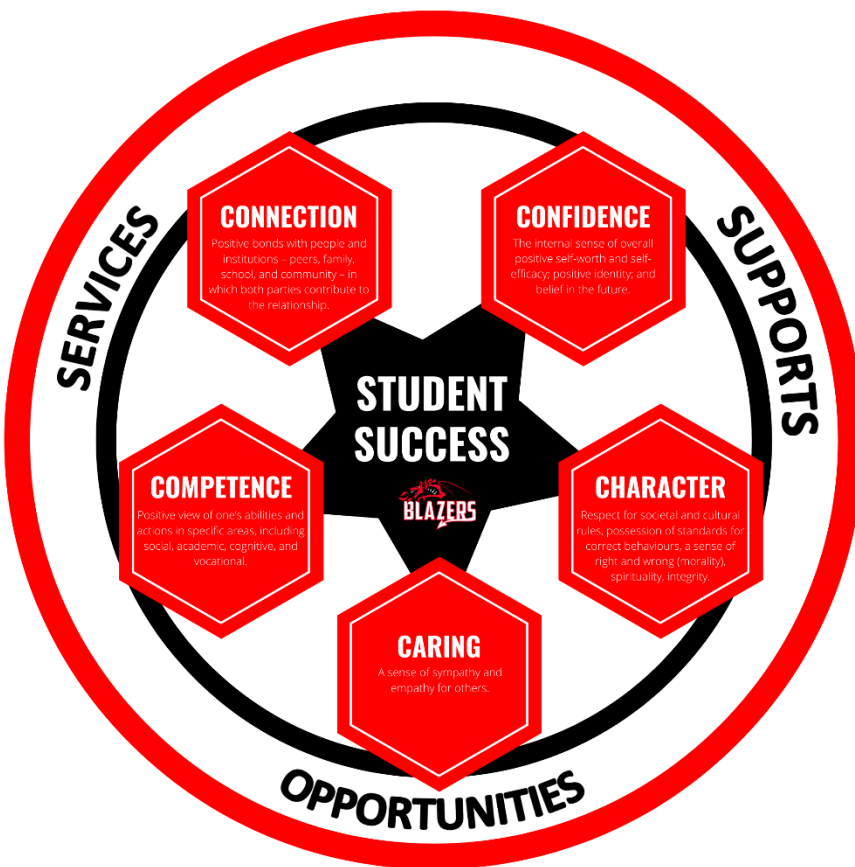
**Connection:** Positive bonds with people and institutions – peers, family, school, and community – in which both parties contribute to the relationship.

**Character:** Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviours, a sense of right and wrong (morality), spirituality, integrity.

**Caring / Compassion:** A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

(Lerner, Fisher, and Weinberg, 2000)

It is worth noting that in 2007, **Contribution** was included in the model as the 6<sup>th</sup> C with the premise that if the other 5 are in place, a person will become a contributing member of the community, participating actively, and showing leadership in a variety of settings. Within the ÉMMS plan, “contribution” is considered an outcome rather than part of the goal-setting framework.



The “S.O.S. of Positive Youth Development” refers to Services, Opportunities, and Supports that create the rich environment that youth need to be successful.

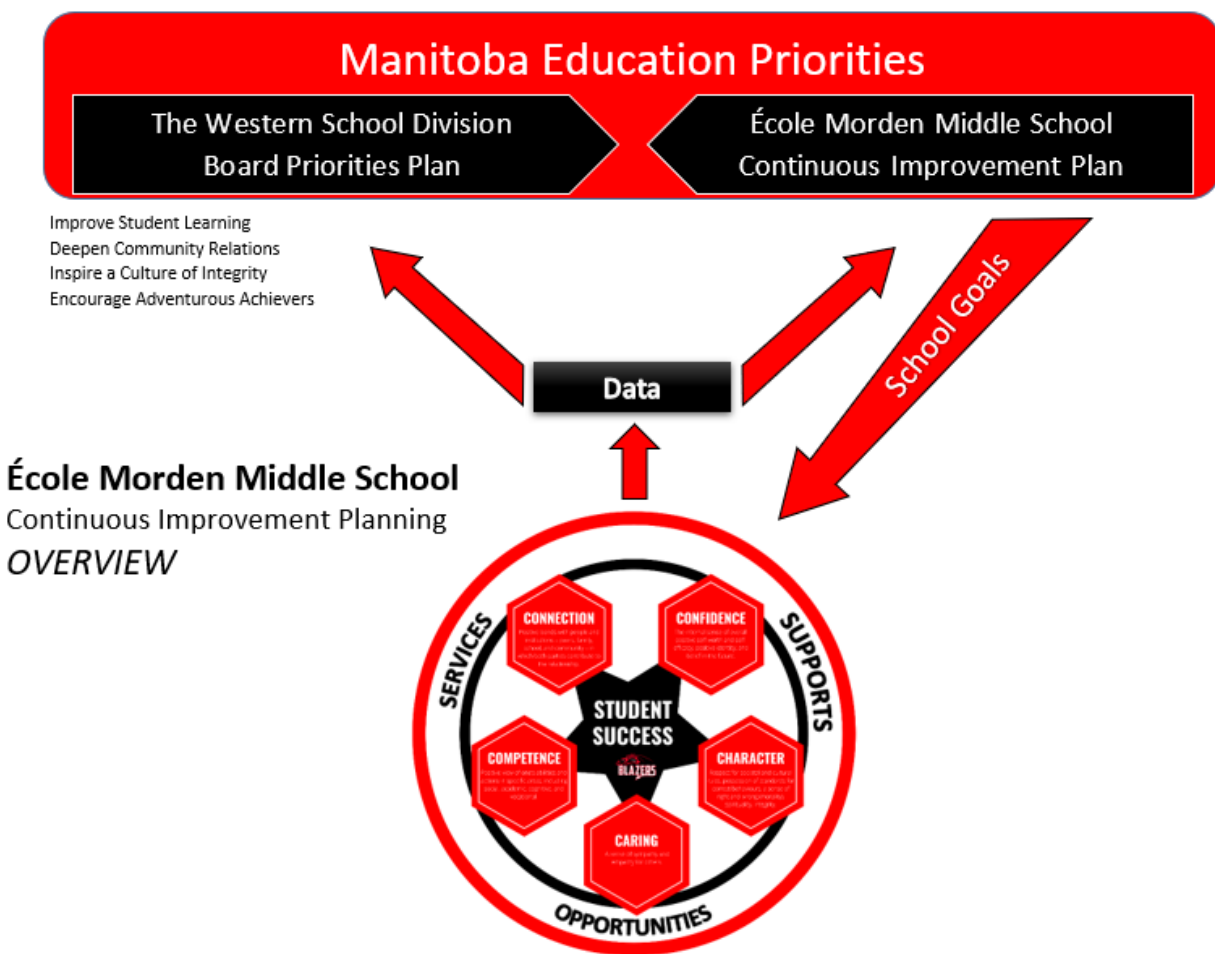
**Services** refers to things provided **TO or FOR** youth.

**Opportunities** are things done **BY** youth.

**Supports** are things conducted **WITH** youth.

## School Improvement Plan

Manitoba Education Priorities are part of all planning in the province. These priorities guide The WSD priorities, which serve to inform school improvement plans. At the same time, school planning also informs The WSD Trustees as they create the divisional priorities plan. This thinking allows for responsive planning and informed decision making at all levels. School goal setting at ÉMMS focuses on ensuring the Services, Opportunities, and Supports exist to develop the 5 C's of Positive Youth Development in all of our students. Goals will be set in each of the 5 C's and with an emphasis on provincial and divisional priority areas (currently Literacy and Numeracy, which fall under "Competence").



### École Morden Middle School Continuous Improvement Planning OVERVIEW

#### ÉMMS S.O.S. Overview

The **Services, Opportunities, and Supports** that are in place at École Morden Middle School. ÉMMS has prided itself for many years on providing these things to students and it is currently considered a strength of the school. There is a common belief amongst staff that all children can be successful, that all children have strengths to be nurtured, and that youth require

intervention when things are not going well. We aim to solidify our existing S.O.S. as well as identify areas of need to address throughout the year. In the table below, a short summary of existing S.O.S. is provided. By consistently reviewing and considering our S.O.S., we can help reduce risk exposure and increase protective factors for students as they learn to negotiate and navigate the world around them.

<b>Services</b>	<b>Ensure students are provided with critical interventions needed to enhance their learning and essential well-being.</b>
<p>School services are things that are done “to” or “for” kids. They include robust Resource and Guidance referrals and services, regular screening, and assessment of students at various levels, and making the necessary adaptations to each student’s environment and learning activities to ensure success. The scope of services at ÉMMS is broad but collectively emphasizes the importance of the whole child in relation to their growth and development.</p>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Ensure students are provided with opportunities to influence the world around them, nurture their interests and talents, practice and enhance their skills and competencies, and make connections.</b>
<p>Opportunities are things that are done “by” kids. They include both curricular and extra-curricular activities that ensure students can explore their interests and the world around them. Field trips, sports teams, leadership groups, activity clubs, school musicals, choirs and optional course selections all represent opportunities for students to grow and learn. Developing student voice and self-efficacy are highly valued outcomes which are achieved through diverse and robust opportunities. The pandemic significantly restricted the opportunities available to our students in 2020-21 and ensuring these are restored is a priority.</p>	
<b>Supports</b>	<b>Ensure students are provided with safety, structure, motivation, nurturing, and guidance to allow them to explore, test, learn, grow, and contribute.</b>
<p>Supports are things that are done “with” kids. They include counselling, transition activities, self-regulation programs, restorative disciplinary practices, community connections, EAL programming, Individual Education Plans, and many others. ÉMMS offers a wide range of supports for students and our staff are always in search of innovative ways to help students succeed.</p>	

## GOAL SETTING IN EACH OF THE “5 C’s”

**COMPETENCE:** Develop a positive view of one’s abilities and actions through academic growth and achievement.

Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve Student Achievement in Literacy.</li> <li>2. Improve Student Achievement in Numeracy.</li> <li>3. Improve Student Collaboration Skills.</li> <li>4. Improve French Immersion Student Competency and Confidence in Speaking French.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Quoted concepts are from Visible Learning by John Hattie</i></p>
Key Data Sources	Provincial Assessment Data Weschler Screening Assessments Fountas and Pinnell Running Records MRLC Assessment Results Grade Level Assessment Results Support Team Information on individual Indigenous students
Key Data Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet 10-year WSD avg. in all Provincial Assessment outcomes</li> <li>• 90% of students will show a year’s growth on F and P assessments</li> <li>• The achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students will narrow</li> </ul>
Initiatives / Strategies to Drive Improvement	Implementation of Collaborative Practices to assess needs and target instruction accordingly. Continued Exploration of “Visible Learning” in both Literacy and Numeracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface / Deep / Transfer – Best Practices for identified intention</li> </ul> Targeted Intervention in French Immersion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting speaking errors monthly (the same error in each grade)</li> <li>• Tracking the ones corrected so they do not slide to previous levels</li> <li>• Consistent response and approach in all grade levels</li> </ul> Support Team will review each Indigenous student situation to inform individual and group programming opportunities.

**CONFIDENCE:** Develop one’s internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; positive identity; and belief in the future.

Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve student’s overall sense of power and agency.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve student “Self Efficacy”</li> <li>• Reduce student anxiety and raise student self-esteem</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Improve indigenous students’ sense of identity and self-worth.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Quoted concepts are from Visible Learning by John Hattie</i></p>
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Key Data Sources	Our School Survey Results Participation Numbers in Extra-Curricular Activities
Key Data Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students will express an understanding that they have the power to influence their own success on classroom assessments.</li> <li>• Students will report reduced levels of Moderate to High levels of Anxiety and Depression on the “Our School Student Survey.”</li> <li>• Students will report higher levels of Self Esteem on the “Our School Student Survey.”</li> </ul>
Initiatives / Strategies to Drive Improvement	BLAZERS Acronym Spirit Awards Wellness Way Development Self-Regulation Training for Students as Needed Public Celebrations of Student Achievement

**CONNECTION:** Develop and foster positive bonds between peers, family, school and community.

Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve sense of belonging amongst students.</li> <li>2. Improve parents’ sense of connectedness to the school.</li> <li>3. Improve students’ sense of connectedness to the community.</li> </ol>
Key Data Sources	Our School Survey Results Teacher Provided Data Anecdotal Data from PAC and other Parent discussions
Key Data Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School will score above a 7.0 rating on “Parents are Informed” on the Our School Parent Survey.</li> <li>• School will score above a 7.5 rating on “Parents feel Welcome” on the Our School Parent Survey.</li> <li>• Students will report an increase in their “Sense of Belonging” on the Our School Student Survey.</li> <li>• 100% of students will participate in at least one learning opportunity that connects to community people and/or resources.</li> </ul>
Initiatives / Strategies to Drive Improvement	<p>Re-establish full extra-curricular programming and actively recruit students to get involved in at least one activity during the year.</p> <p>Every classroom will participate in a learning activity that involves community groups or members as part of the process.</p> <p>Every classroom will ensure multiple opportunities for parents to connect with the school.</p> <p>#WeAreAllBlazers Promotion Launch.</p> <p>Increase in Grade Group Assemblies celebrating kids.</p> <p>All Classrooms will invite parents to participate in a meaningful way.</p> <p>Parent Volunteer Registration Night.</p> <p>All Classrooms commit to at least one community connected project.</p>

**CHARACTER:** Develop respect for societal and cultural rules, standards of correct behaviours, a sense of right and wrong, and personal integrity.

Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase students’ sense of personal integrity.</li> <li>2. Improve students’ understanding of democratic citizenship.</li> <li>3. Improve students’ understanding of Sustainable Development.</li> <li>4. Improve students’ understanding of Truth and Reconciliation.</li> </ol>
Key Data Sources	<p>Our School Results            School Discipline Data            Composting Program Data</p>
Key Data Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students will participate in classroom activities that explore the theme of personal integrity.</li> <li>• 100% of students will participate in school recycling and compost programs.</li> <li>• 100% of students will explore Sustainability as part of their classroom activities.</li> <li>• 100% of students will participate in classroom-based learning about Residential Schools and Truth and Reconciliation.</li> </ul>
Initiatives / Strategies to Drive Improvement	<p>Well-Being and Well-Becoming Project            Continuation and extension of School Composting Program            Implementation of a Character Education Model – Blazers Acronym            Anti-Bullying Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pink Day</li> </ul> <p>Classroom participation in learning activities surrounding The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</p>

**CARING / COMPASSION:** Develop a sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase students’ understanding of diversity and equity.</li> <li>2. Increase student involvement in service-learning projects.</li> </ol>
Key Data Sources	<p>Our School Survey Results            Classroom Data Collection</p>
Key Data Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students will express a personal understanding of diversity and equity in relation to public schools and democratic society.</li> <li>• 100% of students will participate in a service-learning project that includes a deep connection to an important issue.</li> </ul>
Initiatives / Strategies to Drive Improvement	<p>Every classroom will integrate the themes of diversity and equity into ELA            Every classroom will participate in a student-led service project            Well-Being and Well-Becoming Project</p>