



Learning begins in early childhood

Each experience a child has before age six has an impact on their learning then and on their success in school in the future.

To offer each child the best opportunity to succeed at school and in life, the Conseil des écoles francsaskoises (CÉF) has developed a series of programs and services with the purpose of introducing children to positive and continuing experiences beginning in early childhood.

Preschool daycare services

Offered in partnership with the early childhood education centres, these daycare services present a francophone environment where children under the age of three are surrounded by the French language and Fransaskois culture.

With centres located in several schools, early childhood educators offer a learning program that supports the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and linguistic global development of young children (including language acquisition and competency in communication).

Play and explore preschool program

This program is offered part-time to three-year-old children and full-time to four-year-old children, providing a positive first experience with school. Through a series of fun activities, children familiarize themselves with their new school environment, learn to socialize with others and, especially, discover the joys of learning through play.



Photo supplied by the Conseil des écoles francsaskoises

Full-time kindergarten program

This program, offered five days per week, is dedicated to five-year-olds. Children develop skills in pre-reading, pre-writing and mathematics. While the program is optional, most parents choose to register their child, knowing that these learning skills will ease the transition into Grade 1.

For more information on early childhood programs in French, contact École Monseigneur de Laval at 306-584-7558.

School days get longer

For L-P Specialty Products

The basics of reading, writing and arithmetic may stay the same, but the time spent at them can, and does, change.

Students heading to their classrooms for the coming school year will be looking at a slight increase in the number of minutes they spend cracking those books. Earlier this year, amendments to The Education Act and Regulations were proclaimed setting out the instructional hours for the province's school divisions. As part of those changes, the total hours of instructional time has been set at a minimum of 950 hours, and the earliest students will begin the school year is the first day following Labour Day and the latest day in the year students will be in school is June 30.

According to a Government of Saskatchewan news release, school divisions are required to submit their calendar year plans to the Ministry of Education by May 1, and the regulatory changes must be incorporated. Boards of education will continue to set specific timelines for the opening and closing date of schools, school hours of operation and the general schedule of operation for the school year. Boards will also retain the autonomy to allow teachers to begin working earlier to prepare for the school year.

Establishing a calendar for the upcoming school year is a yearly process, according to Noah Wernikowski, communications officer with the Regina Catholic School Division (RCSD). "Every year, we make a new calendar. It's a little different each year, but the basics are the same," he said. The amendments to the Act will mean an increase of 40 hours over the school year, which Wernikowski said boils down to about 15 minutes more each day for the more than 10,000 students in the division. "The government's intention in increasing the

instructional hours was to improve student outcomes. As a school division, we strive to make this happen by ensuring all the time spent with our students is filled with quality instruction," he said.

The RCSD conducted extensive consultations with parents, teachers and teacher associations to determine how to allot the increased time. "It was a lengthy and comprehensive process, and we are very happy to have been able to incorporate the feedback we received into the calendar," Wernikowski said. The RCSD worked hard to make sure the new calendar, which comes into force for the 2013/14 year, balances the legislative requirements with the needs of parents, teacher associations and students. "It allowed the ebbs and flows of the calendar year to come together," he said.

The division's consultations followed extensive talks with stakeholders conducted by the government it introduced the new legislation. Consultations began in December 2011 and included the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, the League of Education Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials.

The changes were prompted by concerns raised by the Provincial Auditor in 2011, who stated that Saskatchewan school divisions did not offer a minimum amount of instructional time, resulting in inconsistency in instructional hours. The regulatory changes introduced for the 2013/14 school year provide school divisions the flexibility to work with their local communities to develop calendars that include consistent and adequate instructional hours, according to a government news release. The changes also bring Saskatchewan into line with other provinces, the government said.

Regina Public School Division's new schools focus on flexible learning environments

Miranda Burski L-P Specialty Products

Every child has a different way of learning. For example, some work better in large groups, while others prefer to work individually. To accommodate the learning styles of all students, the new Douglas Park and Arcola elementary schools incorporate learning environments that are much more flexible than the traditional models.

"We all learn in different ways — there's different styles of learning — so we try to adapt to kids' needs so that they ... can learn in a way that they need to learn," said Dixie Nelson, principal of Douglas Park School.

The teams at P3Architecture Partnership (P3A) and Number TEN Architectural Group, the architects of Arcola Community School and Douglas Park School respectively, took this ideal to heart when preparing their designs. They created buildings that could utilize traditional classrooms, but that could also turn those traditional classrooms into something a little unexpected.

Each of the classrooms — or learning studios — comes equipped with large overhead doors that can be lowered or raised, depending on how much space a class needs. This gives teachers the options of combining classes for larger projects, letting kids spread out into smaller groups, or letting some students work individually while others combine efforts, among other scenarios. All in all, everyone involved felt it would be the perfect way to address all learning needs while allowing students some room for creativity.

"The way of delivering education for the 21st century is teaching creativity, because creativity is the key to understanding how pieces go together in our world," said James Youck, project director on the Arcola Community School design team. "So, our philosophy is the educational space should allow this to happen and not stand in the way of it. And teachers want to do this, there are not many teachers that are not interested in ... teaching this way."

The creative learning processes don't end with the classrooms. Certain elements of the buildings are exposed, with signs explaining what's going on, so that the schools could be treated as "3-D textbooks."

"When you walk in the front door there's a cut-away in the floor where we have a glass floor that shows off all of the heating piping in the floor and all of the structure," said Greg Hasiuk, principal architect on the Douglas Park School design team. "Then adjacent to that glass floor is a glass wall, and the wall ... shows all of the studs and the insulation and the electrical boxes and the wiring and the plumbing in the wall. And then there's also a glass ceiling above that that shows off the ductwork and the heat pump." There is also a similar cutaway for the elevator shaft.

Arcola Community School utilized cutouts in much the same way, as well as composite beams in the school's atrium that demonstrate how the structure works.

But despite their similarities, both schools have distinct features requested by those schools' communities that make them unique.

When designing the Arcola Community School, the P3A team incorporated "Saskatchewan" as the school's theme. As a result, the building features such elements as a "waterfall-style" staircase that pools into a river running through the school, tree-trunk columns that lead up to a canopy-style balcony, a patchwork-field carpet and a living wall. The roof of the building is a green space where plants that are found throughout the province can be grown.

The Douglas Park School community, on the other hand, chose to "Bring the 'park' back to 'Douglas Park.'" The school features lots of glass, which brings the outside in, plenty of trees in the courtyard, an indoor commons area that looks like a grove of trees and an abundance of natural light.

"[The natural light] has made a huge difference, I think, especially during the winter months when it's

dark so long. Having the natural light during the day is a real bonus," said Nelson.

Both design teams worked with the students, teachers and members of the community to design the schools. This collaboration, Youck and Hasiuk said, led to many of the schools' design elements, particularly the themes. Both schools were rebuilt because of the Regina Public Schools Structural Innovation plan and involved the assistance of educational planner Fielding Nair International.

The design team for Douglas Park School included Hasiuk (principal-in-charge), Gabe Derksen (project architect), Robin Lalonde (interior designer) and Don Miller (contract administrator) Number TEN (architect of record), Brownlee Beaton Kreke Consulting Engineers (structural engineer), Mechanical Design Group (mechanical engineer), Ritenburg & Associates (electrical engineer), Clifton Associates Ltd. (civil engineer), Crosby Hanna & Associates (landscape architect), Daniel Lyzun & Associates Ltd. (acoustical engineer), Demand Side Energy Management (commissioning agent), Enermodal Engineering (sustainability/LEED), and Westridge Construction (general contractor).

The design team for Arcola Community School included Youck, Vanessa Keilback (project architect), Patrick Kelly (principal-in-charge), Sherry Hastings (job captain), Sarah Turnbull (lead interior designer), Deb Christie (furniture/learning environment), David Powell (landscape architect), JC Kenyon Engineering (structural engineer), MacPherson Engineering (mechanical engineer), Alfa Engineering (electrical engineer), Associated Engineering (civil engineer), Daniel Lyzun & Associates (acoustical engineer), Riley Slywka (landscape architect, City of Regina), P3A (sustainable design/LEED), and Westridge Construction (general contractor).



SCEP CENTRE
Early Intervention and Training Services

A Socialization, Communication and Education Program for Young Children and Their Families

Patricia B. Clark, B.A., M.Ed., R.S.W.
Executive Director

3105 4th Avenue North, Regina, Saskatchewan S4R 0V2

PHONE: (306) 543-6944 • FAX: (306) 545-0199

E-MAIL: scepcentre@sasktel.net • WEB: www.scepcentre.com

École de langue première
aujourd'hui...
Francophone
bilingue
pour la vie!

Offrez à votre enfant
l'éducation de langue française PREMIÈRE.

French first language education is not an immersion program.

From part-time to full-time Pre-K and full-time Kindergarten through to Grade 12, **École Monseigneur de Laval** helps students pursue academic excellence in a vibrant 100% francophone environment.

Students graduate with a **high level of bilingualism**, opening doors to more postsecondary education and career opportunities in the language of their choice.

École Monseigneur de Laval

Pavillon élémentaire (Elementary school)

(Pre-K to Grade 7)

1601 croissant Cowan, Regina
306 584-7558

Pavillon secondaire des Quatre-Vents

(Secondary school)

(Grades 8 to 12)

1440, 9^e Avenue Nord, Regina
306 775-1970

See for yourself! Call today to find out more about French first language education.

Appelez-nous dès aujourd'hui pour en savoir plus!

**Citoyennes
et citoyens accomplis,
fiers francophones.**



Conseil
des écoles
fransaskoises



The **ONLY** French first language provincially funded education system in Saskatchewan.

cefsk.ca