

Sharing Our Learning Story: One & Many

"In the end we each become a story. As we capture the essence of our Catholic education journey, we remember through this holistic lens we put on our work!"

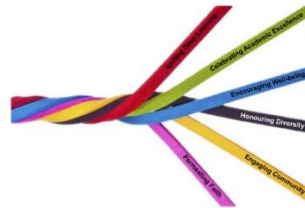
(Gwen Keith, Director of Education)

Our learning story is indeed a rich one. What makes it rich? How do we determine the value of story making and story sharing? Who are the one and the many?

Holy Family RCSSD #140, throughout the course of the 2019-20 school year, has embraced theme and engaged in the activities, events and reflections that make learning come to life. Translating these experiences into stories to share has only enhanced the enjoyment and learning for all.

At the outset of the year, the school-based administrators joined together with the academic administrators of the Holy Family central office to spend some time in a retreat setting to focus on the possibilities this theme might bring. Immediately, it was determined that we would continue to capture our stories in the journal which had been started in the last school year. Administrators would record, in the journal, a variety of stories which reflected student and staff development in the schools and division-wide. Almost immediately, it became evident that 'bookmarking' the stories would be desirable. That way, a reader could quickly revisit any one story. The team worked together to create bookmarks that displayed the values held by the Holy Family members – from the Board of Education to the littlest learner. In Holy Family, we value:

- Permeating Faith
- Igniting Deep learning
- Honouring Diversity
- Engaging community
- Celebrating Academic Excellence
- Encouraging Well-being



The addition of the bookmark to our journal, and the many ways in which the 'marked' stories were shared, definitely enhanced our ability to promote the values and to recognize the outstanding commitment of our staff to encouraging the growth of all these great qualities and characteristics in our students. From the monthly sharing at formal meetings to the informal posting on social media, our Catholic Education community got to look a little closer at our accomplishments (or challenges). From the student artwork created to showcase their ability to live each of the values to the teacher-talk promoting them, all sharing a common language encouraged responsible caring and trusting citizenship.

A couple of the school-based administrators reflected recently:

- * While living the theme *Sharing Our Learning Story: One & Many*, our students developed the confidence to use their voice, and take ownership of the learning process. By Focusing on the theme, our learning community was able to cultivate a better understanding of the strengths within our team and focus these strengths on growing our students. (Ryan Jutras, St. Mary's School, Estevan, SK)

- * When I think of ***Sharing Our Learning Story: One & Many***, I think of how the “sharing” has helped our school and division continue its growth of instructional leadership in 21st century learning, it’s growth in supporting our students and staff in the multiple levels of well-being, and the growth of our many relationships within each of our school communities. In promoting the theme, my staff has laughed, cried, and most importantly CELEBRATED the learning story that is unique to St. Olivier. Our year has been filled with so many stories. Many with success, some with struggle but in each story has been the common thread of doing our best for our students. (Darrell Perras, St. Olivier School, Radville SK)

As all learning and teaching changed drastically with the onslaught of Covid-19 adjustments and restrictions, a couple more school-based administrators shared:

- * When I think of ***Sharing Our Learning Story: One & Many***, I think of the importance of staying connected during this time of uncertainty. At St. Augustine School, we are focusing on continuously developing our story. Although we aren't able to collaborate on our school story together in person, we are still encouraging our students and staff to branch off into new chapters of their own personal stories while they are at home. Every week, I post a series of activities to stay connected while keeping our distance. Each daily task requires some form of response which the parents and students will then share on our social media sites. It gives us a chance to communicate with one another and share our experiences with one another. Our story has not ended; I believe it has only begun! (Alison Jackson, St. Augustine School, Wilcox, SK)
- * When I think of ***Sharing Our Learning Story: One & Many***, I think of the 'Parade' that our grade 2 teachers organized for their students during the Covid-19 Pandemic. With a dozen decorated cars honking and blaring music driving around to each student’s house for three hours. The staff involved each felt a part of something bigger than themselves and felt that they were doing something special for their students in a time of crisis. The students who, because of the pandemic, could not share it with their classmates in the usual way each got their own parade. Just for them. I can only imagine that as they grow and retell the story it will grow from a dozen cars with balloons to a hundred fully decorated parade floats, but for each of them the shared experience will become part of their own learning story. (Dean Loberg, St. Michael School, Weyburn, SK)

The insight of our Principals has been a source of inspiration for our leadership team as we continue to focus on providing our students and staff with the best possible completion of a year that was unexpectedly interrupted. The final moments of living this theme will truly be like no other ever.

