

## BOARD MEMORANDUM

**Date:** May 25, 2022

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Shawna Warren, Acting Superintendent

**Originator(s):** Jonathan Konrad, Acting Deputy Superintendent, Education Services  
Aaron Chute, Principal Sturgeon Heights School

**Subject:** Religious Education and Instruction or Character Education at  
Sturgeon Heights School

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**Purpose:**

For approval. Motion required.

**Motion:**

- a) That the Board of Trustees continue to prescribe the recitation of the Lord's Prayer each morning and continue to prescribe the Religious Education courses at the end of each week at Sturgeon Heights School.

Or

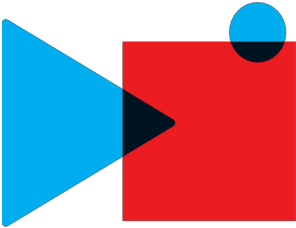
- b) That the Board of Trustees remove the prescription for the recitation of the Lord's Prayer each morning and remove the prescription for Religious Education courses at the end of each week at Sturgeon Heights School.

**Background:**

Historically Sturgeon Heights School has offered all students the opportunity to participate in the Lord's Prayer and Religions Instruction. At the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, playing the Lord's Prayer over the school public address system was suspended. The Board of Trustees initiated a review in 2012 which resulted in allowing parents/guardians to choose the option of enrolling their children in the Lord's Prayer or wellness activities. In accordance with Policy 315 and Policy 800, the Board of Trustees directed Sturgeon Heights School to ask parents/guardians annually if they would like their child(ren) to participate in the Lord's Prayer or wellness activities each morning and Religious Education and Instruction or Character Education on Friday afternoons.

Over the past few years, there has been a documented trend demonstrating a decrease in interest from parents/guardians in enrolling their children in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer in the morning and Religious Education and Instruction on Friday afternoons.





## BOARD MEMORANDUM

At both the March 9, 2022, and May 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Board meetings, Principal Chute presented background information and requested that the Board of Trustees provide direction to obtain parent/guardian and staff feedback related to Opening Exercises and Religious Education at Sturgeon Heights School.

Following the March Committee of the Whole, the Administration engaged parents and staff in the following activities:

- At the March 21, 2022, School Council meeting, parents/guardians were apprised of information trends and invited to participate in a survey to gather feedback on programming choices.
  - See Appendix 1 - March 21: School Council Agenda.
- 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grades 1 to 6 survey was electronically administered to families from April 11 until April 24, 2022.
  - See Appendix 2 - Parent/Guardian Survey.
- The SHS Staff Survey: 2022/2023 Programming Options survey was electronically administered on April 19, 2022.
  - See Appendix 3 - SHS Staff Survey: 2022/2023 Programming Options.
- At the April 25, 2022, School Council Meeting, Principal Chute presented compiled survey results and invited discussion.
  - See Appendix 4 - April 25: School Council Agenda.

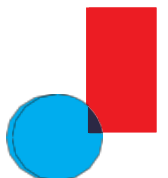
Following this work, the Administration at Sturgeon Heights prepared the attached report to inform the Board of Trustees of the level of parent/guardian interest in a daily opening prayer and religious instruction courses.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the May 25, 2022, Public Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Shawna Warren, M. Ed.  
Acting Superintendent

Attachment





**Sturgeon Heights School**  
50 Hogan Road, St. Albert, AB T8N 3X7  
Ph: (780) 459-3990  
sheights@sturgeon.ab.ca www.sturgeonheights.ca



## **Programming Options for Grades 1 to 6 at Sturgeon Heights School**

### **History Since 2012**

#### **Programming**

Sturgeon Heights School offers 2 different programs for students in grades 1-6 that align with Policy 315 and Policy 800.

- 1) **Policy 315 alignment - Opening Exercises** - parents/guardians have had the choice to enroll their child(ren) in 1 of 2 options each morning. Based on their choice, students move to a different room to:
  - a) Engage in wellness activities to prepare students for the day.
  - b) Recite the Lord's Prayer before classes start for the day.

Singing or Listening to O'Canada and the daily announcements also occurs during these opening exercises.

- 2) **Policy 800 alignment - Religious Education and Instruction** - parents/guardians have the choice to enroll their child(ren) in one of two programs every Friday during the last block of the day. Religious Instruction or Character Education (RICE) is offered to all students and based on their choice, students move to a different room to:
  - a) Participate in a Character Education class to learn about topics such as self-discipline, conflict resolution, personal goals, responsibility, and citizenship.
  - b) Participate in a Religious Instruction class which covers the same topics as the Character Education class but with religious themed discussions and religion based resources.

#### **Parent/Guardian Information and Trends**

Historically Sturgeon Heights School offered all students an opportunity to participate in the Lord's Prayer and Religious Instruction. At the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, playing the Lord's Prayer over the school public address system was suspended. The Board of Trustees initiated a review in 2012 which resulted in allowing parents/guardians to choose the option of enrolling their children in the Lord's Prayer or wellness activities. In accordance with Policy 315 and Policy 800, the Board of Trustees directed Sturgeon Heights School to ask parents/guardians annually if they would like their child(ren) to participate in the Lord's Prayer or



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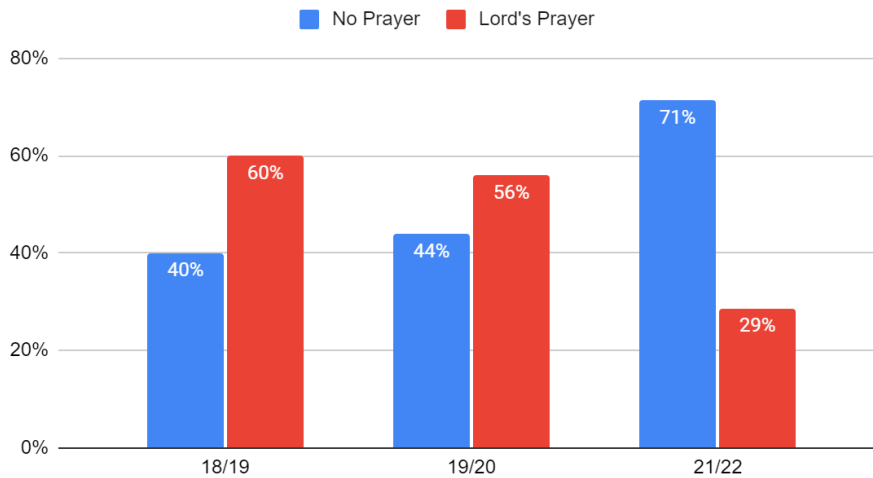
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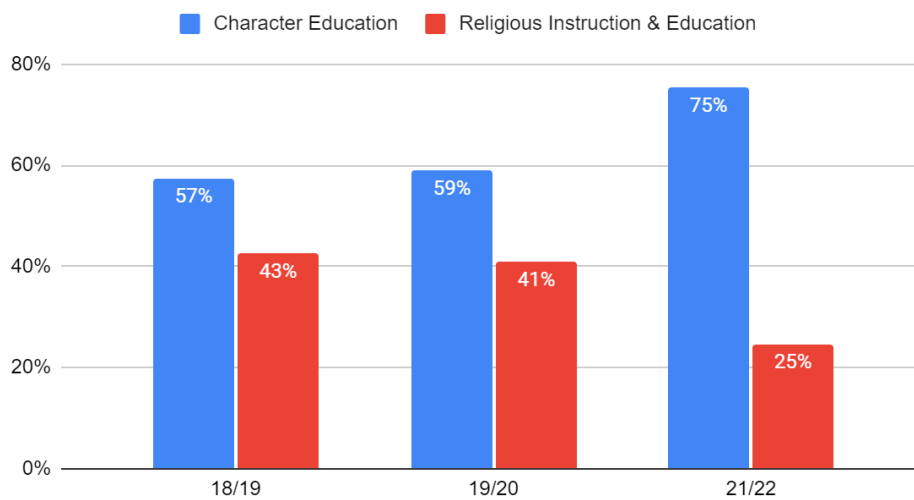
wellness activities each morning and Religious Education and Instruction or Character Education on Friday afternoons.

Over the past few years there has been a documented trend demonstrating a decrease in interest from parents in enrolling their children into recitation of the Lord's Prayer in the morning and Religious Education and Instruction on Friday afternoons.

### Daily Opening Exercises



### RICE (Religious Instruction or Character Education)





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### **Action related to Policy 315 and Policy 800**

At the March 9, 2022 Committee of the Whole Board Meeting, Principal Chute presented background information and requested that the Board of Trustees provide direction to obtain parent/guardian opinion related to Opening Exercises and Religious Education and Instruction.

As per Policy 315 and Policy 800, Board of Trustee direction was provided to pursue community stakeholder engagement to gain deeper understanding of the needs of the school community and be able to create a programming plan.

At the March 21, 2022 School Council meeting, parents/guardians were apprised of information trends and invited to participate in a survey to gather their feedback on programming choices. See Appendix 1 - March 21: School Council Agenda.

The 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grades 1 to 6 survey was electronically administered from April 11 until April 24, 2022.  
See Appendix 2 - Parent/Guardian Survey.

The SHS Staff Survey: 2022/2023 Programming Options survey was electronically administered on April 19, 2022.  
See Appendix 3 - SHS Staff Survey: 2022/2023 Programming Options.

At the April 25, 2022 School Council Meeting, Principal Chute presented compiled survey results and invited discussion.  
See Appendix 4 - April 25: School Council Agenda.



## 2022/2023 Survey Data Synthesis

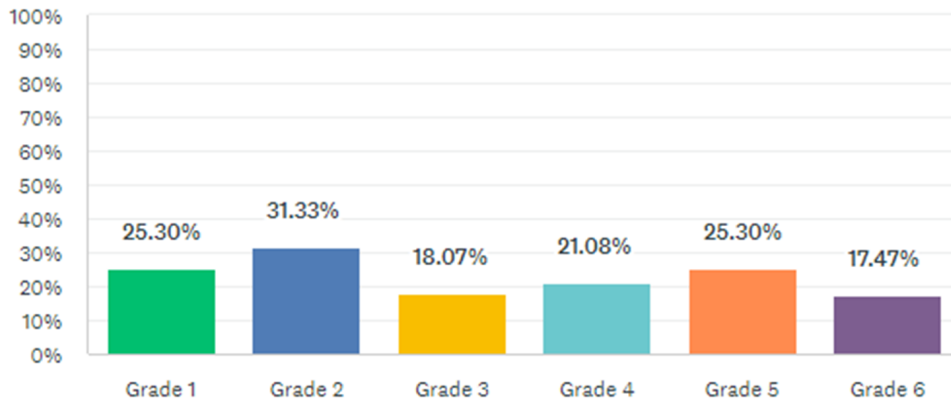
### Parent/Guardian Survey

#### Demographics

- 215 surveys were issued
- 166 responses collected
- **Response rate of 77%**

#### Survey Results

**Q1.** What grade(s) will your child(ren) be in for the 2022/2023 school year?



Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	<b>TOTAL</b>
42	52	30	35	42	29	<b>230</b>

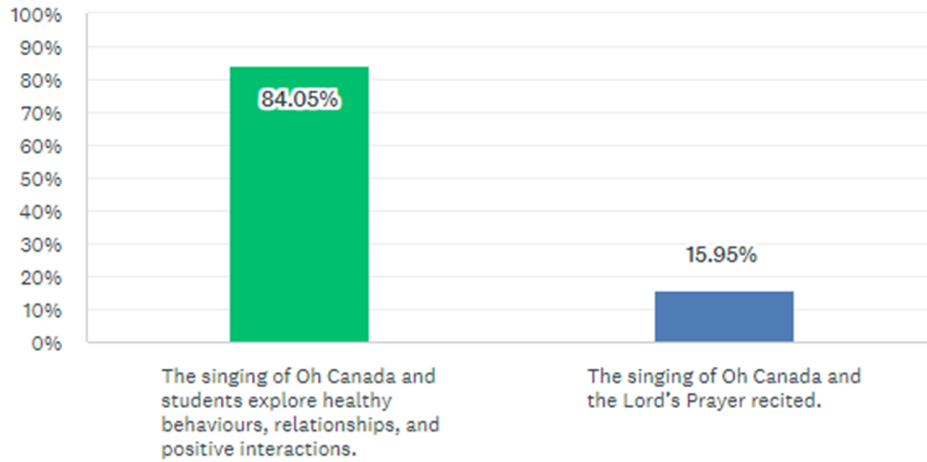


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**Q2.** Indicate the Daily Opening Exercise you would prefer your child(ren) to participate in beginning the 2022/2023 school year.



	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	TOTAL
<b>Wellness Activities</b>	35	45	28	26	38	21	<b>193</b>
<b>Lord's Prayer</b>	6	7	2	9	4	8	<b>36</b>

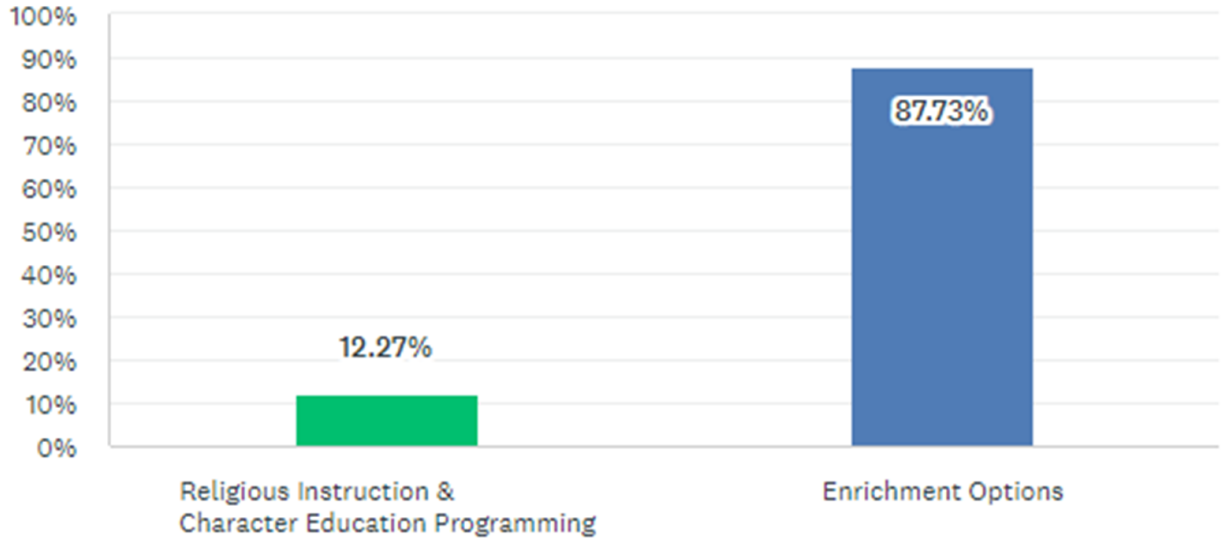


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**Q3.** Please select the learning opportunity choice that you would like offered at Sturgeon Heights School for Grade 1 to 6 students.

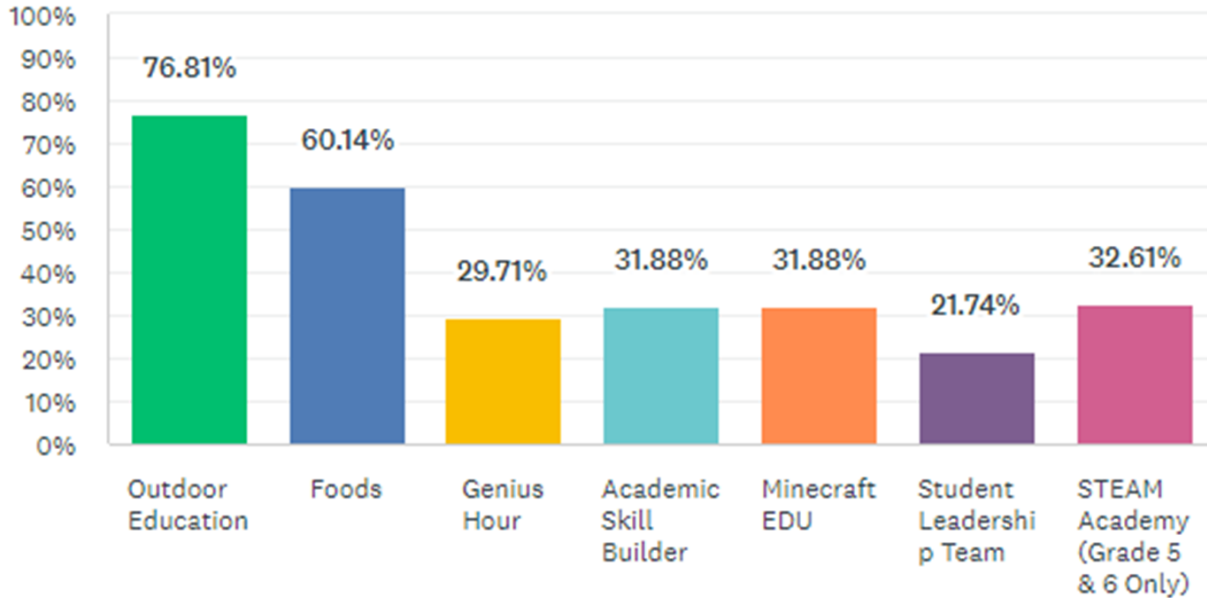


	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	TOTAL
<b>RICE</b>	8	5	1	7	4	3	<b>28</b>
<b>Enrichment Options</b>	34	47	29	28	38	26	<b>202</b>





**Q4.** From the possible options below, please select the top three enrichment opportunities you would prefer.



Outdoor Education	Foods	Genius Hour	Academic Skill Builder	Minecraft EDU	Student Leadership Team	STEAM Academy
106	83	41	44	44	30	45

**NOTE:** Parents/Guardians had the opportunity to indicate their top three priorities.

**Q5.** Please provide any additional comments related to this survey.

NOTE: 33 parent/guardian comments were provided. Comments are available upon request.



Staff Survey

Demographics

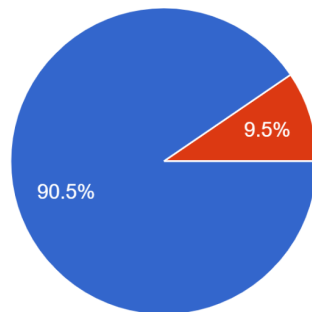
- 31 surveys were issued
- 21 responses collected
- **Response rate of 68%**

Survey Results

**Question 1:**

Indicate the Daily Opening Exercise you would prefer child(ren) to participate in beginning the 2022/2023 school year:

21 responses

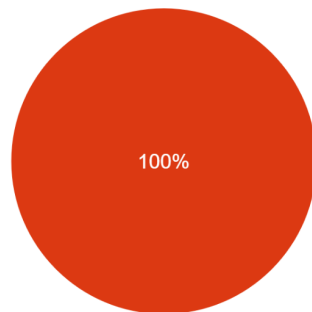


- The singing of Oh Canada and students explore healthy behaviours, relationships, and positive interactions.
- The singing of Oh Canada and the Lord's Prayer recited.

**Question 2:**

Please select the learning opportunity choice that you would like offered at Sturgeon Heights School for Grade 1 to 6 students.

21 responses



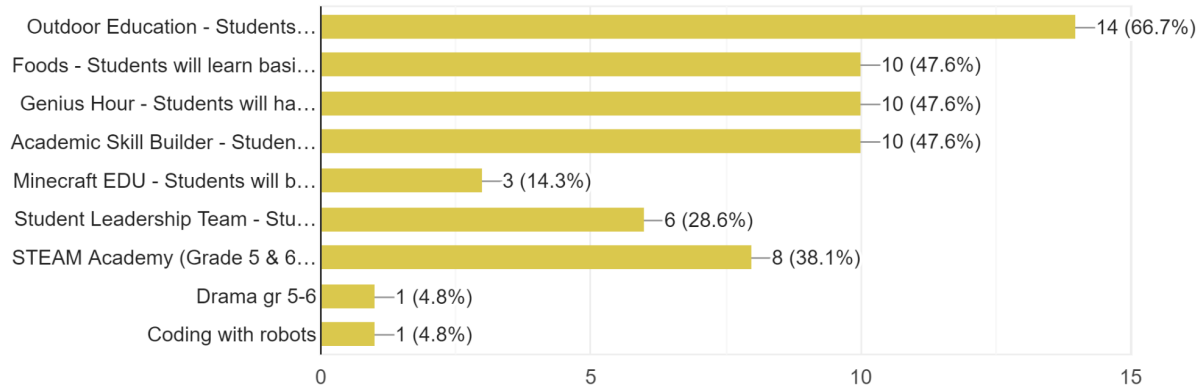
- Religious Instruction & Character Education Programming
- Enrichment Options (For example: Grade 5 & 6 STEAM Academy, Foods, Genius Hour, Academic Skill Builder, Minecraft EDU, Student Leadership Team, Outdoor Education)



### Question 3:

From the possible options below, please select the top three enrichment opportunities you would prefer.

21 responses



**NOTE:** Staff had the opportunity to indicate their top three priorities.

### School Council Response

#### Demographics

- March 21, 2022 meeting - 10 attendees
- April 25, 2022 meeting - 10 attendees

#### Comments/questions from April 25, 2022 meeting

- Good opportunity for change - if the population feels like it needs to change
- Engaged parents - high number of responses
- It wasn't even close - to offer Lord's Prayer
- Lots of opportunities - foods for instance - parents excited about the choices
- This would be the last school offering Lord's Prayer within Sturgeon Public Schools
- Are we concerned about families leaving if we don't offer religious instruction
  - No one has connected with Principal Chute regarding this
- Would we offer clergy or religious support?



## STURGEON HEIGHTS SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Agenda – Monday, March 21, 2022  
5:30 p.m.  
Virtual & In-Person

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### AGENDA

- 1) Call to order/Introductions (email addresses of attendees)
- 2) Land Acknowledgement
- 3) Additions to Agenda
- 4) Approval of Agenda
- 5) Approval of Minutes for February 2022
- 6) Administrative Report – Aaron Chute
  - a) Religious Programming & Opening Exercises
- 7) Trustee Report – Trish Murray-Elliott
- 8) PFA Report – Crystal Belanger
  - a) Current Fundraisers
  - b) Current spending projects
- 9) Teacher Report
- 10) Old Business
- 11) New Business
- 12) Classroom Reports
  - a) Kindergarten Rep – Mary Darling
  - b) Primary Rep – Sara Townsend
  - c) Elementary Rep – Lisa Rosales
  - d) Jr Height Rep – Greg Hebb
- 13) Next Meeting is Monday, April 25, 2022 at 5:30PM
- 14) Adjournment

***ALL PARENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND***



## 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grade 1 to 6

**Sturgeon Heights School is currently reviewing programming options available for Grade 1 to 6 students in the 2022/2023 school year. Our staff has explored increased programming opportunities, such as enrichment options, but needs to be mindful of the time available for programming. The following survey will help inform our programming options for 2022/2023. (A reminder that this survey applies to Grade 1 to 6 programming only.)**

**Survey responses will be accepted until noon April 24, 2022. All survey responses are confidential and anonymous. Survey highlights will be shared at the April 25, 2022 School Council meeting.**

### **Demographics**

What grade(s) will your child(ren) be in for the 2022/2023 school year?

- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5
- Grade 6



## 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grade 1 to 6

**At Sturgeon Heights School, parents/guardians have the choice to enroll their child(ren) in two choices of Daily Opening Exercises.**

**Providing a choice for Daily Opening Exercises involves students leaving their homeroom classrooms to move to pre-assigned locations to participate in exploring healthy behaviours, relationships, and positive interactions or the recitation of the Lord's Prayer. Once the Daily Opening Exercise is completed, students return to their homeroom classroom to begin academic work.**

Indicate the Daily Opening Exercise you would prefer your child(ren) to participate in beginning the 2022/2023 school year:

- The singing of Oh Canada and students explore healthy behaviours, relationships, and positive interactions.
- The singing of Oh Canada and the Lord's Prayer recited.



2022/2023 Programming Options for Grade 1 to 6

## **Programming Options**

Currently, Sturgeon Heights School offers Religious Instruction and Character Education (RICE) programs on a weekly basis. In reviewing programming options for the upcoming school year, our staff has identified enrichment opportunities that may be of interest to families. Recognizing the limited time available for enrichment programming in Grade 1 to 6, we are asking parents/guardians if they would prefer to maintain the current RICE programming or introduce new enrichment options.

## **Religious Instruction and Character Education**

At Sturgeon Heights School, parents/guardians have the choice to enroll their child(ren) in a weekly Religious Instruction Program or a Character Education Program.

The Religious Instruction and Character Education Programs address eight central themes. The themes include:

- 1. Self-Discipline**
- 2. Conflict Resolution**
- 3. Personal Goals**
- 4. Respect**
- 5. Relationships**
- 6. Positive Attitude**
- 7. Responsibility**
- 8. Citizenship**

The difference between the two programs is how the content is approached.

## **Enrichment Options**

Beginning the 2022/2023 school year, a variety of options could be available to students including:

- **Outdoor Education** - Students will participate in a variety of outdoor activities which may include winter walks, snowshoeing, skating, snow sculptures, and Indigenous games.
- **Foods** - Students will learn basic food preparation and safety using the school foods lab.
- **Genius Hour** - Students will have the opportunity to develop a personal interest or idea and explore what it takes to make it come to life.
- **Academic Skill Builder** - Students will enhance their numeracy and literacy

**learning experiences through a variety of games and activities.**

- **Minecraft EDU - Students will build science, technology, engineering, and math skills, unleash creativity, and collaborate with classmates while using Minecraft to complete various challenges.**
- **Student Leadership Team - Students will plan, organize, and implement various activities and events to elevate school spirit.**
- **STEAM Academy - Challenge-based learning with real-world, globally relevant applications gives our students hands-on learning opportunities and specialized instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math. Please note there will be a cost for the Academy and it runs for the full year.**

Please select the learning opportunity choice that you would like offered at Sturgeon Heights School for Grade 1 to 6 students.

- Religious Instruction & Character Education Programming
- Enrichment Options (For example: Grade 5 & 6 STEAM Academy, Foods, Genius Hour, Academic Skill Builder, Minecraft EDU, Student Leadership Team, Outdoor Education)





## 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grade 1 to 6

From the possible options below, please select the top three enrichment opportunities you would prefer.

- Outdoor Education** - Students will participate in a variety of outdoor activities which may include winter walks, snowshoeing, skating, snow sculptures, and Indigenous games.
- Foods** - Students will learn basic food preparation and safety using the school foods lab.
- Genius Hour** - Students will have the opportunity to develop a personal interest or idea and explore what it takes to make it come to life.
- Academic Skill Builder** - Students will enhance their numeracy and literacy learning experiences through a variety of games and activities.
- Minecraft EDU** - Students will build STEM skills, unleash creativity, and collaborate with classmates while using Minecraft to complete various challenges.
- Student Leadership Team** - Students will plan, organize, and implement various activities and events to elevate school spirit.
- STEAM Academy (Grade 5 & 6 Only)** - Challenge-based learning with real-world, globally relevant applications gives our students hands-on learning opportunities and specialized instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math. Please note there will be a cost for the Academy and it runs for the full year.



## 2022/2023 Programming Options for Grade 1 to 6

Please provide any additional comments related to this survey.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact the school principal, Mr. Chute, at 780.459.3990 or [aaron.chute@sturgeon.ab.ca](mailto:aaron.chute@sturgeon.ab.ca).

# SHS Staff Survey - 2022/2023 Programming Options

Sturgeon Heights School is currently reviewing programming options available for Grade 1 to 6 students in the 2022/2023 school year. The school has explored increased programming opportunities, such as enrichment options, but needs to be mindful of the time available for programming. The following survey will help inform our programming options for 2022/2023. (A reminder that this survey applies to Grade 1 to 6 programming only.)

Survey responses will be accepted until noon April 24, 2022. All survey responses are confidential and anonymous. Survey highlights will be shared at the April 25, 2022 School Council meeting.

## \* Required

### Opening Exercises

At Sturgeon Heights School, parents/guardians have the choice to enroll their child(ren) in two choices of Daily Opening Exercises.

Providing a choice for Daily Opening Exercises involves students leaving their homeroom classrooms to move to pre-assigned locations to participate in exploring healthy behaviours, relationships, and positive interactions or the recitation of the Lord's Prayer. Once the Daily Opening Exercise is completed, students return to their homeroom classroom to begin academic work.

1. Indicate the Daily Opening Exercise you would prefer child(ren) to participate in beginning the 2022/2023 school year: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

The singing of Oh Canada and students explore healthy behaviours, relationships, and positive interactions.

The singing of Oh Canada and the Lord's Prayer recited.

## Programming Options

Currently, Sturgeon Heights School offers Religious Instruction and Character Education (RICE) programs on a weekly basis. In reviewing programming options for the upcoming school year, our staff has identified enrichment opportunities that may be of interest to families. Recognizing the limited time available for enrichment programming in Grade 1 to 6, we are asking if staff would prefer to maintain the current RICE programming or introduce new enrichment options.

### Religious Instruction and Character Education

At Sturgeon Heights School, parents/guardians have the choice to enroll their child(ren) in a weekly Religious Instruction Program or a Character Education Program.

The Religious Instruction and Character Education Programs address eight central themes. The themes include:

- Self-Discipline
- Conflict Resolution
- Personal Goals
- Respect
- Relationships
- Positive Attitude
- Responsibility
- Citizenship

The difference between the two programs is how the content is approached.

### Enrichment Options

Beginning the 2022/2023 school year, a variety of options could be available to students including:

- Outdoor Education - Students will participate in a variety of outdoor activities which may include winter walks, snowshoeing, skating, snow sculptures, and Indigenous games.
- Foods - Students will learn basic food preparation and safety using the school foods lab.
- Genius Hour - Students will have the opportunity to develop a personal interest or idea and explore what it takes to make it come to life.
- Academic Skill Builder - Students will enhance their numeracy and literacy learning experiences through a variety of games and activities.
- Minecraft EDU - Students will build science, technology, engineering, and math skills, unleash creativity, and collaborate with classmates while using Minecraft to complete various challenges.
- Student Leadership Team - Students will plan, organize, and implement various activities and events to elevate school spirit.
- STEAM Academy - Challenge-based learning with real-world, globally relevant applications gives our students hands-on learning opportunities and specialized instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math. Please note there will be a cost for the Academy and it runs for the full year.

2. Please select the learning opportunity choice that you would like offered at Sturgeon Heights School for Grade 1 to 6 students. \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Religious Instruction & Character Education Programming
- Enrichment Options (For example: Grade 5 & 6 STEAM Academy, Foods, Genius Hour, Academic Skill Builder, Minecraft EDU, Student Leadership Team, Outdoor Education)

### Enrichment Options

3. From the possible options below, please select the top three enrichment opportunities you would prefer. \*

*Check all that apply.*

- Outdoor Education - Students will participate in a variety of outdoor activities which may include winter walks, snowshoeing, skating, snow sculptures, and Indigenous games.
- Foods - Students will learn basic food preparation and safety using the school foods lab.
- Genius Hour - Students will have the opportunity to develop a personal interest or idea and explore what it takes to make it come to life.
- Academic Skill Builder - Students will enhance their numeracy and literacy learning experiences through a variety of games and activities.
- Minecraft EDU - Students will build STEM skills, unleash creativity, and collaborate with classmates while using Minecraft to complete various challenges.
- Student Leadership Team - Students will plan, organize, and implement various activities and events to elevate school spirit.
- STEAM Academy (Grade 5 & 6 Only) - Challenge-based learning with real-world, globally relevant applications gives our students hands-on learning opportunities and specialized instruction in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math. Please note there will be a cost for the Academy and it runs for the full year.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Final Comments

4. Please provide any additional comments related to this survey.

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## STURGEON HEIGHTS SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Agenda – Monday, April 25, 2022  
5:30 p.m.  
Virtual & In-Person

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### AGENDA

- 1) Call to order/Introductions (email addresses of attendees)
- 2) Land Acknowledgement
- 3) Additions to Agenda
- 4) Approval of Agenda
- 5) Approval of Minutes for March 2022
- 6) Administrative Report – Aaron Chute
  - a) Results of Survey
- 7) Trustee Report – Trish Murray-Elliott
- 8) PFA Report – Crystal Belanger
- 9) Teacher Report
- 10) New Business
  - a) ASCA AGM – Stephanie Cordova
  - b) Preparing for our AGM in September
- 11) Classroom Reports
  - a) Kindergarten Rep – Mary Darling
  - b) Primary Rep – Sara Townsend
    - i) Parking lot supervision at recess bell
    - ii) Literacy Support post COVID for Primary Students
    - iii) Fundraiser Spending Strategy (this will also be at the SHFA meeting)
  - c) Elementary Rep – Lisa Rosales
  - d) Jr Height Rep – Greg Hebb
- 12) Next Meeting is Monday, May 16, 2022 at 5:30PM
- 13) Adjournment

***ALL PARENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND***