

CONNECTIONS

NEWSLETTER

February 2025



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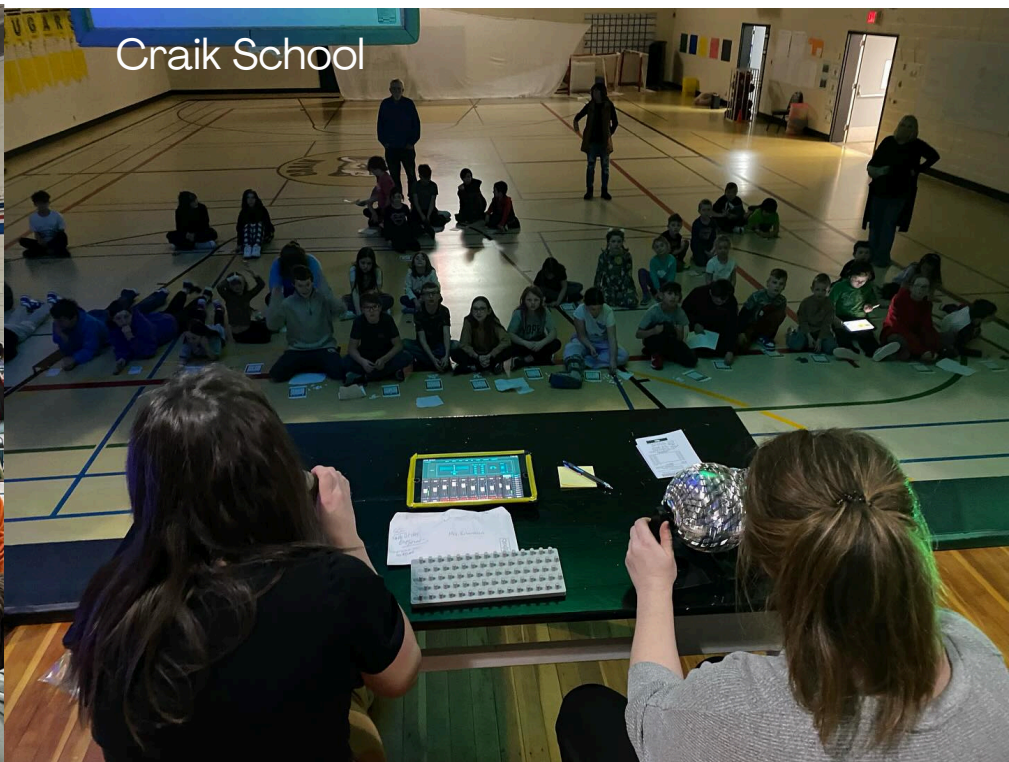
Family Literacy Day

Our schools celebrated Family Literacy Day on January 27.

Assiniboia Elementary School



Craik School



Westmount School



Riverview Collegiate



Human Resources and Payroll Department Spotlight

Our Human Resources Department is a small but mighty group of individuals who support and contribute to the success of Prairie South Schools.

**Superintendent
Human
Resources**
Amy Johnson

Executive Assistant
Elizabeth Cartman

HR Officer
*Bonnie Bistretzan (.92)
Leigh Patterson*
Payroll Officer
*Tammy Berenik
Tanya Miner (.5)
Roxanne Rath*

Prairie South has a total of 1379 staff, including substitutes and casuals. See the table below for a breakdown by job category.

| Job Category | FTEs |
|--|---------------|
| Classroom Teachers | 431.6 |
| Principals, Vice-Principals | 37.9 |
| Other Educational Staff (educational psychologists, counsellors, social workers, speech language pathologists, speech language assistants, educational assistants, library associates, school-based administrative assistants, concession workers, informational technology staff) | 266.17 |
| Administrative & Financial Staff (administrative/management positions within the following departments: learning, student information, human resources and business & operations) | 19.42 |
| Plant Operations & Maintenance (facility operators and maintenance and administrative/management positions within the Facilities Department) | 60.23 |
| Transportation (school bus drivers, mechanics and administrative/management positions within the Transportation Department) | 117.00 |
| LEADS (Director of Education and Education Superintendents) | 5.0 |
| Total Full-Time Equivalents Staff (FTE) as of September 30, 2023 | 937.32 |
| Total Staff (head count) as of September 30, 2023 (includes subs/casuals) | 1379 |

Did You Know?

In 2024 we had:

- 19 employees retire
- 43 employees resign
- 270 job postings

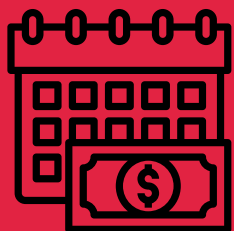


There were:

- 36 teachers and
- 28 support staff



who upgraded their qualifications and applied for tuition and book reimbursement in 2024.



Our three payroll officers run pays for employees totalling over \$4 million every month.



The average age of teachers in our division is 42 years. The average age of support staff is 49 years.

We celebrate employees annually who have 10/20/30/40 years of service with Prairie South.



In 2024-2025 we are recognizing **55 employees** with a total of **950 years** of collective service!

Wow!

Get To Know Our Staff



Roxanne Rath has worked in the Payroll department doing teacher and substitute teacher payrolls, for the last 14.5 years.

Roxanne was born in Porcupine Plain, Saskatchewan but mostly grew up in Humboldt.

She graduated from high school in Humboldt and then went on to business college in Winnipeg where she took accounting.

Roxanne currently lives in Moose Jaw with her significant other, Craig. They do not have any children, but they have a 13-year-old cocker spaniel. She enjoys doing diamond painting, cross stitch, and knitting in her spare time. She also enjoys a good game of cribbage with her Dad!

Roxanne is a huge dog lover – she'll talk to the dog before their human! She is a Motion Picture Pioneer (someone who has been in the movie theatre business for longer than 14 years). She started selling popcorn at the Humboldt drive-in when she was 13 years old. She worked her way up to projectionist and then assistant theatre manager. Roxanne loves perogies and popcorn! She loves popcorn so much that she started "Popcorn Wednesdays" at the board office. If you happen to be around the office on Wednesday afternoons, you'll smell the wonderful aroma of popcorn throughout the office!



Bonnie Bistretzan grew up on a ranch 35 miles southwest of Moose Jaw in the community of Old Wives. She has two older sisters and a younger brother. She went to Lindale School and A.E. Peacock Collegiate and her post-secondary education was received through Athabasca University and Sask Polytechnic. She has lived in Moose Jaw all her adult life.



She had a few jobs before settling into a role in HR. She started working at the Royal Bank right out of high school, but probably the most interesting and unusual job she had was that she used to travel for a living and demonstrated the items you saw on tv infomercials (it slices, it dices etc.) at Home Shows and Fairs across Canada, but no, she was not a "Carnie"! 😊 She was also in the first class of 9-1-1 operators in Saskatchewan. She had other various Admin/HR jobs until becoming the first new employee (other than the Director) of the newly amalgamated Prairie South SD in 2006.

Bonnie has been married to Gill for 28 years and together they have two children, Kendall (25) and Reed (22). She has one grandson, August, who is 2 1/2 years old and is the light of her life. Something you may not know about her is that her house was hit by a tornado when she was young and they were all home at the time - so she's not a fan of storms.

When she has time off you can usually find her in Calgary visiting her daughter, with her son and grandson, on the boat fishing with her husband, or in her yard enjoying a good book and a cup of coffee.

Her favorite family vacation was their trip to Disney World and her favourite tradition is going to at least one concert a year with Kendall (no limits on where).



King George School



King George School: 1912

King George Elementary School is a pre-K to 8 school located in the center of Moose Jaw. Our student population is 427 students. We are a very diverse school with students and families from around the world. We have over 15 first languages spoken by our students and families. Our focus is on student belonging, well-being, and a high level of academic success for all students. We have 48 wonderful staff members who put students first and do all they can to ensure that KG is a wonderful school in which to learn and work. We are proud of our ability to collaborate and focus on what is best for each student.



Tipi Outdoor Classroom

In the spring of 2024, King George embarked on a journey to address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. We wanted to create an outdoor classroom to enhance students' learning. The tipi outdoor classroom is designed to welcome our students and staff as well as community members. It represents our school's commitment to truth and reconciliation as well as serves as a reminder that we are all welcome and represented in our curriculum and schools. Our project began with students learning about the significance of the tipi and Treaty 4. Each classroom had a specific part they researched and contributed to our collective knowledge and understanding. The topics ranged from what each pole of the tipi means to traditional and present-day uses of the tipi. While this learning was happening, we developed plans to have a tipi outdoor classroom built on the playground at the school. We worked with a local developer to create a unique base for the tipi to sit on. This also includes a ramp so that the tipi outdoor classroom can be accessible to all. For this company, it is the first project of its kind. The tipi is over 24 feet in diameter and over 23 feet tall. The canvas is handmade and came from Swan River, Manitoba. Seven staff members have been trained to put up the tipi and take it down. It is a major accomplishment as the poles and canvas are large and heavy!



On June 6, we had a large celebration and community gathering as we raised our tipi. We had several special guests, including Elder Alvin Francis from Nekaneet First Nation and the Buffalo Drum Group from Regina. We had a program where students shared their learning. Elder Alvin smudged the tipi and provided a traditional Cree blessing. The Buffalo Drum Group shared their dancing and drumming. We ended the celebration by having soup and bannock, which was prepared by the grade 5 classrooms. It was a great day of learning and growing together in Reconciliation.

We were able to enjoy the tipi outdoor classroom at the start of the 2024-2025 school year. We had an opening ceremony for it on September 30th, with classrooms learning about Turtle Island as well as other topics. The students have enjoyed learning outside in the tipi. We have taken it down for the winter season but will be put up again once the spring weather is here.



KG Land Acknowledgement 2024

Mrs. Haug's grade 6 classroom created a land acknowledgment that is specific to King George School.

We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 4 territory, the traditional lands of the Cree (Plains and Blackfoot), the Dakota, Lakota, Saulteaux Nations, and the homeland of the Metis; these nations stewarded the land from time immemorial. In honour of true Truth and Reconciliation, we recognize the hurts and mistakes of the past and will work towards transforming our words into actions to change the future by sharing our history to ensure it does not repeat itself. We will work together to reconcile and build relationships with all treaty people and the land. We would also like to acknowledge the traditional languages and ways of all Indigenous people that are important to their culture and identity and what an honour it is to learn from them as it helps us all, as treaty people learn and grow. We are thankful for the privilege of sharing this land and for the opportunity to grow, learn, live, and play here on Treaty 4 land together as a community of treaty people.

Extra Curricular Clubs

Our staff works hard to offer a variety of clubs and sports that meet and help develop our student's interests and passions. This year we have close to 50 students participating in the Art Club and over 100 students in the Drama Club. Students in Drama Club are either part of the crew or are performers. Our Global Guardians are a service-oriented group of students devoted to promoting recycling and taking care of the earth. Our Student Leadership Council is open to leadership-minded students in grades 7 and 8. These students plan and organize special events and help promote good citizenship around the school. We also have a big Safety Patrol club who helps students to cross the street safely after school. They are a committed and responsible group of students who have learned to follow a schedule, watch over their peers, and show up no matter what the weather is like. We offer a Chess Club for students who enjoy competition and strategy. Girls Group provides an opportunity for students to develop positive social connections and self-esteem. We have a busy Debate Club where students learn about the fine art of communicating and defending their point of view and finally, a Choir Club which includes 20 students from grades 3-8.



School Community Council (SCC)

Many of our members have been on our SCC for several years. They are a dedicated group of parents who work with us to promote parent engagement, offer hot lunches and special events for our students, and support our school goals - especially reading. They are amazing people to work with and we are lucky to have such great support!





Sports

King George offers a variety of sporting choices for our students. In the fall, we have cross country and volleyball for students in grades 6-8 (for the A teams) and grades 5-8 (for the B teams). In our cross-country events, we have several students who finish in the top 3 in their age groups. After Christmas comes the start of basketball season. This year, we have 2 boys' teams and one girls team. In January, we host our Cougar Classic with our teams playing Lindale and Westmount. The King George Cougars won the Cougar Classic last year and hope to continue the streak this year. As well as basketball, curling is offered to students in the winter months. They spend the first part of the season learning about the game and will spend the remaining part playing games against other schools in Moose Jaw. The season will end with a bonspiel. Badminton starts in the spring with league play. The students can decide to play as a single or as a double. Our sports season ends with track and field. The grades 7 and 8 students can join our competitive track team with an all-day track event at Guthridge Field. For our younger students, the students in grades 4-6 participate in the standard track meet at Guthridge Field where they can choose between running, throwing, jumping or field events.



Upcoming Events

February 4

- Regular Board Meeting

February 10-14

- Staff Appreciation Week

February 12

- School-based Administrators' Meeting

February 13

- School Calendar Committee Meeting

February 14

- Valentine's Day

February 17

- Family Day Stat Holiday

February 17-21

- No School

February 25

- Board Planning Meeting

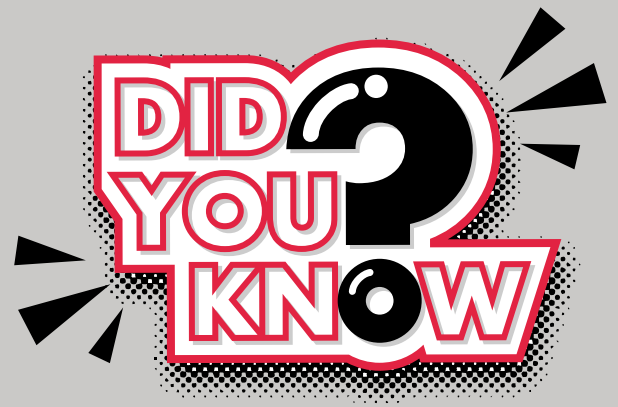
February 26 & 27

- LINC Bargaining

SHARE

We would love to hear from you!

Do you have any stories or ideas to share? Please email your submission today!



During Staff Appreciation Week we ask parents, guardians, community members, students, and staff for compliments and positive feedback so we can celebrate you! We share some of the responses we receive on our social media pages and all responses get shared with the individual employee. If you want to give a Shout Out to a staff member, [click here](#) to access the survey.

