



SENIOR YEARS



River East Transcona
SCHOOL DIVISION

creating student success



WELCOME TO THE SENIOR YEARS!

An important step in the education of Manitoba youth occurs in the final four years of schooling, commonly referred to as Grade 9 through Grade 12. As senior years students approach and enter adulthood, they assume greater responsibility for their paths in life. Key decisions are made during these years that assist them with this transition.

In senior years, there is a continued focus upon building and refining the essential skills of literacy, communication and numeracy. A significant change is that students select from a variety of courses that will enable them to pursue their interests, talents and potential career paths. It is at this level that students personalize their educational experience. To foster student success in this process, a strong team including parents, educators and community members is key.

During this stage, students experience many firsts that signify their transition to the adult world. They can learn to drive, get a job and vote, and are held legally accountable for their actions. There are increased opportunities for volunteerism and for contributions to the global community that can affect their future decisions. At this time, important lifestyle choices are made that can affect who they will become. These students are now members of society who are increasingly called upon to function as informed, responsible citizens. These transitions form an important context for senior years education.

What should senior years education look like? Parents, students and educators have contributed to this document, which has been designed to provide a common focus for answering this question. We have agreed upon key factors to guide our future thinking, planning and innovation at the senior years level with the ultimate goal of preparing our students for success.

We have chosen to elaborate on these key questions:

- What are the characteristics of senior years students?
- What do educators believe about educating senior years students?
- What should an ideal learning environment look like in the senior years in order to respond to these characteristics and beliefs?

For students to achieve their goals, they have to take full responsibility for their learning and become involved in their own career planning. Fortunately, the journey of life is not taken alone, and friends, family, teachers and school counsellors can be willing and helpful allies when it comes to choosing a direction. — Manitoba Education. Focus on the future, A parent and student guide to senior years graduation requirements. Winnipeg: 2008.



WHO ARE SENIOR YEARS LEARNERS?

Growth is a key word to describe what happens in the senior years—growth toward adulthood, independent thinking and citizenship.

Senior years learners are students who:

- Experience many academic, physical, social and emotional transitions
- Have a heightened need for independence and responsibility
- Have the capacity for greater purpose in their lives
- Have an increased capacity for abstract and theoretical reasoning
- Refine their moral philosophies and ethical behaviours
- Have a more mature social understanding and an ability to discern the motivations of others
- Refine and expand their appreciation of the arts
- Appreciate differences in culture
- Accept that people may hold beliefs different from their own
- Evolve in their relationships with their peer group, family, school and community, becoming more aware of their roles within these interdependent relationships
- Have a desire to assume challenging leadership roles
- Have a greater capacity for problem solving and decision making

“The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers, who can be critical and verify, and not accept, everything they are offered.” — Jean Piaget



WHAT DO SENIOR YEARS EDUCATORS BELIEVE?

The success of students is dependent upon what educators believe about them. These beliefs are fundamental to how they program for and interact with senior years students.

Senior years educators believe that all students:

- Can learn
- Can accept responsibility for their learning
- Can be accountable for their actions
- Have unique personal strengths and talents
- Need a variety of challenging learning opportunities and experiences
- Can develop a commitment to lifelong learning
- Can be active participants in the pursuit of excellence
- Can develop and refine their role as caring and contributing members of society
- Are in an educational partnership with their parents, school and community
- Can achieve their potential
- Can respect the goals and needs of others

Senior years educators must be highly skilled and knowledgeable about teaching, learning, current research and their subject matter. They need to be learners themselves and contribute as part of a learning community in which high levels of student learning are a key focus and commitment.

Our challenge as educators is to identify the kinds of educational environments in which (the) conditions of learning are met. In order to learn, the learner has to feel that the learning is for them. The learner has to feel a sense of belonging in the content, and that they belong in the community or learning setting; they have to feel at home with that kind of learning or way of getting to know the world.—Kalantzis, Mary and Bill Cope. 2005. Learning by Design. Victorian Schools Innovation Commission.



WHAT IS THE SENIOR YEARS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

A positive learning environment provides the foundation for student learning. Students, teachers, parents and partners need to work together to create a community of learners. In senior years, the environment should reflect the student's increasing power to determine his or her educational direction.

Citizenship

The learning environment:

- Promotes experiences to mirror the skills and abilities necessary to function as informed, responsible citizens
- Provides opportunities to develop leadership and collaboration skills
- Supports adolescent growth toward independence, responsibility and effective decision making
- Promotes partnerships and fosters a collaborative learning community
- Flourishes when all partners accept responsibility and accountability for their actions

Climate

The learning environment:

- Is inclusive
- Is physically, socially and emotionally safe
- Is safe for intellectual debate
- Provides academic, social and emotional support
- Promotes physical well-being and healthy lifestyle choices

Curriculum

The learning environment:

- Is relevant to the needs, interests and abilities of students
- Provides a rigorous curriculum with high standards and expectations
- Provides a diverse range of curricular offerings
- Is transition focused
- Incorporates best teaching practices
- Engages students in the assessment and evaluation process
- Includes assessment practices “for” and “of” learning

“Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.” — Margaret Mead



VISIT OUR SCHOOLS

There are six senior years schools in River East Transcona School Division. Detailed booklets describing course and program offerings can be obtained at each location. Individual school websites can be accessed through www.retsd.mb.ca.

Collège Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau

216 Redonda St.
204.958.6888
cpet@retsdb.ca

Kildonan-East Collegiate

845 Concordia Ave.
204.667.2960
kec@retsdb.ca

Miles Macdonell Collegiate

757 Roch St.
204.667.1103
miles@retsdb.ca

Murdoch MacKay Collegiate

260 Redonda St.
204.958.6460
mur@retsdb.ca

River East Collegiate

295 Sutton Ave.
204.338.4611
rec@retsdb.ca

Transcona Collegiate

1305 Winona St.
204.958.6440
tc@retsdb.ca

Senior years courses are also offered through:

McLeod Adult Learning Centre

530 McLeod Ave.
204.667.6193

River East Off-Campus Program

530 McLeod Ave.
204.667.8103

Transcona Adult Learning Centre

130 Regent Ave. E.
204.958.9297

Transcona Off-Campus Program

111 Regent Ave. W.
204.958.6002



OUR PURPOSE

The River East Transcona School Division exists to educate students to be inspired, skilled, responsible citizens.

OUR VISION

The River East Transcona School Division will be forward-looking, innovative and service-oriented, offering superior, comprehensive programming to meet the emerging needs of our students and community.

OUR BELIEFS

We exist to serve our students and community. Everyone is unique and can achieve individual success. Individuals excel where there are high expectations and challenging learning opportunities. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Working together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of our students. People thrive in safe and caring environments. Teamwork and collaboration are essential skills for both students and staff.