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**MANITOBA'S 2025-26 EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
AWARDS RECIPIENTS**

Premier's Award for Excellence in Education: Karla Grobb, Douglas Hemmerling and Laurie-Anne Regula, Gonzaga Middle School, Manitoba Catholic Schools

The Student and Graduate Support Program teacher team of Karla Grobb, Douglas Hemmerling and Laurie-Anne Regula provides long-term, whole-person support to students at Gonzaga Middle School and beyond. Using the Circle of Courage® model, the team develops socio-emotional development plans, conducts regular check-ins and offers first-level counselling.

The program supports students in grades 6 to 8, as well as alumni now in high school or post-secondary education. Services are offered after school, in the evenings and throughout the summer.

Regula provides daily regulation routines and an after-school tutoring program focused on literacy, math and test preparation. Grobb uses a tiered intervention approach to address learning, behavioural and family challenges. Hemmerling mentors and supports more than 100 alumni across 15 high schools. Together, the team helps students strengthen academic skills, confidence and connections to culture and community. Their work has contributed to improved attendance, stronger academic outcomes and enhanced well-being.

Teaching Excellence Award: Leanne Chornoby, Stevenson Island School, Frontier School Division

Leanne Chornoby has dedicated more than 30 years to teaching early-years students in a remote, fly-in region of northern Manitoba. Since 2013, she has taught at Stevenson Island School, where she creates a welcoming nursery to Grade 5 classroom grounded in care, high expectations and belonging.

Chornoby provides individualized support for students with diverse and complex needs, helping each child succeed in meaningful ways. Her patient, consistent approach supports growth in literacy, numeracy and communication while promoting student wellness, physical activity and positive choices.

Beyond the classroom, Chornoby mentors colleagues, coaches students and contributes to curriculum initiatives. Her long-standing commitment to education and community has made a lasting impact across generations.

Teaching Excellence Award: Kurt Hangle, Exchange Met School, Seven Oaks School Division

Kurt Hangle has taught at Exchange Met School for more than four years, bringing nearly 20 years of experience in industrial arts. As a teacher adviser, he supports the same group of students throughout all four years of high school, building strong relationships and a deep understanding of their strengths and goals.

Through project-based learning and internships, Hangle helps students meet curriculum outcomes while developing practical and creative skills. He has built strong community partnerships, including work with North Forge and has guided students in completing large community-based projects.

Through land-based learning, leadership programming and mentorship, Hangle supports students in becoming confident, capable and resilient young adults.

Teaching Excellence Award: Dawn Knight, Pembina Trails Collegiate, Pembina Trails School Division

Dawn Knight has taught visual arts for more than 26 years and is recognized for using artmaking to build empathy, critical thinking and belonging. Her inclusive classrooms support students from diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Knight fosters creativity and confidence by encouraging experimentation, reflection and risk-taking. She also leads student leadership initiatives and co-ordinates large-scale community art projects.

Beyond the classroom, Knight shares her expertise through professional learning workshops and curriculum development. Her leadership continues to strengthen visual arts education across Manitoba.

Outstanding New Teacher Award: Riley Paull, Stevenson School, St. James-Assiniboia School Division

In her first year of teaching, Riley Paull has earned the trust of students, families and colleagues through her calm, caring and reflective approach. As a grades 1 and 2 teacher, she uses thoughtful routines that support emotional regulation and independence.

Paull works closely with families and support staff to meet individual student needs. Her welcoming classroom encourages engagement and confidence for all learners. Committed to professional growth, Paull uses research-based strategies and data to inform her practice. She is a valued member of the school community and a strong new voice in the profession.

Outstanding Team Collaboration Award: Danielle Iliffe, Rachel McKenzie, Ainsley Richardson and Erin Weekes, Sansome School, St. James-Assiniboia School Division

Danielle Iliffe, Rachel McKenzie, Ainsley Richardson and Erin Weekes demonstrate the impact of strong collaboration through their shared commitment to student success. The grades 2 and 3 team developed a targeted literacy initiative grounded in assessment and flexible instruction.

The team regularly reviews student progress and adjusts supports to ensure timely intervention and enrichment. They also design interdisciplinary learning experiences that promote curiosity and inclusion.

Their collaborative approach has strengthened instruction, built community and supported positive transitions for students.

Outstanding School Leader Award: Barbara Reimer, Adult Learning Centres, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)

As education director, Barbara Reimer has led the transformation of MITT's Adult Learning Centres into an inclusive, learner-focused network. She has expanded flexible learning options to support adults balancing education, work and family responsibilities.

Reimer has introduced innovative teaching practices, streamlined processes and strengthened learner supports, including access to food, transportation and mental health resources.

Her collaborative leadership has created learning environments where adult learners can succeed and plan their next steps with confidence.

Nello Altomare Award for Excellence in School Nutrition: Paul Augst and Joshua Hogan, Ruth Hooker School and Robert Smith Elementary, Lord Selkirk School Division

Paul Augst and Joshua Hogan play key roles in expanding access to nutritious meals for students in the Lord Selkirk School Division. Together, they have strengthened and expanded school meal programs to better support student well-being.

Working from a shared commercial kitchen, they prepare balanced, culturally inclusive meals that meet individual dietary needs. Their work supports the learning and health of hundreds of students. Through strong community partnerships and collaboration, Augst and Hogan have helped build a sustainable program that supports food security and student success.