

## KSD Significant Initiatives in Counselling

### 1960s

The first delivery of “guidance counselling” was as part of a minor course assignment of various teachers, and had a focus on occupation/career guidance. In the latter part of the 1960s “counselling” was added to “guidance” in the high school setting. In 1967 when the Kelsey School Division opened a new high school, vice-principal **Jack Hyde** was allocated some time for counselling and implemented topics obtained from a Roman Catholic marriage preparation program taught in Ontario. In addition, some high school classroom teachers delivered various aspects of a career/guidance curriculum. One special education teacher, **Velma McAdam**, delivered personal counselling to aid individual female students in distress.

### 1970s

1972-73

Child Development Services of Manitoba Education responded to a need for services in northern Manitoba and cooperated with KSD in a major initiative to provide local services. Secondment of KSD personnel was done in curriculum development (**Vaughn Wadelius**), psychology (**Dr. Bruce Handly**), and speech/language pathology (**Robertson**) was initiated, and eventually expanded to other northern school divisions, augmenting the fragmented counselling services for critical incidents such as suicide, child abuse, etc.

1973-74

An elementary “counselor” was introduced into Kelsey School Division with the hiring of teacher/psychologist **Gerry Saleski** for one year. While brought in primarily to assist with the development of an elementary level Family Life curricula, Saleski’s role as assistant principal in Mary Duncan Elementary provided opportunities to establish the concept of providing student counselling at that level. That year his wife, **Rosalie**, and **George Fric** established a broader delivery of guidance and counselling at the high school level. At the opening of the division’s new junior high school in 1973, a school counselor, **John Kerr**, was added to the faculty.

During the mid-1970s, George Fric, in cooperation with elementary principal Vaughn Wadelius, established a “Forming Relationships In Children” (FRIC) high school student credit SIC course which paired high school students with at risk elementary students for in-class elementary emotional and tutorial assistance.

### 1980s

Elementary:

Counselling was permanently extended to the elementary level in 1981 as a school board supported initiative with the hiring of **Christine Bell** to provide counselling services to students in all three of the school division’s elementary schools. One significant initiative was the introduction of the “Care Kit,” a family life/sex education program at the elementary level. In 1988 Christine was replaced by **Kevin Bate** who still continues in this position. In 1982 **Linda Munro** became the full-time counselor at Scott Bateman Junior High, and was replaced by **Barbara McLeod** in 2001.

**MBCI** In 1980-81, **Myra Hiebert** and **Al Gardiner** began providing counselling services at the high school level and they worked together until 1999. In 1987, at the initiative of MBCI principal Vaughn Wadelius, the two high school counselor positions became full time and significant student service initiatives were undertaken at the high school level. Among them were:

- > the establishment of an annual Career Day
- > a Student Peer assistant initiative was started (for high school credit)
- > Comprehensive high school counselor job description developed
- > Administrative computer program utilized to monitor student records, student discipline incident records
- > Computerized career information system added (Choices)
- > the utilization of tri-annual post-graduate surveys and annual graduate exit surveys for feedback on school services.
- > the use of high school student surveys developed for feedback on various school issues
- > the coordination and extension of the Independent Study Program
- > Student registration, course selection, and program explanations were computerized and expanded.

## **1990s**

**MBCI** In 1993-94 a comprehensive job description was developed by the high school principal and counselors. The description preamble noted that

*“The School Counselor is principally concerned with the personal, social, educational and career needs of the students, provides counseling and guidance within an educational setting, and works in collaboration with school personnel, other professionals and parents. The school counselor will adhere to the guidelines for ethical behaviour of the Manitoba School Counselors’ Association.”*

Copies of this job description (1993-94, 2001-02, 2009-10) are appended for information. Personnel changes and circumstances effected the nature of these tasks.

Further utilization of the high school counselors included:

- > Assisting with articulation meetings for entering Grade 8 students
- > Assisting with the concurrent advanced placement of gifted Grade 8 students in specific high school Grade 9 courses, and selected Grade 12 students into first year distance education university (FYDE) courses taught in the high school setting.
- > In 1993-94 the high school Mature Student program was enhanced and extended to meet a growing need
- > In 1994, the high counselors assisted with the development of “adult” Mature Student program summer school learning opportunities for former high school dropouts. This developed into the establishment, in 1996, of an Adult Learning Centre affiliated with the local high school.
- > With AFM funding, a Rural and Northern Youth Intervention Strategy

(RNYIS) to provide on-site alcohol and drug (later gambling was added) addiction intervention and counselling for senior students was incorporated into the high school programs.

## **2000s**

### MD/ALC

> In 2006 the Adult Learning Centre was relocated into its own school facility at Mary Duncan School and in 2009 it was granted its own principal. The ALC was joined there by alternate school programs for middle school (Great Expectations) and high school (PACE) students. Various counselling and support services from community agencies as well as from school division resources were provided at this site to encourage attendance, academic success and individualized student support.

### MBCI

- > Some drug and alcohol counseling initiatives, using the collaboration of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba RNYIS counselor **Diane Curry**, were added.
- > High school counselors **Judy George** and **Merilee Hamilton** support Grade 9 initiatives including the topics Assertiveness, Anger Management, Health/Wellness, Self-Esteem, Toxic Relationships, Suicide Intervention, Sexuality, Eating Disorders, Anxiety/Phobias, Grief/Loss, Abuse, Separation/Divorce, Stress Management, Chemical Abuse, Mediation, Conflict Resolution, Trauma Recovery, Decision-Making, Travel/Exchange Programs, Problem-Solving, Study/Learning Strategies, and Peer Tutoring Arrangements.
- > Anti-Racism and Anti-Bullying projects were introduced after high school students participated in the Manitoba Human Rights Youth Conference "Mission Impossible"
- > High school counselors have participated in work with the Healthy School Initiatives team and are involved in special initiatives with the Senior Years Apprenticeship program, Northern Technical Vocational Consortium program and the Health Care Aide course credits with The Pas's University College of the North.
- > By the late 2000s the high school guidance and counselling services at MBCI and Mary Duncan School comprised five major task areas. Counselling responded to daily crisis intervention and management (panic attacks, anxiety, suicide ideation/attempts, depression, medication concerns, family stress, child and family services intervention, criminal justice system issues). In addition individual student need counselling is a daily occurrence, academic coaching, referrals to outside agencies, and student advocacy occur.
- > Group counselling is a preventative aspect and addresses topics such as stress management, cyber-bullying, and healthy relationships.
- > Guidance support is provided for teacher health instruction, and career guidance to students.
- > Coordination, consultation, and collaboration takes place with other support agencies and school administration

- ÉSBMS > An articulation opportunity (shadowing Middle School students) for Early Years students entering Middle School
- > Healthy Living shops classes developed.
  - > Supporting the provincial Healthy School Initiatives.
  - > A “Middle School Idol” initiative (2001-15) provides and displays student talent to enhance student self-esteem and confidence.
  - > A “Pay It Forward” initiative (2013-15) was a school-wide project that promoted good deeds.
  - > A “Lego At Lunch” club (since 2014) provides socialization opportunities
  - > A Gay-Straight Alliance group was formed in 2018 at the request of students.
  - > Liaison with numerous other related agencies.
- EOS > WITS program (2016-0resent) equips students with the means to handle potential conflict. WITS stands for “walk away, ignore, talk it out, seek help.”
- > Zones of Regulation (2016-present) uses a colour code system to provide students with the means to express their mood.
  - > Terry Fox Week (1998-present) uses the profile of a national Canadian celebrity to support activities and fund-raising projects to help fund a cure for cancer.
- KSD > All counselors can be participants in the School Division’s Threat Assessment/Crisis team.
- > A Kelsey School Division Counselors Association was formed and meets regularly to co-ordinate strategies for dealing with chronic cases and to pool resources.
  - > In 2006-07, the School Division initiated “behaviour counselors” at the elementary and middle school levels to assist school administrators and classroom teachers with specific problem students.
  - > Counsellors work in cooperation with the Northern Region Health Authority and the Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba.

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Compiled by Vaughn Wadelius