

## SAGE Visioning Statement

To spark in each child a passion for learning, a creative spirit and a commitment to community and the environment, in a child-centered classroom that is enriched by the arts, enhanced by innovative teaching, supported by strong home and school collaboration, and rooted in an appreciation for the differences around us.

### Arts: Exploring Creativity in the Learning Process

Through enhanced curriculum that includes instruction from professional artists, cross-grade art activities, and an overall strategy to incorporate and integrate experiences in the arts across the curriculum, SAGE endeavours to foster, support and celebrate the creativity, imagination and self-expression of each child in the program. Emphasis is placed on direct experiential learning in a broad spectrum of artistic media, including music, drama, visual arts and dance. In addition to teaching specific skill sets, the Arts component of SAGE strives to engender an appreciation for all forms of artistic expression, and encourages exploration as a vital part of the learning process.

### Global Education: Fostering an Appreciation of the World Around Us

In tandem with an enriched Arts education, the SAGE program offers enhanced curriculum that emphasizes ecology, sustainability and stewardship on the one hand, and cultural diversity, social justice, and peace studies on the other. Students explore these topics across the curriculum and through numerous events organized around such topics as cultural celebrations, International Women's Day, Indigenous studies, habitat exploration, and Earth Day, among many others. As well as fostering an appreciation for ecological issues and engendering a sense of social responsibility, the program strives to create opportunities that inspire children to be active and empowered citizens in their community.

### Innovative Teaching: How We Teach is as Important as What We Teach

While enhanced curriculum forms the backbone of the SAGE program, teaching brings it to life! Emphasis is on integrated, experiential learning that encourages a child's sense of ownership and accomplishment. Teachers blend structured lessons and age-appropriate technology with learning centers and student initiated inquiry to provide a rich learning environment that stresses collaboration over competition. Importantly, lesson planning is tailored to incorporate parent skills and participation, helping to build a community-centered school environment that has been shown to have a direct impact on academic success.

# HWDSB



## Parent/Guardian/Caregiver - Teacher Partnerships: Working Together to Improve the Learning Experience

Parent involvement forms a vital part of the SAGE program. Through Enhancement Meetings between teacher and parents, teachers shape curriculum delivery around parent skills and knowledge bases, providing opportunities for parents to be directly involved in the learning process. Another parent engagement opportunity is the position of class rep, a liaison position that helps to facilitate parent--teacher interactions and communication. Parents are instrumental in program oversight and management: there are many opportunities to help shape the program by becoming involved in the SAGE Steering Committee or one of its numerous subcommittees.

## Building Community: Integrating School, Home and Neighbourhood

The final element of the SAGE paradigm is Community Building, stemming from a recognition that child development does not take place in isolation, but through the connections between families, educators and school staff. Each month, time is set aside so that students from all grades, together with teachers and families, can gather to explore and learn about Arts and Global Education themes, as well as fellowship and sharing. These gatherings can catalyze new friendships, provide mentoring and leadership opportunities among students, and help to foster a sense of belonging and confidence. Moreover, outside of school hours, SAGE families build community through extracurricular activities, ranging from potlucks and camping, to galas and feasts. After all, learning and development do not end when the final bell rings.