The Mother Teresa Middle School: Supporting Regina’s Vulnerable Youth

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Infinity Consulting

Nurturing Capacity
Funding Sponsor
Preface

Nurturing Capacity: Building Community Success

Indspire supports communities to improve educational outcomes through the documentation and evaluation of their innovative practices. This community-led process is supported by an Indspire-funded Indigenous scholar, who works with programs on the ground to provide training on data collection and evaluation methodology.

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Project Abstract

The Mother Teresa Middle School (MTMS) is a Jesuit-founded, private middle-years school that seeks to provide Regina youth with outstanding educational experiences and integrated family services. Research shows that the Regina’s Indigenous youth population is young and growing however, they are less likely to graduate from high school and are underrepresented in post-secondary institutions and the labour force. Therefore, implementing inclusive educational programs provides youth with opportunities to travel, gain critical skills, learn the necessity of education, and to value their culture. This review provides an in-depth analysis of qualitative and quantitative data demonstrating a strong correlation between this school and success in high school. Issues covered include possible long-term impacts and next steps to ensure further success for this school and Regina’s Indigenous youth.

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Executive Summary

In 2011, the Mother Teresa Middle School (MTMS) opened its doors in the North Central community of Regina, Saskatchewan as a way to engage local youth aged 11-14 who experience economic and social barriers preventing success in school. Based on the ground-breaking work of the Nativity Miguel Network of Schools (established in 2006 in southern California), MTMS, a Jesuit-based school, became the first of its kind in Canada. The school sought to provide urban youth who are struggling in impoverished neighborhoods with extensive academic, extracurricular, and travel/experiential opportunities during Grades 6, 7, and 8. Today the school has grown to serve over 50 youth and has nearly 40 alumni students (in high school). The program aspires to provide Regina youth with an experience that might otherwise be unavailable due to barriers (both socio-economic and cultural) and has been successful in helping dozens of Indigenous youth achieve success in a short time, as 81% of their current student population is Indigenous.

It is hoped the MTMS would have a positive impact in the areas of:
- Academic achievement;
- Success in secondary school;
- Self-confidence and self-esteem; and
- Family and cultural connections.

By offering the youth of North Central opportunities to study and participate in a top quality educational institution, MTMS alters the youths’ perceptions of themselves, their communities, and the importance of education. They learn to integrate their own culture and way of life with other cultures and communities in meaningful ways through service and study.

The following evaluation assesses the effectiveness of MTMS in creating a positive impact in the areas mentioned above, as well as the overall view of the programming it offers from the perspective of the administration, board of directors, staff, and mentors as well as current youth participating in MTMS programming and their caregivers.

This report provides an overview of this institution and includes a logic model that demonstrates the project flow and processes. In addition, both qualitative and quantitative data sets prove that MTMS has been very successful in achieving its short and intermediate goals and is poised to achieve its long-term goals in the near future. In terms of the perceptions of MTMS, the evidence overwhelmingly supports it, and all participants included in this evaluation greatly value the unique programming and organization.

Finally, accomplishments, limitations, and next steps are outlined to assist the evaluator and MTMS in moving in a direction that will allow programming, and possibly other initiatives, to grow and thrive.
The Mother Teresa Middle School: Supporting Regina’s Vulnerable Youth

Program Description

Mother Teresa Middle School (MTMS) is located in Regina’s North Central community. It serves highly motivated but severely economically disadvantaged middle-years youth (Grades 6, 7, 8). MTMS operates as one of a few private schools in the city offering family-based education. It is, however, the only one of its kind in the community, and in Canada, offering this type of extensive and holistic programming to disadvantaged youth.

Mother Teresa Middle School offers a wide range of programming and educational opportunities to the youth who attend. The following section provides a brief overview outlining the educational pedagogy, practices, and types of programming offered at the institution.

I. Student Engagement and Well-Being

Through their unique full day program (8:30-4:30 daily) MTMS is able to effectively target engagement and well-being. According to their website, “active student engagement” is an essential part of the MTMS educational brand. Student engagement, hope and well-being account for between a quarter and a third of the variance in student academic success” (Mother Teresa Middle School, 2016).

The student’s current perceptions of success are measured regularly, as this feedback has a direct impact on student success in attendance and school success. They are measured by assessing three areas: engagement (e.g. “I believe school work is important”); hope (e.g. “I believe that I will graduate from high school”); and well-being (e.g. “What I think about my life now and how I think it will be in 5 years”). The students complete hope, wellness and engagement surveys three times per year. The results are formally reported in their report card and discussed with parents and staff. They also serve a proactive function, as staff are able to address concerns with students well in advance of potential problems. The Graduate Support Director immediately acts on individual student scores that appear of concern.

MTMS follows a Cura Personalis (caring for the whole person) model of education, which means not only educating the child but also addressing any barriers to student learning that might exist. MTMS provides the following services in order to eliminate many of these barriers:

- Free visual supports, e.g. glasses
- Free auditory assessment
- Access to dental care
- Attention to medical needs
- Staff follow up in the home
- Nutritious meals
- Clothing
- Social networking
- Crisis counselling
- Referrals
II. Spirituality

MTMS is the only Jesuit fostered middle school in Canada and is rooted in the Ignatian Pedagogy, which is a teaching model that seeks to develop students of competence and compassion. There are focused attention on values and high standards for students both personally and academically. In addition to preparing students to be strong and fit physically and mentally, MTMS students are exposed to daily prayer, spiritual celebrations, and integrated spiritual art. While all faiths are welcomed and the students are encouraged to express their own spiritual and cultural beliefs, it is expected that each student respectfully participate in the spiritual activities at MTMS.

III. Strengths-Based Approaches

MTMS operates based on the theory of strengths-based psychology wherein the focus is on what is the students can do and creating teaching and learning strategies that lead to academic success. Research indicates that people who focus on strengths are more likely to be engaged in a sustainable way. Strengths are part of the student success equation that can help improve grades, career readiness and stronger, positive citizenship. All staff and students regularly complete surveys and self-monitoring questionnaires that allow them to identify their strengths, set goals, and learn coping skills.

IV. Grade 8 Supports and Transitions

MTMS has a strong transitional support program, which they are continuing to develop and expand each year as the first group of MTMS Grade 8 alumni prepares to graduate from high school in 2018. Maintaining a connection with the MTMS alumni is a large undertaking requiring the coordination and collaboration of many individuals. However, the success of each and every student (both current and former) is essential to MTMS.

Transition services assist students in finding the appropriate secondary school to meet their goals and needs; assisting with housing, transportation, scholarships and finances; advocacy for students and caregivers; creating a partnership with the receiving school; allowing students to remain connected to MTMS (through peer mentorship opportunism); and beginning the transition process well before the completion of Grade 8.

Many people are involved in the transition process including the Graduate Support Director who oversees all graduate transitions, the student, the family, the mentor, and the family. This team approach allows the student to explore all options and consider the best possible fit when choosing a secondary school. MTMS supports students who wish to transition outside of faith-based schools and are supportive of any transitions that are in the best interest of the student.

V. Mentorship

There is a need for both peer mentorship and mentorship from adults in the community. With an ever-increasing number of MTMS graduates requiring support as they continue on in their academic journey, the role other adults in the community can play has a great impact. The type of personal individualized support MTMS provides during middles years needs to continue beyond Grade 8 in order to ensure success, however, this type of intervention is not sustainable.
High school and post-secondary institutions are not set up in-depth, proactive individualized support for each student. Past experience has shown long-term attempts at supporting students beyond their walls does not work and is not a realistic mandate. However, the mentorship program has the capacity to overcome this barrier.

Successful mentorships assist the students with high school transitions, preparation for the work force, securing part-time or summer employment, gaining experiences and exposure outside their community, and creating a long-term, healthy relationship with a trusting adult. This relationship building will help the mentee understand positive and negative relationships, develop healthy social skills and boundaries, and learn how to network, problem solve, and communicate.

**VI. Food Program**

MTMS offers nutritionally balanced snacks and meals throughout the day. A light breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. Following breakfast, the daily assembly starts at 9:00 a.m. In addition, snacks are served daily in the morning, and in the afternoon. MTMS also serves a full lunch each day and if a student has special dietary needs, parents are asked to indicate the request at the beginning of the year. In order to ensure all students are fed and able to return to class in the afternoon, students do not go home for lunch or bring their own food to school for meals and snacks. They also cannot opt out of the nutrition program as it is seen as a vital component to teaching the whole child. MTMS is able to know that nutritional needs are met throughout the day and the students will not suffer academically as a result of inadequate nutrition. It also alleviates this burden for parents who may experience food shortages or food security issues in the home.

**VII. The Summer Program**

Each year, MTMS offers a summer program with the purpose of orienting new Grade 6 students to the culture and model of MTMS through two weeks of summer programming. During this camp, the future students become familiar with MTMS routines and procedures, meet and form relationships with staff and students, gain familiarity with the University of Regina, and gain exposure to key MTMS standards of excellence in “a low stakes environment.”

At this time, the Grade 7 and 8 students also have a week out of province to develop teamwork skills gain experience being away from home, and are exposed to activities that will enrich the Grade 7 and 8 curriculum.

Some of the opportunities and objectives include:

- Visiting sites in Alberta connected to the Saskatchewan middle-years curriculum (i.e. Banff) and travelling to Ottawa;
- Learning travel planning and social skills required for a successful group trip out of province (i.e. airport and airplane etiquette and rules, time management, responsibility of travel documents and personal items; and
- Time to bond with peers and MTMS staff and volunteers; and
- Experiencing more responsibility and rigor during summer months in order to better prepare for the upcoming school year.

**VIII. After School Enrichment**

All students are required to participate in extracurricular, after school activities for one hour at the end of each school day. Research demonstrates that involvement in extracurricular activities is a protective factor for youth living in high-risk communities. Options for after school enrichment include:

| AR Reading | Dungeons & Dragons | Martial Arts |
| Babysitting Course | Engineering | Oratory Competition |
| Badminton | Ethnic Cooking | Photography |
| Band Lessons | EYES Club | Poetry |
| Basketball | Film | Reach Cooking |
| Beading | Fitness | Robotics |
| Board Games | Football | Running |
| Boys’ Club | Girls’ Group | SaskPower Tree Planting |
| Cadets | Homework Club | Sr. Violin |
| Cathedral Arts School | Interschool Sports | Stock Market Games |
| Chocolate Making | Activities | Study Hall |
| Christmas Cards | Joy Luck Club | Track |
| Christmas Crafts | Jr. Violin | Volleyball |
| Computer Coding | Just Dance | Wrestling |
| Cross Country | Knitting | Yoga |
| Cultural Dance | Mackenzie Art Gallery | Zen Art |
| Drama | Mandolin | |
| Drumming | Marathon Club | |

**IX. Technology**

Part of MTMS’s mandate is to create global citizens capable of adapting and excelling in a wide range of professional and personal circumstances. It is for this reason that MTMS focuses on increasing technology literacy teaching daily. Technology is used by students to help motivate themselves and others as a way to strengthen skills. Specifically, the students at MTMS are expected to learn aspects of digital citizenship, internet literacy, global connectedness, creative innovation, and technological problem solving.

**X. Community Involvement & Impact**

MTMS student are involved in a significant amount of community service in order to develop as *men and women for others*. The involvement ranges from participation in large-scale global initiatives such as the *ALS Ice Bucket Challenge* to local fundraising efforts.

Some of the initiatives and events undertaken in the past include:

- The ALS: Ice Bucket Challenge - the students raised over $100 and will be participating in the local ALS Walk/Run.
- **Red Hand Day** - the Grade 6 and 7 students participated in Red Hand Day, a global initiative to bring awareness and stop the use of children as soldiers in war.

- **National Cupcake Day** - fundraiser for the SPCA, where four students made and sold cupcakes to community members and peers.

- **Typhoon Fundraiser** - Two students raised $400 for typhoon four victims in the Philippines. The Canadian Government also matched the donation.

- **Food Bank** – MTMS students spent a Saturday packing and sorting food at the Regina Food Bank.

- **‘Come N’ Learn Aboriginal Head Start Program Fundraiser** - the Grade 7 class accompanied the Come N’ Learn Aboriginal Head Start Program families and staff at Chapters and presented a cheque to the preschoolers, and then helped them choose books to purchase for their school library.

- **Gingerbread House Contest** - The Grade 7 class chose to raise money for the Come ‘N’ Learn Regina Aboriginal Head Start Program that is run by Aboriginal Family Service Centre in Regina. In total $1,650 was donated to the program.

- **ALS Challenge** – In total $360 was raised and donated in September 2014.

- **Transition House Crab apple Jelly Project** – a total of $2,351 was raised and donated in December 2014.

- **Church of Christ** - Funds were raised for Good Samaritan School at Nungthang Tampak Village in India through a Gingerbread Fundraiser. In total $2,506 was raised.

- **Transition House Crab apple Jelly Project** – a total of $2,351 was raised and donated in December 2015.

- **Hope’s Home** – A Gingerbread Fundraiser was held and raised $2,576.

- **Stock Market** – Grade 8’s raised $800 in April 2016.
Context

Project Background: The Compelling Need

The province of Saskatchewan is currently experiencing unprecedented economic and social growth. As a result, the government and Indigenous leaders have the opportunity to come together with a common vision for engaging all citizens. A large piece of ensuring this long-term growth involves investing in the province’s youth, particularly, Indigenous youth. In order to realize this potential, the province must improve the educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis populations (Conference Board of Canada, 2013). Saskatchewan has a young and growing Indigenous population. The Indigenous population of Regina is very young and steadily increasing. As the Regina Priority Population Study (2011) states, 35% are under 15 years of age compared with 18% for the general population. In addition, Indigenous people make up 18% of Regina children but only 2% of Regina seniors (Sask Monitor Trends & DC Strategic Management). By 2030, it is estimated that one in every four new entrants to the labour force will be Indigenous (Sask Trends Monitor, 2008).

Projections estimate that between 2013 and 2017, the Saskatchewan economy created nearly 54,000 new jobs. The vast majority (90%) of these opportunities required at least a high school diploma. Moreover, one-third required a post-secondary certificate, diploma or apprenticeship trade and one-third were management and university degree related opportunities (Saskatchewan Ministry of the Economy, 2013). It is therefore critical to have the necessary education in order to compete in Saskatchewan’s ever-expanding job market.

Research by the Saskatchewan Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis People shows that a high school education is the key to positive participation in the work force for all adults. However, there are differences with regards to Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth completing high school. Provincially, in 2014, only 40.3% of self-declared Indigenous students graduated on time (i.e. within three years of entering Grade 10), compared to 83.2% of non-Indigenous students. Canada’s provincial high school dropout rates range between 25 – 30%, however in affluent communities, that number decreases to between 6% - 11% (Pelletier, Cottrell, Hardie, 2013). In low-income communities, where residents are more likely to be immigrants, Indigenous, or single-parent families, the rate can rise significantly to over 70% (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2016).

First Nations and Métis youth in Saskatchewan also have a higher dropout rate compared to non-Indigenous youth. In 2011, 33% of Indigenous people in the province between the ages of 25 and 64 had not completed high school. In addition, 61% of Indigenous people between the ages of 20 and 24 living on-reserve had not completed high school (Pelletier, Cottrell, Hardie, 2013). Research confirms that those who fail to complete high school are more likely to be unemployed, become involved in the criminal justice system, have higher incidents of mental health issues and addictions, and require long-term social assistance programming (Noah, 2007; Wortzman, 2009).
Many people are often able to obtain work immediately following a departure from school and are therefore able to learn the necessary skills and gain valuable experiences that are, in many cases, the equivalent of secondary school credentials. However, the odds are now stacked against those with lower educational credentials. With an increase in people obtaining post-secondary credentials in the country, it is increasingly difficult to compete with a high school diploma or equivalent. The 2006 Census states that the unemployment rate for First Nations people between the ages of 25 and 54 living on-reserve and off-reserve was 23% and 12% respectively (Statistics Canada, 2008). The disparity in education and employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Saskatchewan remains one of the province’s largest challenges.

Taking Action: Targeting Education

Saskatchewan has a young and growing population. Two key areas for stakeholders to prioritize are high school completion and school-to-work transitions in order for First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan to realize their potential. Currently, the high school dropout rate is two to three times higher for Indigenous youth in the province compared to non-Indigenous counterparts. However, of those Indigenous students who do graduate from high school are just as likely to attend post-secondary institutions and gain meaningful employment. Therefore, it is essential for focus resources on ensuring Indigenous youth have adequate supports and opportunities to be successful in high school. Today’s workforce revolves around some type of post-secondary credentials. In order for Indigenous adults to find long-term and meaningful employment in Saskatchewan and become a vital part of the labour force, the province must implement in a strategic goal to increase high school graduation rates. As for all Canadians, failure to complete high school creates a barrier to entering the work force.

Closing the education gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is essential for the success not only of Indigenous people but also for the growth and prosperity of the province as a whole. There is both an economic and social imperative to improve the educational success of Indigenous youth. Education is about more than improving the province’s economy. There are large social implications to ensuring Indigenous youth are successful in school. In addition to improving individual and family health and well-being and finances, an increase in graduation rates for Indigenous people will have a lasting impact in the community. Communities with high levels of education and employment experiences greater cohesion, trust, and pro-social behavior and enjoy a reduction in negative or harmful behaviors.

The top reasons for not completing high school given by Indigenous peoples in the Aboriginal Peoples’ Survey (2001) were: teen pregnancy; caregiving for children in the home/family; boredom at school; and wanting to work (Statistics Canada, 2003). These reasons are similar to non-Indigenous counterparts. Therefore, successful interventions must address the reasons that Indigenous youth are not able to successfully complete high school. In terms of protective factors: school engagement, school climate, and connection to a caring supportive adult (teacher or parent) tend to be elements that can ensure achievement in high school.
Mother Teresa Middle School recognizes that despite the current disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in Saskatchewan, there is the potential for measurable change through educational programming. Research also indicates that specific, targeted interventions can have a direct impact on Indigenous youth being successful in education. Moreover, these inventions can also have an impact on youth living in poverty and provide opportunities to lessen education disparities for many youth.

MTMS believes: “First Nations and Métis individuals in Saskatchewan have the potential to have a greater social and economic impact on the province.” While currently, Indigenous people have lower formal education rates and lower levels of employment, on average, there is an opportunity to create lasting changes with positive benefits to all Saskatchewan residents. For example, employing Indigenous people at a rate equivalent to the non-Indigenous population would boost the economy by $1.8 billion (or 2.6 %) by 2035 (Conference Board of Canada, 2013). It would also have broad social effects on individuals, family, and society.

MTMS centers its targeted interventions within North Central, a community in Regina that has a high concentration of youth, single-parent households, poverty, crime, unemployment, and undereducated people. Statistics show that almost 35% of the adults in this community have not completed high school and 44% of the households fall below the low-income cut-off. The school is not restricted to Indigenous students, however currently 81% of MTMS students are of Indigenous ancestry and it is expected that number will increase in future years. While all of the students are at-risk because of socio-economic status and other complex issues, there is a particular focus on serving Indigenous families in the community.

Statement on Reconciliation

On February 17, 2016, Mother Teresa Middle School released a statement regarding the recent publication of the Call to Action Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). In this landmark report, the TRC outlined the decision and policies that lead to the implementation of residential schools in Canada as well as the lasting impacts residential school system continues to have. The report also calls to action both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada to actively work towards reconciliation and healing (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

In light of the TRC recommendations and findings, Mother Teresa Middle School is committed to focusing in relationship building with families and communities; providing long-term education supports and programming for students; working with community leaders (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to implement the TRC reconciliation recommendations. MTMS is also committed to providing inclusivity of all religious and cultural traditions while continuing to be inspired by Catholic values. They are focused on creating a community and culture of care and respect; supporting Indigenous Elders and educators and ensuring Indigenous content as well as the history of residential schools are included in the school curriculum; and endorsing the Calls to Action from the TRC report recognizing “reconciliation must become a way of life.”
Clearly, the rapidly growing population of Indigenous youth in Regina coupled with low Grade 12 graduation rates and the increased need for post-secondary credentials have created “a compelling need” for educators to take action. Research has highlighted that disparities in education and employment has roots in in colonialism, particularly the inter-generational effects of systemic racism and the residential school system. Despite, these barriers, Mother Teresa Middle School is determined to take action and create meaningful educational opportunities for Indigenous youth in the Regina.

**Objective of the Project**

MTMS identified several objectives of their project that will ensure they can continue as an innovative and essential educational institution in Regina. Specifically, MTMS attempts to:

- Provide holistic support for middle-years students in order to eliminate many of the barriers that prevent students from excelling;
- Create a school culture that is spiritual, inclusive, community-oriented, and strengths-based in order to meet the unique needs of every learner;
- Focus on student attendance, engagement, and interest through setting goals and high expectations;
- Include families, caregivers, and community members and leaders;
- Focus on peer and adult mentorship to ensure success and smooth transitions to high school and beyond;
- Invest in each student for the entire duration of their academic experiences (until post-secondary); and
- Provide balanced education approach including curriculum based hands-on experiences, and mandatory meal programs and extracurricular programming.

The objectives of MTMS are to both maintain and strengthen existing programming, while exploring ways to adapt and expand to meet the needs of their growing alumni.

MTMS uses a model that centers on four key aspects as well as the ways in which those aspects are implemented and evaluated within the organization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. There must be engaged people</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ MTMS Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Administration (Executive Director, Principal, Graduate Support Director, Community School Outreach Worker, Student Services Assistant, Jesuit Regent).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Support Staff (Office Manager, Bus Driver, Nutrition Support).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Mentors, Families, Donors, Volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Strategically teaming to implement the MTMS mission

To provide an enhanced holistic Saskatchewan Ministry approved, faith-based middle school education to highly motivated marginalized students who live in inner city, Regina, Saskatchewan. MTMS aims to help break the cycle of poverty amongst its target families through the application of its unique model.

3. Using a practice standards blueprint

- Optimized Time for Student Learning
  1. School culture of delivered high expectations and mutual accountability.
  2. Active student engagement in academic goal setting and chartering progress.
  3. Expanded time - school day and year.

- Time to Help Students Thrive in School and Beyond
  5. Holistic education – mind, body, spirit.
  6. Commitment beyond graduation.

- Continuous Improvement of MTMS Staff
  7. Evidence-based school relentlessly assessing, analyzing, and using student data.
  8. Innovative team with strategic learning and alliances.

4. Readiness for the next generation

Mission Measurement Outcomes Targeted

- 97% student attendance.
- One-year academic progress based on potential (locally, provincially and internationally).
- Sustained well-being, hope and engagement.
- Holistic assessment – physical, social, emotional, family.
- Application of developing strengths and social entrepreneurship.
- Documentation of enrichment opportunities in extended time-school day and year and enrichment opportunities.
- Growth in the application of technology.
- Growth in community service.
Scope of the Project

The mission of the Mother Teresa Middle school is:
*To provide an enhanced holistic Saskatchewan Ministry approved, faith-based middle school education to highly motivated marginalized students who live in inner city, Regina, Saskatchewan. MTMS aims to help break the cycle of poverty amongst its target families through the application of its unique model.*

MTMS accepts 20 students per grade level per year through an extensive admissions process beginning in January of the preceding year. Each student, as well as their families, are a part of the process and students are notified of their acceptance in June. The criteria are based on both motivation and need. MTMS desires to serve those students who are capable of the highest academic achievement but are prevented in doing so because of social and economic barriers. Students and their families will take part in a clearly defined admissions process and most come from the North Central and Core areas of Regina. MTMS provides transportation for students who live within its identified boundaries. Students that are accepted have diverse academic needs but are motivated to attend and committed to MTMS, as are their families. MTMS provides all needed supports to students and their families to succeed.

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and runs until 4:30 p.m. and includes mandatory dress codes and uniforms, meal programs, extracurricular activities, and a three-week summer program. All faiths are welcome at the school; however, it is a faith-based organization and as such, students are expected to participate in all teachings and celebrations.
The staffing structure along with the number of staff currently serving in each role is as follows:

**MTMS Operational Structure: September 2015**

- **Treasurer**
  - Tina Dvevdal

- **MTMS Board**
  - Paul Hill, Ma Bunton, John Meehan, Laurie Powers

- **MTMS Executive Director**
  - Curtis Kleinsorge

- **MTMS Principal**
  - Terri Cole

- **Student Services - Graduate Support Director**
  - Ron Gonzales

- **Nutrition Support**
  - Janessa Rosenthal

- **Bus Drivers**
  - Kirk Steedman
  - Stan Koslowski

- **Social Community Outreach Coordinator**
  - Becky Schmidt

- **Student Service Assistant**
  - Lindsay MacPherson

- **Teacher**
  - Grade 6: Harmony McMillan
  - Grade 7: Jane Brundige
  - Grade 8: Greg Bieder
  - Prep/Technology Support: David Nelson

- **Development Director**
  - Cindy Kobayashi

- **Administrative Assistant**
  - Nicole Rueve (CO)

- **Office Manager**
  - Laura Lielel
Brief History of the Project

Historical Overview

In 2007, Paul J. Hill, a Regina businessman and entrepreneur, with the support of partners Harvard Developments Inc., the Regina Catholic School Board, Campion College, and English Canadian Jesuits began the journey of establishing the Mother Teresa Middle School of Regina. The motivation behind establishing the school was realized several years prior when Mr. Hill, his colleagues, and his family were visiting Mother Teresa during her mission work in India. During the trip, Mr. Hill and the other executives wanted to provide financial support, but Mother Teresa exclaimed, “I don’t want your money. What I would like you to do is go back to your community, identify a need in that community, and then give of yourself and your resources to fill this need.”

Several years later, during a business trip in southern California, Mr. Hill came across the Nativity Miguel Network of Schools, which were established in 2006. This organization's mandate of guiding and strengthening the development of a growing network of schools across the United States designed to provide families struggling in impoverished neighborhoods with a high-quality school choice for their children. Mr. Hill was inspired to explore the potential of having such a school in Canada. The model, which focuses on providing a holistic approach to education, offers students an extended school day/year, and a positive environment to learn and grow.

Connections Indspire Principles

Mother Teresa Middle School closely aligns with the following Indspire principles:

- **Principle 1**: Indigenous peoples have the right to retain shared responsibility for the education and well-being of their children.
- **Principle 5**: Learning is viewed as lifelong, holistic, and experiential, which is rooted in language and culture, is place-based, spiritually oriented, communal and open to multiple ways of knowing the world.
- **Principle 6**: Programs, schools and systems are responsive to both the aspirations and needs of Indigenous peoples.
- **Principle 7**: Recognizing the legacy of the colonial histories of Indigenous peoples, education is also a process of decolonization, which seeks to strengthen, enhance & strengthen and embrace Indigenous Knowledge and experience through various strategies including but not limited to anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogies and Indigenous pedagogies.

MTMS ensures that “Indigenous peoples have the right to retain shared responsibility for the education and well-being of their children” by continuously including the families in the school and the education of their child. From the beginning, with the admissions process, MTMS recognizes that the success of these students is linked to not only supporting the family, but also
acknowledging the invaluable role that parents and caregivers play in the education of their children. By including families in all aspects of student and school life, MTMS encourages not only the success of the child, but of the entire family.

It recognizes that “learning is viewed a lifelong, holistic, and experiential, which is rooted in language and culture, is place-based, spiritually oriented, communal and open to multiple ways of knowing the world.” For this reason, MTMS seeks to create an opportunity for youth where they are able to learn through an experiential, dynamic, and holistic experience. All aspects of the youths’ lives are expected to be challenged and positively impacted. It is an academic experience, but it is also a largely personal journey that for many is transformative, spiritual, and has lifelong impacts.

In terms of ensuring that “programs, schools and systems are responsive to both the aspirations and needs of Indigenous peoples,” the school operates on a strengths-based, youth-centred model that is not based on youth identifying personal deficits, problematic family dynamics, or negative community aspects. Instead, the youth identify their personality strengths, personal needs and passions. The program seeks to find the best possible opportunities for youth beyond their regular academic experience. In this case, it is about finding best possible fits rather than fixes.

MTMS also “recognizes the legacy of the colonial histories of Indigenous peoples, education and that there must be process of decolonization, which seeks to strengthen, enhance and embrace Indigenous Knowledge and experience through various strategies including but not limited to anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogies and Indigenous pedagogies.” It is for this reason that MTMS allows the youth multiple hands-on learning experiences that are designed to educate, inspire, and foster a greater sense of self. Cultural aspects are not separated from the learning experiences. Youth are encouraged to explore and express their own culture while learning and appreciating other cultures. Indigenous ways of knowing and learning are encouraged through the assignments given, during mentorship, and throughout the excursions and summer camp. Youth are encouraged to consider what makes them unique but also what connects to them to one another as northern Indigenous peoples.
Activities Accomplished

MTMS represents their accomplishments by focusing on four pillars:

- **Academic Excellence**: Develop a rigorous and balanced curriculum that focuses on establishing strong academic skills.
- **Financial Stability**: Achieve long-term financial stability.
- **Graduate Support**: Ensure a 100% graduation rate from high school and post-secondary opportunities.
- **Strategic Partnerships & Community Engagement**: Share our story, create new partnerships, and establish solid governance.

According to the 2014-2015 MTMS Annual Report, each pillar experienced success and contributed to the overall positive impact MTMS has in the community. The following chart highlights many of those successes for all of the students (of which 81% are Indigenous):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Academic Excellence</th>
<th>II. Financial Stability</th>
<th>III. Strategic Partnerships &amp; Community Engagement</th>
<th>IV. Graduate Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Lead: Principal</td>
<td>Key Lead: Development Director</td>
<td>Key Lead: Executive Director</td>
<td>Key Lead: Graduate Support Director &amp; Director of Student Supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ According to results from the <em>Tell Them From Me Effective Schools Survey</em>, MTMS student show above average levels of student engagement</td>
<td>✓ Received a total of $464,280 in funding and $8,760 per student from the provincial government</td>
<td>✓ MTMS has a 95% attendance rate and 92% retention rate (on par with Nativity Miguel Coalition Schools)</td>
<td>✓ 18 students had their hearing checked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 78% of Grade 8’s scored above average in reading and writing and 88% scored above average in math on the <em>Canadian Achievement Test (CAT 4)</em></td>
<td>✓ Senior students received $142,140 in scholarships to attend secondary institutions.</td>
<td>✓ Executive Director, Principal and Graduate Support Director attended conferences to share and strengthen networks</td>
<td>✓ 53 had their vision checked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ According to the <em>Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)</em>, the Grade 8’s expanded their math, reading, and language usage skills by 3.6 years in only three years</td>
<td>✓ Raised $50,435 in community donations at the <em>Sky’s The Limit Gala</em></td>
<td>✓ Partnership with Campion College (at U of R) to hold school masses, Executive Director was a guest lecturer</td>
<td>✓ 19 received new glasses, 4 for the first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ MAPS data also shows the Grade 7’s expanded</td>
<td>✓ September 2016, Gonzaga Middle School opened in Winnipeg, MB following MTMS model</td>
<td>✓ September 2016, Gonzaga Middle School opened in Winnipeg, MB following MTMS model</td>
<td>✓ 91.2% attendance rate and a 94% pass rate for students now in high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Graduate Support Director made 147 visits to high schools</td>
<td>✓ Principal member of Jesuit Schools Network Board</td>
<td>✓ 100% of students transitioned to Grade 10</td>
<td>✓ Six Honour roll students in high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 100% of students transitioned to Grade 10</td>
<td>✓ Participated in with Regina</td>
<td>✓ Ten are involved in extracurricular activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Logic Model

A logic model has been created to demonstrate the inputs, outputs, outcomes, and time frame of MTMS. This model has been instrumental in designing and driving its programming and evaluating its impact. It provides a visual of nearly all aspects of the project as well as its goals. Please see Appendix A on page 68.
## Performance Indicator and Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Success Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure high level of student engagement</td>
<td>MAPS testing three times/year and reporting results to families/caregivers; Student conferences and consultations</td>
<td>Student participation and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure a high level of academic achievement</td>
<td>Standardized test performance for literacy and numeracy</td>
<td>Students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations of provincial standardized test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a school culture that is culturally inclusive</td>
<td>Demographics of staff, mentors, and students</td>
<td>Presence of Elders, and Indigenous mentors and role models. Greater diversity in student body, mentors, and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase parental and community involvement</td>
<td>Formal and informal conversations with caregivers</td>
<td>Positive feedback and regular communication from parents and caregivers; willingness of staff to adapt and support families/caregivers when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support “whole” child</td>
<td>Evidence of interventions targeting nutrition, health, spirituality, identity, family issues, and individual personal and academic needs (anecdotal records)</td>
<td>Students basic emotional and physical needs are met and they are ready to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire and retain highly qualified staff</td>
<td>Regular performance evaluations, conversations, professional development, networking opportunities</td>
<td>Low staff turnover; high morale; low number of staff conflicts; highly motivated staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and sustain community partnerships</td>
<td>Creation of targeted number of joint community/school events and partnerships</td>
<td>Visibility of community leadership throughout school; high participating in joint community/school events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure long-term funding</td>
<td>Budgets, fundraising initiatives</td>
<td>Program sustainability and/or expansion; staff retention and expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Success Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide adequate transitional support to and throughout high school and beyond</td>
<td>Retention and attendance rates, student satisfaction, receiving school feedback</td>
<td>Student feedback; student successes (retention, attendance, high school graduation, scholarships/bursaries, involvement in receiving school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrate successes and immediate solutions for challenges</td>
<td>Grade 8 Graduation Ceremony; awards ceremonies; monthly newsletters, website updates and social media presence</td>
<td>Positive student, caregiver, staff, and community member feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation**

**Data Results: Overview**

The data presented below reflects the short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals of the implementation of MTMS. When possible, data sets were compared on certain outcome measures. In order to effectively measure the success of the school and the programming, several data sets were used, as well as qualitative and quantitative surveys and interviews. Through a combination of charts, graphs, and thematic analysis, the following outcomes were measured:

- Short-Term Goals: attendance, volunteerism and academic experience, travel experiences, confidence and independence, problem solving and social skills
- Intermediate Goals: enrolment in secondary education/training, appreciation of Indigenous culture and way of life
- Long-Term Goal: engaged, educated, and employable Indigenous Saskatchewan youth

**Priority Investments Report Recommendations**

The *Priority Investments in Saskatchewan’s First Nations and Métis People* report identified several specific issues that relate to the education gaps experienced by Indigenous youth in Saskatchewan. The report also highlighted best practices that institutions need to implement in order to successfully close this gap.

The chart below demonstrates some the ways in which MTMS is already implementing purposeful and successful interventions according to these recommendations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommended Best Practice</th>
<th>MTMS Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Academic Standards</td>
<td>▶ Youth need clear, consistent, high standards and expectations</td>
<td>MTMS students are expected to perform at or above grade level in all subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ “Pipeline” of services approach - supports are provided in the beginning and extend throughout until high school is completed</td>
<td>Staff are able to individualize programs and supports due to small class sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Invest in teacher training</td>
<td>Peers support one another regularly to achieve success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Provide culturally rich training for teachers</td>
<td>Mentors provide assistance and cultural connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Increase relevance of course content through hands-on learning</td>
<td>Hands-on learning experiences occur regularly and in particularly during the summer program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Adopt culturally sensitive teaching practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Academic Engagement</td>
<td>▶ Increase the relevance of course content and offer extracurricular activities</td>
<td>All activities, course work, and programming is relevant and meets the interests and needs of the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Ensure curriculum is inclusive</td>
<td>Students are given tools and opportunities to identify needs and provide feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Continuously monitor progress</td>
<td>Summer camps and enrichment programming are mandatory for all MTMS students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Tap into resources and funding</td>
<td>Indigenous content is taught as part of the daily curriculum and many recommendations from the TRC have been implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Offer educational summer camps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Offer enrichment programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Pregnancy</td>
<td>▶ Extracurricular participation and connection to school can reduce chances</td>
<td>Extended day provides ample opportunities for extracurricular participation to occur before, during, and after school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MTMS will connect and support students who wish to participate in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Recommended Best Practice</td>
<td>MTMS Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Support</td>
<td>➢ Increase parental engagement as connected families will be able to assist students in involvement, engagement etc.</td>
<td>Parents and caregivers are a large part of the recruitment and admissions process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Seek opportunities to include Indigenous adults in programming</td>
<td>Families are invited to attend events, participate in school activities, and engage with youth in the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Students are offered top notch education with a focus on digital literacy</td>
<td>MTMS staff assists caregivers with supports and referrals whenever possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-to-School Transitions</td>
<td>➢ Strengthen literacy, numeracy, computer and basic living skills</td>
<td>Students are offered top notch education with a focus on digital literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Ensure quality education that focuses in skill development needed to immediately enter the work force and be successful</td>
<td>There is a dedicated staff position (teacher) who works as a technology specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Increase employer interest in employing and training Indigenous youth.</td>
<td>Board of Directors, staff, and mentors assist students in creating networks, obtaining part-time employment in high school, and exposing them to career options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Increase support services</td>
<td>All students have access to extensive transitional supports until post-secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Lobby for increased adult education</td>
<td>Adult family members are encouraged to participate in student education and career planning and encouraged to consider their own options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Engagement

Student Surveys

On November 2, 2016, 52 MTMS students completed the ClassMaps Survey (81% of the 52 who completed the survey were Indigenous). This survey asks the students a variety of questions related to engagement and motivation which are to be ranked on a four-point Likert scale (where 0 = Never; 1 = Sometimes; 2 = Often; and 3 = Almost Always).

The survey is divided into eight sections focusing on six specific areas of engagement:

- Academic efficacy;
- Student-teacher relationships;
- I believe in myself
- I have positive relationships with my teachers
- I take charge
- I have positive peer connections
- I follow the class rules
- The peers demonstrate negative behaviours
- My family is connected to the school
- I worry about peer relationships
➢ Academic efficacy self-determination;
➢ Peer relationships;
➢ Behavioural self-control; and
➢ Home-school relationships.

The following chart highlights the average response from each section. It is presents the total number of points generated from each of the eight survey sections.

The data demonstrates the following:
➢ The majority of the students felt they “almost always” had positive relationships with their peers, believed in themselves, and had positive peer connections.
➢ The vast majority of students “never” worried about their peers and/or had negative interactions with their peers. They also reported “never” witnessing their peers demonstrating negative reactions.
➢ Less than half felt they were only in control of situations or able to take charge “sometimes”.
➢ The average responses for each of the eight sections are: 2.4; 2.8; 2.1; 2.3; 2.1; 1.8; 2.5, and 2.2.

These data results overwhelming support the efforts of MTMS staff and students to create a positive learning and social environment. The students generally “often” or “almost always” experienced positive interactions with staff, peers and family members and only a small minority reported having negative interactions or experiences.

**Behavioural Incidents**

In order to measure student engagement, MTMS also documented the rates of suspensions related to serious behavioural incidents for all students from the 2012-2013 school year to present. It also provides a gender breakdown.
The data demonstrates the following:

- The total number of overall suspensions reached its highest point in the 2013-2014 school year (total of 11 suspensions) but has been declining steadily ever since.
- More boys are suspended than girls are however, in the 2015-2016 school year no boys were suspended.

**Standardized Test Performance**

Student success at MTMS needs to be measured against provincial standards. Therefore, several standardized tests are implemented each year to determine how well MTMS students perform and to compare those results to the “norm” across the province of Saskatchewan. These tests are generally administered in the fall, winter and spring and the results are then compared. The results of four such standardized tests are presented below in order to demonstrate what impact MTMS interventions may have on student achievement.

The standardized tests compared are:

- The Reading Achievement Diagnostic Test (RAD); and
- The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP);
This data tables indicate that overall the student achievement for math, reading, and language usage (oral and written language skills) is high. In the 2015-2016 school year, for students in their first year at Mother Teresa Middle School (Grade 6), 39 students were above grade level in reading, 11 were above grade level for math, and 22 were above for language usage.

This data demonstrates two trends:

1. Many of the students who enter MTMS are capable of achieving higher than grade level expectations in both numeracy and literacy.
2. Those students who are above grade level in Grade 6, will most likely be able to maintain this type of academic achievement in future years.

**MAP Goal Setting**

The same group of Grade 6 students were also asked to partake a MAPS testing process to create their own literacy and numeracy goals throughout the year. MAPS testing is also done in Grades 7 and 8. The data chart below demonstrates the results of the goal setting done by the Grade 6 class.
The data demonstrates the following:

- Nearly half (44%) of the students exceeded their MAPS goal for math while 39% were able to meet or exceed their goals for reading.
- Some students may require additional instruction, support, and assistance with setting and achieving reading and language usage goals.
RAD Assessment Data by Cohort

MTMS collects and analyses data for many measures by using cohorts as they are interested in tracking and comparing the students throughout their entire academic career (not just their time at MTMS). Using cohorts allows MTMS to be able to assess the performance of these groups through until Grade 12.

In this case, Cohort C is comprised of those MTMS students who began Grade 6 in the fall of 2013 and ended in the winter of 2016. The following data tracks their progress in the RAD standardized reading assessment for Grades 7 and 8.

The results indicate the following:

- The students had higher achievement in the spring of Grade 7, demonstrating growth throughout that year, particularly during reading strategies.
- The students in this cohort demonstrates strong “before reading strategy” skills for both years.
There is very little change between the Grade 8 fall and winter test results for “during” and “after reading strategies”, demonstrating a possible need for strengthening these strategies in Grade 8.

Cohort D is comprised of those MTMS students who began Grade 6 in the fall of 2014 and ended in the winter 2016. The following data tracks their progress in the RAD standardized reading assessment for Grades 6 and 7.

The data reflects the following trends:

- “Before reading strategies” are the strongest for this cohort and steadily increase from the beginning of Grade 6 through to the middle of Grade 7.
- There was a decrease in “during reading” from the end of Grade 6 to the beginning of Grade 7, however there was a tremendous increase at the end of Grade 7.
- “After reading strategies” were strong at the end of Grade 6 but dropped off significantly in Grade 7 indicating an area to focus instructional time and resources.
Cohort E is comprised of those MTMS students who began Grade 6 in the fall of 2015. The following data tracks their progress in the RAD standardized reading assessment for Grade 6.

The data reflects the following trends:

- For all three strategies, there were incredible gains from the beginning of the year until the winter.
- As with Cohorts C and D, this Cohort (E) of Grade 6 students is projected to experience the same successes in “before reading strategies” and possibly “during” and “after reading strategies”.
RAD Assessment Data by Grade

MTMS collects and analyses data for many measures by grade level as they can be analysed and compare the students from each grade in one year and determine their success on standardized tests.

The following charts present the fall and winter RAD performance of MTMS students who began Grade 6, 7 and 8 in the fall of 2014. Specifically, it presents the total points accumulated for the “before”, “during”, and “after reading strategies”.

This data table demonstrates that:
The students’ performance increased from the fall to winter across all reading strategies. The greatest amount of growth was seen in the “after reading strategies”, where the students increased their performance from 17 total points to 53.
This data table demonstrates that:

- The students’ performance increased from the fall to winter across all reading strategies. The greatest amount of growth was seen in the “during reading strategies” where the students increased their performance by 52 points.
This data table demonstrates that:

- The students’ performance decreased from the fall to winter across all reading strategies. The greatest amount of decline was seen in the “before reading strategies” where the students decreased their performance by 23 total points.

These three data tables reflect the following trends:

- There is an overall increase in total points across reading strategies for Grades 6 and 7 demonstrating an increase in reading strategy skills learned.
- The decline in reading strategy performance Grade 8 indicates the need for greater targeted interventions for senior students.
The following charts present the fall and winter RAD performance of MTMS students who began Grade 6, 7 and 8 in the fall of 2015 and presents the total points obtained for each class across five areas (predicting, summarizing, inferencing, making connections, and self-monitoring).

The data demonstrates:

- There was an increase in total points across all five measures, with the greatest growth occurring in the areas of self-monitoring (increase of 65 points) and predicting (increase of 41 points).
The data demonstrates:

- There was an increase in total points across four measures, with the greatest growth occurring in the areas of summarizing (increase of 46 points) and inferencing (increase of 18 points).
- There was no change in the area of self-monitoring.
The data demonstrates:

- There was a modest increase in total points across two measures: summarizing (11 points) and self-monitoring (2 points).
- There was a decrease in performance across three areas: predicting, inferencing, and making connections.

These three grade alike data tables reflect the following trends:

- There is an overall increase in total points across these five measures of comprehensions for Grades 6, 7, and 8 demonstrating an increase in reading comprehension skills learned.
- The decline in comprehension strategy performance in Grade 8 indicates the need for greater targeted interventions for senior students.
Qualitative Interviews

As part of the formal evaluation process, in-person interviews were conducted by Infinity Consulting during the evaluation period (February 22-26, 2016). MTMS personnel (including administrators, board members, mentors, and programming staff), and former and current MTMS students, and their caregivers were interviewed. The questionnaire consisted of eight open-ended questions given in an interview format so that participants could use their own words while someone else recorded their responses. Given the open-ended nature of this interview, the responses generated span a wide range and encompass many experiences. As such, the transcriptions of these interviews were analysed and similar responses were grouped together thematically. However, whenever possible direct quotations have been incorporated into the report to capture the participants’ actual responses.

The breakdown of the interview participants is as follows:
Administrators, Teachers, and Board Members

There were a total of eleven staff members interviewed. Of those staff members interviewed, two are administrators, four are support workers, three are teachers, one is a board member, and one is an Elder affiliated with the school.

Q1. Please tell me how long you have worked for Mother Teresa Middle School and in what capacity.

- One administrator has been involved with MTMS since 2011 as a teacher and in the 2013-2014 was half-time Vice Principal and half-time teacher. In 2014, she transitioned to Principal and oversees day-to-day operations.
- The other administrator has been involved with MTMS for six years and was brought on board one year before it opened in 2011 to be the first Principal. Prior to coming to MTMS, he worked as an educator and assisted in putting the school together. He has continued to build it over the past six years and deals with the Ministry, generates reports, manages missions, and reports to the Board of Directors.
- One interviewee began as a volunteer in the 2012-2013 school year and continued off and on throughout her education degree. She then did her practicum placement in the summer of 2014 and she completed her internship at MTMS in 2014. Following her internship, she accepted the Student Services Assistant position in 2015 and is now the Grade 7 classroom teacher.
- Another staff member has been at MTMS for four years, first as a Grade 7 teacher and then in 2014 as a Grade 8 teacher.
- The current Student Service Assistant was a former volunteer and interned at MTMS in 2015. She assists with secondary supports, the mentorship program, transportation, and problem solving with families.
- Another interview has worked at MTMS for three years teaching Grade 6, 7, and 8 science, health, and physical education. He is also responsible for all the technology in the school, including troubleshooting, updating the website, and overseeing social media sites.
- One participant has been involved as the School Community Outreach Worker for two years. She has a background in social work and provides wrap around supports for students and their families.
- Another interviewee has worked for two years as the Grade 6 teacher.
- The Graduate Support Director/Director of Student Support began in September 2011 and has occupied this position for the past three years.
- An Elder, who is a specialist in plant knowledge and worked with the youth at First Nations University of Canada on a planting project, was also interviewed.
- Finally, one Board member was interviewed. She has served in the Board since 2013 and has been connected to the school from the beginning.
Q2. Can you tell me briefly how the school operates and what makes the school so unique?

- All of the staff interviewed identified the “wrap around” approach as one of the things that makes MTMS so unique.
- Two staff members mentioned that it is the only Jesuit Middle School in Regina and the only school that tracks and helps students right from middle-years right to employment. As one staff members said, “It was well-researched and everything is purposeful and clear. MTMS is the first nativity school in Canada, and the first to deal with issues in the community and with Indigenous youth in this way.”
- Another staff member highlighted the strengths-based nature of the school noting, “Everyone is an expert in their own way, but no one has an ego. Everyone wraps themselves around the students and does what is in their best interest. We pull on each other’s strengths regardless of your background.”
- Nearly 80% of all staff members explained the family-based approach the school uses. According to one staff member, being able to advocate for families that are not confident to ask for things with no judgment only compassion is what makes MTMS unique from other schools.
- 36% discussed the alternative day schedule (longer day with mandatory after school programming) and summer sessions/trips as the most unique thing about MTMS. According to one staff member, this structure allows MTMS to create networks and build community, build relationships, and learn about culture and identity. Yet another stated, “We have to create a continuity of learning, some kids have been to 10-15 different schools before Grade 6, some are in care, living with grandparents, living with trauma, lots of people are coming in and out of their lives, kids can learn in a great environment and teacher can do great things.”
- Another 36% explained the transition piece and how essential it is to see the students through to high school graduation. Investing in their students long-term and placing a lot of time and resources into transitions and secondary support also makes MTMS unlike other schools in Regina.
- For one teacher, the relationship building with students and families was the most unique aspect of MTMS.

Q3. What do you see as the main benefits to the youth? Can you provide an example?

- The majority of the staff listed three or more main benefits for youth who attend MTMS.
- Over half (55%) of the staff interviewed felt the total wrap around approach MTMS provides to be the main benefit to the students. One staff member noted, that the care goes beyond the classroom, while another explained how this is different from teaching at other schools as they are able to help in ways not possible in the public system. She stated, “We can deal with issues they have at home and get them back into the classroom and learning that much more quickly.” By providing extensive, integrated services, MTMS is dealing with issues outside of the classroom rather than pretending they do not exist or acknowledging them but not acting on them. They have the time and resources to as one teacher stated, “Get them to school so the real changes can happen.”
- Another 55% felt the transition services and follow-through until post-secondary education were the greatest benefits. These transition services include broader supports (i.e. helping
students choose a secondary school that meets their needs) to much more specific assistance. For example, one teacher shared how a former MTMS student now in high school needed access to a computer for a school assignment and MTMS was able to provide the computer. According to another staff member, these trusting relationships that does not end just because a student finishes Grade 8. One administrator explained, “This is a seven-year commitment that we make to your students and families. We will see you through until you graduate high school.”

- Four teachers noted the strong commitment MTMS makes to families and as one staff member stated, “We know the aunts, uncles, and grandparents. They trust us and that’s key; there is no judgment.”
- 18% of the staff felt the experiential learning that extends throughout the school day and year were the greatest benefits. Specifically, one staff member discussed how the summer program at the university to prepares them for post-secondary and gives them a chance to be in that space.
- Another 18% focused on the structure of the school discussing the smaller classes and how they have a huge impact on motivation and engagement, the transportation, and the nutritional supports. According to one teacher, no kid goes unnoticed.
- Three more participants explained the greatest benefit lies in the pedagogical approach MTMS takes to breaking the cycle of poverty through education. MTMS prides itself on truly listening to its students and their caregivers as having that serve as the foundations for teaching and learning. According to one teacher, anything they promise, they follow through on as their grandmothers have told them that this means so much. They had their recruiting meeting and one of their grandmothers and mothers spoke out and said that in the voices of their people is where the power lies.
- An additional three interviewees acknowledged the changes in attitude in the youth who attend MTMS. They noted increases in self-esteem, hope, independence, problem solving and communication skills, and leadership.
- Three more staff members expressed the relationships that are formed with the students are greatest benefit. For one employee this goes beyond just the typical student-teacher bond as it is a constant and continuous relationship from 6th Grade to employment.
- Two more teachers mentioned the exposure and how MTMS allows student and families to network and meet community members, which creates opportunities.
- Finally, one staff member noted how the great staff relations and high morale translates into benefits for the kids as even the staff treat each other like family.

Q4. Do you see any areas for improvement? If so, what would you recommend? Please provide an example if possible.

- 34% of the staff members would like to see greater Indigenous inclusion. Specifically, they would like to increase the network of First Nations and Métis mentors so students can learn and grow and to increase cultural partnerships (i.e. with First Nations University of Canada). Another staff member noted the need for an onsite Elder or Indigenous consultant while another reminded the interviewers that the model MTMS uses is from the United States and...
requires deep roots in the community to be successful (which will take time); the deeper the roots, the better the school will be.

- 27% of the staff interviewed felt that the graduate support program needs improvements. One staff member noted how because MTMS is a unique school there are no best practices to follow, they are creating a model as they go. As such, they need to adapt and change to meet the growing needs and growing alumni student body. Another staff member noted that, first group will graduate from high school in 2018 and will give us a good indication of the work that needs to be done.

- Another 27% discussed the issues with staffing. Particularly, one employee identified a need for increases staff in the areas of student support. They stated, “My favourite part of the job is working one-on-one with the students but that sometimes takes a backseat to what the school needs to function, sometimes we are so busy being reactive instead of proactive.” Another teacher noted the need for greater sustainability of staff and the implementation of a succession plan for new staff. For example, they need to have trained substitutes so the teaching staff do not feel obligated to work through illnesses and can take time for self-care. Finally, one staff member noted that the staff is committed to working hard, but they need more support.

- Yet another 27% acknowledged the need for more space in the building so programs can grow. This includes a gym, more prep space, more storage, and a third bus.

- Two staff members discussed the need to build community capacity. They expressed the need for programming (i.e. community kitchens) to build relationships and help families and to offer non-judgmental help so the families can experience supports without shame and guilt. According to one teacher, the more that they can empower the whole family the great the changes – need more supports to reach family.

- Finally, one teacher mentioned the need to expand programming. For example, MTMS piloted a boys’ club initiative, which had great results, but they need more resources to continue the initiative.

Q5. What has been the biggest change, positive or negative, that you have noticed in terms of the youth that take part in the program? Please give an example.

- 55% of the staff felt the personal transformations of the youth were the greatest positive change. According to one teacher, they find out what they are passionate about that’s really the goal of education; leave here a changed person. One staff member notes how when the students first come they are disengaged but over time there is a positive change in their confidence and they are able to state their needs and learn to ask for help and to be resilient. Two more participants mentioned how the school provides the students with the tools and strategies they need to be successful and the staff models what they expect to see so that students can better develop successful skills.

- 27% of the staff acknowledged how the wrap around approach coupled with high expectations creates the biggest positive change. The staff is able to create a huge impact because they establish a high level of trust. Many of the students and the staff have gained this trust by following through and meeting the individual needs of the students and empowering their families. Another teacher noted that the consistency of the wrap around
approach right through until graduation has the biggest positive impact. Finally, one administrator stated, “*We keep telling them they can do this, no one rises to low expectations, we hold them accountable.*”

- One staff member acknowledged the richness of experiences from camps to university to sports programming as these experiences are life-changing for these kids, while another staff member highlighted the changes brought about by establishing relationships with families.

- In terms of the negative aspects, 36% of the staff noted the importance of increasing transitional supports. These students require support in order to be successful. The secondary supports are especially essential for Grade 9 students because as one staff member stated, “*The students have 3 years at MTMS to trust and open up and ask for help and then they go to high school and it’s different from MTMS and they struggle. The walls can come crashing down and they have to adapt. We need to focus our efforts here.*”

Another employee mentioned that, “since 2011 we have 34 students in high school and that’s a huge accomplishment and the crazy thing is that could change in a day because of trauma and crisis and that’s why graduation is so important.”

**Q6. What have youth told you about their experiences attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please provide an example or two.**

- All of the youth have expressed positive experiences to the MTMS staff.
- Three former students have expressed to the staff that they appreciate the loving approach and loved being held accountable for actions even if they do not realize why yet. Often the appreciation comes from alumni students in high school who see all the valuable things they learned at MTMS. In particular, one student shared with a staff member that she needed to be at the best school and away from negative influences and needed to find a new family after her mother and grandmother passed away. She is grateful for the help MTMS gave her in finding the right high school.
- Three staff members noted the need to find new and inclusive ways to incorporate Indigenous spirituality into the school structure and curriculum while another two teachers said the kids often discuss the trips (i.e. the Tim Horton’s camp).
- 73% of the staff members interviewed said the students praised everything from the transportation, to the small class-sizes, the nutrition program, the fundraising campaigns, the teachers, the extracurricular activities, the Grade 8 graduate supports and the mentorship program. In fact, most staff members listed at least four positive reactions the students have had.

**Q7. Is there anything else you would like to add?**

- Two staff members did not have anything to add.
- Three interviewees spoke about the unique nature of MTMS, expressing, “*It’s a special place with a different atmosphere*, “*I feel such a deep sense of purpose here*” and, “*This is not a band aid fix. We are really trying to break the cycle of poverty.*”
- Another two noted the excitement in seeing the students as high school graduates.
Two staff members noted the need for expansion and how the administration has done a great job of laying strong foundations. One staff member stated, “We are nothing without our strong foundations, the leadership is amazing, each staff member and student brings a special gift to the building and makes the school better that is why we are successful.”

Two more interviewees acknowledged that at MTMS they model what they want to see in their students and create reciprocal relationships.

The Elder acknowledged how the staff were respectful and eager to learn, very respectful in how they asked questions and she would work with them again.

Finally, one teacher added, “I could never go back to working at a mainstream school. How [the principal] models and problem solves has been tremendous experience for me here.”

Mentors

There are a total of three mentors interviewed. All of the mentors have been involved with the school for two or more years.

Q1. What do you see as the main benefit in attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please share a few examples.

One of the mentors acknowledged that MTMS works with the whole family, not just the students when are at school. He mentioned the holistic, balanced education model used.

Two mentors noted the main benefits of MTMS were the extensive after school programming and the inclusion of knowledgeable community members in programming.

Finally, one mentor who works with students in Grade 9 (following their high school transition from MTMS) stated the main benefits of this type of school include: a focus on cooperation; considering what is in the best interests of the students; is empowering, focuses on positives of students, families, and the community; includes the students in decisions-making; and recognizes the needs for supports to make the transitions successful.

Q2. What do your colleagues think of mentoring at Mother Teresa Middle School? Can you share any examples (positive or negative)?

One mentor noted that he is an advocate for the school and encourages people from different backgrounds to apply to diversify and extend the mentor pool. He also mentioned the need to expand programming, for example, offering the beading class on a regular basis. This mentor also shared the positive story of receiving a positive Facebook message from a parent whose son he had worked with as a mentor.

Another mentor acknowledged that he can promote to his colleagues the holistic education system that engages the student, family, and the community, and teaches social skills.

Finally, one mentor noted he is able to tell individuals from his community they can make a difference in the lives of youth.

Q3. Is there anything about Mother Teresa Middle School that you don’t like? If so, please share an example.
None of the mentors could identify any negative aspects of the mentorship program of MTMS.

One of the mentors mentioned hearing a speaker at a conference who stated, “You can’t program your way out of poverty, but you can network your way out.” He noted that MTMS tries hard to empower youth but teaching them how to create healthy support networks.

Another interview discussed many of the positive aspects of the school. For example, he highlighted how expecting the students to wake up for school every day in middle school creates an easier transition for high school. He claimed the students will be used to the pace and expectations, even for university too. MTMS also ensure the students have to give back to the community and pay it forward. The school teachers teach them to be the best they can be.

Q4. Do you have any suggestions that you think might improve your experience here?

- All three mentors mentioned the need for MTMS to improve and expand its programming to include more Indigenous content. One mentor mentioned the need to explore deeper and move beyond Indian Fine Arts, such as beading and learn more about culture and way of life.
- Another suggested increasing First Nations and Métis staff, board members, and/or teachers as well as more First Nations mentors for after school programming from various fields.
- According to another mentor, the kids respond to people of their own ancestry and MTMS does recognizes they need more First Nations and Métis mentors for their students. This will help transition to high school and the real world. The more opportunity there is to incorporate culture would be great.

Q5. What has been the single best learning, lesson, or experience since attending Mother Teresa Middle School? How do you think this will help you in the future?

- One mentor acknowledged the First Nations University of Canada experience to be the best. He noted how positive it was to give tours to youth and build bracelets. According to this mentor, seeing the excitement when they finish their bracelets was incredible for both, First Nations and non-First Nations students.
- Another mentor discussed how the confidence increased in the kids and how they made huge progress in dealing as evidenced in photos from Grade 6 to Grade 8. According to this mentor, they have more self-esteem and are more confident and comfortable in their own skin as they engage in what they are learning.
- Finally, one mentor stated that knowing where his mentee is going after high school and knowing that this student has vision, dream, and goals including going to Notre Dame is amazing. For him, watching and witnessing the student grow throughout the three years was the single best thing about working with MTMS.
Q6. Would you recommend that other youth from your community attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Why or why not?

- All three of the mentors stated they would recommend MTMS to youth who meet the criteria. According to one mentor, the best reason to recommend MTMS is that schooling extends throughout part the summer.
- Another mentor expressed he would recommend MTMS because of the high expectations to attend, participate, and excel, the extracurricular activities, and the transportation and funding opportunities.
- Another would recommend MTMS because of the importance placed on reading, which is essential to success in any aspect of life.

Q7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

- One mentor added that great staff and strong leadership makes a difference, remarking that the staff at MTMS go above and beyond.
- Two mentors noted how MTMS is unique in their approach toward including families from the beginning (during recruitment) and helps caregivers realize their own dreams and successes.
- Finally, one mentor stated, “This school is a model for success, hopefully other schools are able to implement the program.”

Students

There were a total of 13 Indigenous students interviewed. Of those students interviewed, eight are current students at Mother Teresa Middle School and four are former students who are currently in high school.

Q1. What do you see as the main benefit in attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please share a few examples.

- The main benefits mentioned by the students were: immediate academic supports, variety of extracurricular opportunities, smaller class sizes, one-on-one time with the staff, positive peer relationships and zero tolerance for bullying, access to technology, chances to travel, excellent high school preparation, the nutrition program, and transportation.
- As one student mentioned, “It’s peaceful and they pay attention to us more, when I had big groups and lots of people at school it was hard for me. They helped me through my learning by using more examples. We move around a lot so I attended many schools, the teachers are kinder here and we are like a big team.”
- Another mentioned that if you fall out of shape, they would push you back into shape and would help make you strive for better. MTMS helped them mature well past their age group.
- According to one MTMS alumni, the school gave them the opportunity to come to Notre Dame and play sports. They are to get a scholarship to college (in the United States). MTMS helped them to grow more confident and now they have learned new social skills.
Q2. What do your peers think of attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Can you share any examples (positive or negative)?

- Most of the students’ peers had positive feedback. The reasons ranged from loving the summer trips and after school programming to the close-knit school community, to creating lasting friendships, to getting to travel. They think it is awesome. Every summer they do trips – they think that is great.

- 36% of the students noted that some peers do not like the school because of the high expectations and strict rules, however, they also acknowledged that this just was not the right fit for them. Nonetheless, all of these students recognized the need for these rules and expectations to prepare them for high school.

- According to one student their friends really like this school because it gives them the opportunity to do things they never thought they could do (football/wrestling). Another stated, “Everybody has a great attitude about going to this school and the staff really value the students and they talk to us and play attention.”

- Another student did mention the struggle with peers in the community who did not attend MTMS. Sometimes it can be challenging because the youth in the community don’t understand the school or become jealous. This student elaborates further and stated, “My friends think it’s expensive and hard to get into and it creates a divide with friends from the community and makes them feel like second class citizens because now there is a divide. They think you have to have a lot of money or you’re be really smart to go there. We feel special and like we have worth but they also notice it.”

- One former student noted that as the years go and more and more students come through, the school needs to expand to meet the needs. He recognized that he will was able to take advantage of many opportunities as one of the first graduates of the school.

Q3. Is there anything about Mother Teresa Middle School that you don’t like? If so, please share an example.

- Four of the students did not have anything to add.

- Three of the students noted the meal options were limited (either in portion size or in variety).

- Three of the students noted the read-to-self time (45 minutes in the morning, after lunch and at the end of the day and for one hour after school) was too much. However, a former student did expand on this stating that, “While it was a lot back then now looking back I know why they did it and now I’m one of the biggest book worms on campus.”

- Three students mentioned the extended day was too long. For one student, who has to take the bus for 1.5 hours both before and after school, the long day is often hard. However, a former student who noted having complained about the mandatory after school programming, now sees the value in high school and is able to commit to activities at that level.

- One student mentioned making band a choice rather than mandatory.

- One student mentioned that the bathrooms were small.

- One student noted that, sometimes, it is challenging to talk to teachers or counsellors regarding problems on social media but did not elaborate as to why.
Finally, one former student discussed how the hands-on learning focus, while awesome, found that it didn’t do a good job of prepping them for high school as it’s a lot more formal with lectures.

Q4. Do you have any suggestions that you think might improve your experience here?

- 62% of the students did not have any suggestions for improvement.
- Two students noted having different foods on the menu.
- Two students would like to see less rules and mandatory aspects such as the dress code, conversely, one former student did acknowledge how the rules and expectations did a great job preparing him for high school.
- One student discussed teaching about the LGBT community, offering transgendered or gender neutral washrooms.

Q5. What has been the single best learning, lesson, or experience since attending Mother Teresa Middle School? How do you think this will help you in the future?

- 62% of the students mentioned the summer camp, trips to Calgary and Ottawa and time spent at the university were the best aspects of MTMS. As one student stated, “Going to Banff was one of the first trips of my life and experiencing the Gondola was amazing.” Another said, “Going to Ottawa and getting to ride on a plane was the best. I get to see the world.”
- Two students most valued how the teachers engaged the students and try to help them with social skills and academics. For one learner, the use of “Minecraft math” helped him learn math.
- Another student most appreciated learning about God as, it will help them because the high school they want to attend is Catholic and they will understand the values and morals.
- One student valued that MTMS listened to his ideas when he suggested lacrosse for after school and table tennis and they worked it out and made it possible, while another liked the after school programming because “other kids just go home after school in other schools and we get to stay and learn stuff we like.”
- Finally, one student stated, “The best thing for me is the teachers help me grow in math, science, social, they help me a lot.”

Q6. Would you recommend that other youth from your community attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Why or why not?

- All of the students stated they would recommend MTMS to other youth in the community. The reasons provided include: participating in fundraising initiatives, going on trips, focusing on academics, having ample amount of teacher support and respect, focusing on faith and fitness, awesome extracurricular activities, smaller class sizes, and the positive atmosphere with great peers and staff.
- As one student stated, “I would definitely recommend them. They would have more opportunities to experience. The three years here can change their lives.”
While another drew on personal experiences saying, “Yes, I would recommend MTMS, because the community I’m from is not really positive, so these kids can learn to make the community better.”

Q7. Is there anything else you would like to add?
- Eleven students did not have anything to add.
- One student discussed how the teachers were patient with the students and made every effort to explain something and did not get mad if the students disagreed with them.
- Another student noted, “In social [studies] the teacher taught us about right and wrong and the assembly every morning and the prayer and the uniform made us feel like we were on a big team.”

Q8. How is the graduate support follow up?¹
- One student did not answer the questions.
- All three students who provided feedback found the graduate support very helpful. For example, one former student who now attends a boarding school noted, “When I need something and my family cannot help me they are instantly there.”
- Finally, two former students discussed how helpful the supports were in Grade 9 and how the gradual decrease in transition supports has been effective.

Parents and Caregivers

There are a total of seven parents of Indigenous students who attend Mother Teresa Middle School that were interviewed.

Q1. Please tell me what grade your child(ren) are in and what your overall impression of Mother Teresa Middle School is in relation to your child(ren).
- All of the parents interviewed had a positive overall impression of MTMS.
- The parent of a Grade 6 girl felt that MTMS is a great opportunity for her child because her daughter can take full advantage of the school and can focus on school. This parent appreciates how MTMS sends the bus right to the house and helps the kids, get through the school, Grade 12 and even get them into the best university.
- Another parent has a student in Grade 9 who started MTMS halfway through Grade 6. This parent noted that MTMS is an amazing place, kind of like a small family which encourages you when you’re having problems, provides counselling, and volunteer opportunities for parents.
- 50% of the parents expressed how the school adequately prepares their children for high school. According to the parent of a Grade 8 student, at this school, these people really care about their kids, they really love their kids, they make it easy for their kids to break down the barriers for their kids. The other parent, who has two boys at the school noted that the school provides equal opportunities here and a chance for scholarships.

¹ The following questions were added to the former Mother Teresa Middle School students interview only.
Another parent used the term “overwhelmed” discussing the growth in her Grade 7 daughter and Grade 6 son.

Two parents acknowledged that MTMS saved their children from potentially negative situations. According to the parent of a now Grade 9 son, when their son started at MTMS his academics weren’t good. He sat in the principal’s office for two years in his previous school and he started MTMS two years delayed. Another parent of a Grade 8 boy stated that MTMS is a miracle school as his son overcame racism, bullying, depression, and negative peer influences.

Finally, one parent expressed the need for schools like this in the community and stated, “I have 8 kids and 4 have dropped out because they didn’t have opportunities to be supported like this. I was a single parent. My oldest wanted to play sports but I couldn’t afford it so he dropped out of school.”

Q2. What do you see as the main benefit to your child(ren)? Can you provide an example?

71% of the parents interviewed identified a change in their child’s attitude as the main benefit to since attending MTMS. One parent stated, “This school is like magic. Even the bus driver teaches respect and has patience for the children.” Two parents expanded on the attitude shift noting that previously here children had poor attendance and motivation and often displayed challenging behaviours at school and home. According to one parent, their son has become more loving and caring, he knows there’s people out there that are there for him.

This attitude shift has also extended beyond academics, one parent discussed how his son is becoming more involved in cultural practices and has found his spiritual identity. He expanded noting, “He wants to be a Pipe Keeper and ceremonial helper, but he isn’t ready yet. We grew up thinking children should be seen and not heard, so I encourage him to speak his mind.”

MTMS also fosters a greater sense of responsibility and independence in its students. One parent discussed how her child now gets herself ready for school and to the bus, while another claimed these responsibilities have extended into the home as her son is helping out more and paying more attention to his siblings.

43% thought the unique school structure and community provided the greatest benefits to their children. It assisted in meeting their individual learning needs, filled in gaps unaddressed in the public system, and gave them a love for learning. The small class sizes, attentive staff, and hands-on learning initiatives had a huge impact on their success.

One parent noted the scholarships benefits as her son received a scholarship to attend Luther. She stated, “If he didn’t have the scholarship he would have attended public school as I wouldn’t have been able to afford schooling at Luther.”

Another parent felt the academic sports programs and mentorship program were the main benefits of attending MTMS.

Q3. Did you see any areas for improvement? If so, what would you recommend? Provide an example if possible.
One parent did not see any areas for improvement stating, “I think they are doing a great job, they are on everything, they take care of everything, help out the family, they know all 8 of my kids.”

One parents mentioned wishing she had known about the school earlier so her older children could have attended. She also mentioned that people discouraged her and her daughter from applying by claiming it was competitive and hard to get into but the processes was easy and MTMS was incredibly supportive. She stated, “[It] wasn’t that hard, they even came to the house to do the interview, which was helpful.”

Another parent who is a single mother on disability and is therefore unable to work a full time job asked for some sort of compensation or honorarium for volunteering at the school (as she has volunteered in the library in the past).

One parent called for more funding for growth and a larger school, academic maybe more computers, newer computers, and more opportunities for scholarships for the students.

Three parents highlighted some areas of concern. One parent wishes the school started at an earlier age, while another wishes it went all the way through high school and stated, “My son likes the friends he has made at MTMS, but I worry about the friends he will make at high school, he doesn’t like to say no to bad influences.” Finally, another caregiver said that her son reported that too much praise and attention was given to the girls (i.e. they were favoured in some circumstances).

Q4. What, if anything, has been the biggest change, positive or negative, that you have noticed in your child(ren) since attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please give an example.

86% of the parents noted the change in attitude as the great positive attitude change. All of the parents claimed their children now have a love of school, where before they were unhappy, unmotivated, and not engaged. According to one parent, their son learned that he’s not stupid, they all knew it but he needed to believe that in his heart. Another parent identified changes in her child at home and stated, “She is looking after her siblings and doing house duties.”

One parent explained the school’s wrap around approach provided the greatest positive impact and praised everything from the uniforms to the dentist appointments to the calm atmosphere. She stated, “They really look after the kids here. They are wanted and important.”

Two caregivers felt the positive peer relationships and lack of negative peer pressure and bullying were noticeable positives to having their children attend MTMS.

Another parent noted how the focus on academics were positive as his child is reading now, has better grades and is on the football team, while another parent expressed the fact that her child is setting goals for himself to have the greatest impact.

Only one parent identified a negative as her child was suspended for sticking up for himself during a fight.

Q5. Would you recommend other students from your community to attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Why or why not?
All of the caregivers would recommended MTMS to other families, and as one parents stated, “Every person I see, I recommend their kids to go to this school.”

Another explained, “You see so many kids that deserve a chance, you see children and you know they could go one way or the other, around Grade 6 and you know they would succeed if you could take them away from it. Kids need to be away from those bad influences, these kids have good influences after school programs and that is what they need.”

Three of the parents acknowledged the unique elements of MTMS such as the large extracurricular options, the engaged teachers, the smaller class sizes, and the mentorship.

Finally, one parent noted, “Every school should be like this place, it’s amazing. My son brings books home and reads them and he’s thinking about high school and post-secondary opportunities. This school made my son a better person.”

Q6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

One parent did not have anything to add.

One parent wrote an open letter to the MTMS staff in the understanding that it would be included in this evaluation. The letter explains their family situation and expressed deep gratitude for MTMS. The following excerpt has been pieced together from this letter:

“I feel very fortunate and blessed to have our daughter at your school, as you probably know, her attendance at previous schools was very bad. We are a family that has been through many hardships and we are continually working on being a family again. We believe that with your help, she can achieve anything she puts her mind to. You all really have a way to make each child feel welcome and very much wanted. So we really want to say thank you very much from myself, my husband, and our child. You have truly made this the best time in her education. We hope to be a part of your school for many years to come, as we have two more children. We would love to join MTMS in the future.”

Another parent explained how his son was not challenged enough in public schools and since attending MTMS he has maintained a high average and reading level and earned a four-year scholarship to Luther.

One parent expressed that the best things about the school are the extensive follow-through with whatever promises they make to the students and the mentorship program.

Two parents mentioned how wonderful the school is at creating equal opportunities, teaching life skills and academics, teaching the students about themselves, and accepting where the children are at rather than pushing them to reach the teachers’ expectations.

Two parents noted that it is essential for the parents to become involved in the school and one parent mentioned the need for the building to be wheelchair accessible.

Another parent also penned a letter to MTMS with the hopes of having it included in this evaluation. She stated:

“I want a better life for us. I want to break the cycles and role model a healthy, positive and rewarding life. I need supports that want the same thing as I do for my children. I need her to love who she is and know who she is and pursue her dreams. If she can live up to her potential, then her children will. A positive cycle will replace the negative cycles
that had devastated my family. She deserves a good life. A life of love, guidance, and opportunity. I want a better life for me, my children, and my community.”

Results & Conclusions

Overview

This section provides highlights from the data results presented in the previous section as well as the main conclusions that were drawn from evaluating the school overall. While the purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the MTMS programming, the richness of the data gathered cannot be overlooked. For example, the achievement of data-focused goals such as academic student success or future school success should not overshadow the increase in student-identified feelings of confidence and pride.

Analysis

These results have yielded a number of conclusions regarding the overall effectiveness of MTMS. In general, most of the feedback is extremely positive. The data demonstrates an increase in student success at school and an increase in academic skills, confidence, and extracurricular involvement, which will have a positive future impact on the engagement of youth throughout secondary school.

Highlights from the Priority Investments Report Recommendations:

- MTMS was able to implement measurable interventions for each issue identified in the Priority Investments Report, which creates disparities in education.
- To combat low academic standards, they provided a mentorship program (where every student is paired with an adult mentor during and after middle-years), hands-on learning, small class sizes, and targeted interventions based on individual student needs and interests.
- In terms of low academic engagement, they provide diverse extracurricular activities through mandatory after school programming, opportunities for student feedback, and are implementing several recommendations from the TRC report.
- In fact, all MTMS students participate in extracurricular activities and ten graduates continue to participate in high school.
- Finally, they are providing extensive transitional support throughout high school to increase school-to-work transitions.
- They have an over 90% attendance rate for transitioned high school students and 100% of all the students from MTMS have successfully transitioned into their second year of high school.
Highlights from the Student Engagement Data:

- The majority of the students surveyed (52) reported having positive peer and family relationships, feeling supported by their teachers, and often or almost always feel motivated and in control.
- Severe behavioural incidents resulting in suspensions have decreased by nearly 40% from the 2014-2015 school year to the current school year.
- The highest year for suspensions was eleven in 2013-2014. Since then, the suspension rate has decreased by more than half.

Highlights from the Standardized Test Data:

- In 2015-2016, over half of the students were above grade level for reading, nearly half were above grade level for language usage and eleven were above grade level for math.
- Nearly half (44%) of the students exceeded their MAPS goal for math while 39% were able to meet or exceed their goals for reading.
- The students in Grade 6 and 7 demonstrates strong reading and comprehension strategy skills, particularly in before reading strategies and self-monitoring and summarizing.
- There is very little change between the Grade 8 fall and winter test results for during and after reading strategies, demonstrating a possible need for strengthening these strategies in Grade 8.
- There was a decrease in performance across three areas for comprehensions strategies for the Grade 8 class (predicting, inferencing, and making connections) indicating the need to target interventions in these areas.
Highlights from In-Person Interviews:

- All of the MTMS staff interviews noted the biggest impact of the program was its ability to engage and empower youth and their families.
- 100% of all the staff interviewed identified the “wrap around” approach as one of the things that makes MTMS so unique, while nearly 80% also identified the family-based approach as “being able to advocate for families that are not confident to ask for things with no judgment only compassion” is what makes MTMS unique from other schools.
- 36% of the staff noted the importance of increasing transitional supports. These students require support in order to be successful following Grade 8.
- All three mentors mentioned the need for MTMS to improve and expand its programming to include more Indigenous content. One mentor mentioned the need to explore deeper and move beyond “Indian Fine Arts, such as beading and learn more about culture and way of life.”
- The main benefits mentioned by the students were: immediate academic supports, variety of extracurricular opportunities, smaller class sizes, one-on-one time with the staff, positive peer relationships and zero tolerance for bullying, access to technology, chances to travel, excellent high school preparation, and the nutrition program, and transportation.
- 62% of the students mentioned the summer camp, trips to Calgary and Ottawa and time spent at the university were the best aspects of MTMS.
- 100% of all the students stated they would recommend MTMS to other youth in the community.
- 86% of the parents noted the change in attitude as the great positive impact.
- 100% of the caregivers would recommended MTMS to other families, and as one parents stated, “Every person I see, I recommend their kids to go to this school.”
Conclusions

Several conclusions can be made from the above analysis:

- The Mother Teresa Middle School is currently helping many Regina youth build confidence, problem-solve, and become more independent. The wrap-around supports offered to these students from Grade 6 through to Grade 12 provides individualized supports that extend beyond the classroom.
- The program is widely received and endorsed by MTMS youth, their families, and community mentors.
- The quantitative data lends itself toward the accomplishment of many of the goals of the program such as an increase in academic achievement, student engagement and motivation, and a decline in behavioural incidents among participating youth.
- The qualitative analysis reveals that MTMS is integral to the development of strong, confident, educated, and empowered Indigenous youth in Regina, Saskatchewan.

In order for a program to be considered a best practice, several aspects must be present. The program must be deeply rooted in meeting the needs of the community it serves and it must achieve or exceed its mandate and goals. Finally, the program must follow guiding principles that are supported by current, relevant research. Throughout this evaluation, MTMS has established itself as exceptional in its ability to meet the needs of the youth it serves, adhere to its goals, and focus on relevant research to guide its programming and policies. Furthermore, it has shown tremendous promise as a ground-breaking Canadian school with the ability to expand to reach even more youth in the community.

According to recent research, youth need opportunities to learn strong academic skills, and achieve or exceed grade-level expectations in order to successfully complete Grade 12 on time and effectively “break the cycle of poverty.” They need opportunities to use these skills in experiential, real-world contexts that are authentic and relevant. In addition, factors that typically prevent success in education (i.e. transportation, family connection, trauma, and physical health) also need to be addressed. The data from this evaluation demonstrates that the youth enrolled at MTMS feel they are being listened to and valued every day. They reported feeling a strong connection to the MTMS staff, their peers, and their families and moreover, they reported that this connection was not present prior to attending MTMS.

MTMS prides itself on being the first Nativity Miguel, Jesuit founded middle-years school in Canada. It is a youth-focused, strengths-based, institution that commits to offering top quality education to Grade 6, 7, and 8 students. Furthermore, MTMS commits to seeing each and every
MTMS alumni through to graduation. Central to the organization is the belief that all youth are academically capable and that it is the economic and social disparities that prevent them from being successful. MTMS has also recognised that the Indigenous youth of North Central in Regina, Saskatchewan experience these disparities at rates that are disproportionately higher compared to non-Indigenous youth in similar circumstances. MTMS has acknowledged the role of that colonialism, and system racism has played and continues to play on these youth.

By allowing youth the opportunities to learn beyond the regular 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. school day and year, they are impacting not only the individual but also their peer network, their family and their community. The positive results of this type of programming extend beyond middle-years and have that ability to increase academic achievement, graduation rates, and enrolment in post-secondary institutions. In fact, the data from this evaluation shows that 85% of the youth felt the program has increased their interest in secondary education, while another 24% were excited to participate in extracurricular activities in high school. Furthermore, 100% were pleased they attend MTMS and all of the former students interviewed acknowledge that attending MTMS gave them invaluable skills needed to be successful at school.

The most powerful evidence of the program’s achievements does not lie in the research or the statistics, but in the perspective of the youth themselves. It is their voices that truly demonstrate the value of MTMS. One student shared, “It’s peaceful and they pay attention to us more, when I had big groups and lots of people in class it was hard for me. They helped me through my learning by using more examples. We move around a lot so I attended many schools, the teachers are kinder here and we are like a big team.”
Outcomes: Most Significant Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

Accomplishments

Since its first year in 2011, MTMS has achieved several accomplishments including increases in youth engagement and confidence, increases in preparation and interest in secondary institutions, increases in exposure to career possibilities, and opportunities to travel and bond with peers. Information gathered based on interviews with personnel, alumni, mentors, parents, and youth connected with the school indicates MTMS is both a reputable and necessary institution in the North Central community. Currently, MTMS is doing an excellent job of creating and administering over ten highly successful programs and initiatives ranging from mentorship to summer programs to graduate supports to fundraising. They are a highly accountable and transparent organization that puts the needs of the youth they serve first. For these reasons, MTMS will continue to be successful eventually leading to an increase in their long-term goal of creating an educated, engaged, and empowered youth workforce in Saskatchewan.

One aspect of the program, and MTMS’s organization as a whole, that should not be overlooked is its foundational principle of utilizing a whole-child, inclusive care approach in its programming. MTMS does a phenomenal job of ensuring all of the needs of the youth are met so that when they enter the classroom they are focused and ready to learn. MTMS deals with everything from dentist appointments to transportation to social media issues to family issues. Moreover, when an MTMS staff member is assisting a child beyond academic concerns, they do so with the utmost respect and compassion for the student and the families. Not only is MTMS attempting to lessen the social and economic disparities children experience but they are also alleviating a large burden from caregivers.

A parent stated, “We are a family that has been through many hardships and we are continually working on being a family again. We believe that with your help, she can achieve anything she puts her mind to. You all really have a way to make each child feel welcome and very much wanted. So, we really want to say thank you very much from myself, my husband, and our child. You have truly made this the best time in her education. We hope to be a part of your school for many years to come, as we have two more children. We would love to join MTMS in the future.” This wrap-around care model acknowledges and honours the students’ unique personalities, family situations, and cultural backgrounds. In this way, MTMS is addressing several barriers youth face, however they are doing it in a meaningful and empowering way that is consistent with Indspire principles.

Perhaps two of the most telling pieces of evidence of the success of the school were given directly by the youth themselves. One former student stated, “It’s peaceful and they pay attention to us more, when I had big groups and lots of people in class it was hard for me. They helped me through my learning by using more examples. We move around a lot so I attended many schools, the teachers are kinder here and we are like a big team.” Clearly, the students are...
aware of the how this school will impact their future and they are confident in their abilities as future leaders in their community.

**Lessons Learned**

Several lessons have been learned since MTMS opened its doors including:

- Staff sustainability and training is essential;
- Youth strengths and needs must be considered to optimize learning;
- Evaluation (for both students and staff) must be continuous and consistent;
- Training and professional development is important;
- Consultation with families is foundational;
- Learning must be project-based, hands-on, and experiential;
- Mentorship and the inclusion of Indigenous leaders, Elders, and staff are critical; and
- Alumni support and involvement is necessary to continue momentum.

**Limitations**

There are a few limitations that have been encountered since MTMS began. One large and complex issue is with regards to transitioning youth to high school following the completion of the program. It can be just as shocking and difficult to return to mainstream school systems and previous personal and family situations, as it was to leave it. Many youth struggle with returning to family situations that are not positive, or admit to being lost with many new skills and a new sense of confidence, but no direction or outlet for these skills. While there are extensive supports in place in the past for alumni, the population grows with each graduating Grade 8 class. The Graduate Support Director noted in his interview the need for more supports in this area as the number of high school alumni increases.

Another issue is with regard to the inclusion of Indigenous curriculum content and a greater connection and involvement with Indigenous leaders and Elders. Many of the staff, families, and mentors expressed the need to increase the visibility of Indigenous adults connected to MTMS in the hopes of increasing meaningful connections with the youth. Given that a vast majority of the youth who attend MTMS are First Nations or Métis, it would be in the best interests of the organization to make efforts to recruit Indigenous staff, mentors, and community partners. In additional, following the TRC report, MTMS has openly acknowledged its commitment to ensuring an inclusive, culturally safe curriculum.

Finally, there are concerns with regard to the lack of financial resources available from both provincial governments, partnering institutions, and private donors. Secure, long-term funding would mean that the school could expand to include a larger facility, more staff, and/or recruit and accept more youth each year. Given all that is known about the needs of urban Indigenous youth and best practices in engagement and education, it would be beneficial to have greater funding options. A lack of financial resources has prevented MTMS from employing full-time,
fully-trained staff. Moreover, the space they are in is proving to be inadequate as they grow. For example, students mentioned in their interviews that they cannot have basketball practices that they need in order to compete at the level that they felt they needed because they have to share the space with St. Michael’s School.

Currently, MTMS spends $25,000 per student per year. In addition, they are able to provide approximately between $3,000 and $5,000 per graduate, per year for support throughout high school. The Board of Directors has done an outstanding job securing this level of long-term stable funding, and have been able to ensure each student and alumni are able to have full access to MTMS programming and services. However, as the institution grows, the board of directors, as well as the staff, are aware of the need for greater funding to ensure both the school and the students can realize their full potential.

**Next Steps**

The evaluative process yielded several next steps in order for MTMS to move forward and continue to achieve success. Through greater capacity building, program development, youth transitions, and evaluation, MTMS will continue to grow and succeed.

**Building Capacity**

In order for MTMS to grow and strengthen, it must build capacity. The staff acknowledges that this is an essential piece of program delivery. However, it is also one of the most challenging aspects, as it requires considerable time and resources to build and sustain relationships, encourage investment, and ensure integrity. The current Executive Director and full-time staff have made it a priority to establish relationships with community members, mentors, volunteers, teachers, and funders to achieve better outcomes for their students. Of the utmost importance, is to ensure the inclusion of First Nations and Métis community members when considering staffing, program development, cultural programming, and mentorship.

**Program Development**

Repeatedly, MTMS staff called for greater resources to assist in effective delivery of services and programs. The MTMS staff noted two areas where greater programming is needed: 1) First Nations and Métis inclusion and 2) family supports. Programming should include cultural content and exploration that extends beyond fine arts (i.e. beading) and addresses Indigenous ways of knowing, colonialism, racism, identity and spirituality. Further programming is also needed to expand and strengthen the family supports offered. Most of the MTMS students have siblings who also require supports and adult caregivers who may look to the school as a lifeline in times of crisis. In order to build this programming, greater capacity is needed in addition to greater resources.
Transitions & Secondary School Supports

This program will only be as successful as its alumni. The students who have transitioned to Grade 9 still require continuous and consistent supports, which may look different depending on the personal circumstances of each alumnus. Those former students who experienced learning difficulties, have experienced childhood trauma, and/or had challenges being successful throughout the program may require additional supports. While it is often challenging to assist the youth once they are off-site, it is essential if real changes are going to occur. By offering greater supports to alumni, MTMS ensures they are strengthening both the program and the youth they serve. Many of the youth may need additional academic supports, additional opportunities to reconnect and problem solve with MTMS support staff and mentors, and assistance participating in extracurricular activities or finding part-time employment.

On-Going Evaluation

A large part of the current success of the program thus far has been the continuous and purposeful evaluation of the program. Since its infancy, MTMS personnel and board members have been gathering data from staff members/mentors, youth, families, alumni, and community members. Through their recruitment and student support programming, MTMS has been collaborating with youth to ensure the program is meeting their needs and is successfully carrying out its initiatives.

While this report is a formal evaluation of the school, it relied heavily on the data already collected and analysed by the MTMS staff. It is critical that MTMS continues to seek the input of students, staff, mentors, and caregivers in order to expose barriers and improve what already works. A close examination of the numbers is also essential. This includes academic performance, student engagement, secondary institution enrolment and attendance rates, and in the near future high school graduation rates. This continued evaluation will allow MTMS a greater sense of the long-term impacts the program is having in the community.
Interactive Tools

The following web links could be useful and may provide Indspire with additional information:

1. The Mother Teresa Middle School Official Website
   ➢ http://mtmschoolregina.com

2. This news clip by CBC showcases the Mother Teresa Middle School.
References


Mother Teresa Middle School Official Website. (2016) http://mtmschoolregina.com


http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Appendix A: Logic Model

**Inputs**
- Staff time and skills
- Collaboration among staff, families, community leaders, board members, and mentors
- Materials and resources (i.e. for school, extracurricular, and summer programming)
- Training for host mentors
- Technology
- School, community, and parental involvement
- Administration
- Financial resources/fundraising initiatives
- Planning, research, and evaluation time and resources
- Recruitment and

**Outputs**

**Activities**
- Complete all school work, participate in extracurricular activities, volunteer
- Ensure attendance, punctuality, positive attitude
- Engage in goal-setting

**Participation**
- MTMS Youth (Ages 11-14)

**Outputs**

**Short Term**
- Increase in school attendance and engagement
- Increase in academic success, volunteerism and extracurricular experiences
- Increase in travel experiences and cultural awareness
- Increase in confidence and independence
- Increase in problem solving skills and social skills

**Intermediate**
- Increase in extracurricular opportunities at secondary level
- Increase in completion of secondary education
- Increase in knowledge and appreciation of self, spirituality, community, and culture

**Long Term**
- Engaged, educated, and employable Saskatchewan youth

**Time Frame**
- One year During Placement
- Two years After Placement
- Five years

**Inputs**
- Complete all school work, participate in extracurricular activities, volunteer
- Ensure attendance, punctuality, positive attitude
- Engage in goal-setting

**Outputs**
- Provide useful feedback and problem solve with youth

**Activities**
- MTMS Administration and Staff
- MTMS families
- MTMS Board Members
- MTMS Mentors

**Outcomes**
- Assist youth to successfully transfer skills and experiences secondary school

**Activity**
- MTMS Administration and Staff
- MTMS families
- MTMS Board Members
- MTMS Mentors

**Outcome**
- Increased knowledge and appreciation of self, spirituality, community, and culture

**Engaged, educated, and employable Saskatchewan youth**
Appendix B: Consent and Interactive Forms

Indspire - Informed Consent Form

Evaluation Research
Indspire (Lead Researcher Dr. Carrie Bourassa, Infinity Consulting)
2932 St. James Cres., Regina, SK, S4V 2Z1
P: 306-535-6855

50 Generations Drive, Ohsweken, Ontario, N0A 1M0
P: 519-445-3003

SECTION B: INDIVIDUAL CONSENT FORM
(Please print or write legibly)

Name, and role in the Mother Teresa Middle School program of the individual

Personnel
Student
Community Member
Elder/Knowledge Keeper

☐ INDIVIDUAL CONSENT
I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the aforementioned information.
I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted regarding the research and understand I may ask questions in the future.

NAME: ________________________________
SIGNATURE: ______________________  DATE: ________________________

SECTION C: GROUP CONSENT
(Please print or write legibly)

☐ GROUP CONSENT
I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the aforementioned information.
I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted regarding the research and understand I may ask questions in the future.

NAME: ________________________________
SIGNATURE: ___________________________  DATE: _______________________

SECTION D: CONTACT INFORMATION
Please provide your contact information if you would like to be contacted to review your transcript and/or receive a copy of the research results.
EMAIL ADDRESS: _______________________________________
PHONE NUMBER: _______________________________________
Appendix C: Planned Evaluation Framework

Name of Project: Mother Teresa Middle School
Date: February 3, 2016

Planned Evaluation Framework
Qualitative Data

Interviews
Administrators, Educators, Parents, Students, Elders, and Community Members should all be considered when developing the list of people to be interviewed.

Planned Interviewees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Number</th>
<th>Position / Role</th>
<th>In Person / Teleconference / Skype</th>
<th>Who is responsible for setting up interview</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Guidance Counsellor</td>
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<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Director</td>
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<td>Student Support Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Community Outreach Worker</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Parents/grandparents</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10-15</td>
<td>students</td>
<td>In person</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Grad Students</td>
<td>In person</td>
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**Timeline**
Interviews to be completed in February (tentative dates are Feb. 22 and 25th).

**Site Visit**
Contractor knows the school so this is not required.

**Signatures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indspire Program Coordinator</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Holder (person that signed LOU)</td>
<td>Project Lead (e.g. principal or teacher)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Planned Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position / Role</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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</table>
| **e.g. Students, Mentors** | 1) What do you see as the main benefits in attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please share a few examples.  
2) What do your peers think of attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Can you share any examples (positive or negative)?  
3) Is there anything about MTMS you don’t like? If so, please share an example.  
4) Do you have any suggestions that you think might improve your experience here?  
5) What has been one single best learning, lesson or experience since attending Mother Teresa Middle School? (Prompt: How do you think this will help you in the future?)  
6) Would you recommend that other youth from your community attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Why or why not?  
7) Is there anything else you would like to add? |
| **e.g. Administrators & Teachers, Board Members** | 1) Please tell me how long you have worked for Mother Teresa Middle School and in what capacity.  
2) Can you tell me briefly how the school operates and what makes the school so unique?  
3) What do you see as the main benefits to the youth? Can you provide an example?  
4) Do you see any areas for improvement? If so, what would you recommend? Provide an example if possible.  
5) What has been the biggest change, positive or negative, that you have noticed in terms of the youth that attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Please give an example.  
6) What have youth told you about their experiences attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please provide an example or two.  
7) Is there anything else you would like to add? |
| Elder | 1) Please tell us your role and a little bit about the program with Mother Teresa Middle School and SaskPower.  
2) What do you see as the main benefits to students? Can you provide an example?  
3) Do you see any areas for improvement? If so, what would you recommend? Provide an example if possible.  
4) What, if anything, have students told you about their experiences in attending Mother Teresa Middle School or their experiences in the current program you are part of? Please provide an example.  
5) Do you think that Mother Teresa Middle School supports students better than other schools that you are aware of given your experience in the school system? If so how?  
6) Is there anything else you would like to add? |
| Parents | 1) Please tell me what grade your son/daughter(s) is/are in and what your overall impression of Mother Teresa Middle School is in relation to your son/daughter(s).
2) What do you see as the main benefits to your son/daughter(s)? Can you provide an example?
3) Do you see any areas for improvement? If so, what would you recommend? Provide an example if possible.
4) What, if anything, has been the biggest change, positive or negative, that you have noticed in your son/daughter(s) since attending Mother Teresa Middle School? Please give an example.
5) Would you recommend other students from your community to attend Mother Teresa Middle School? Why or why not?
6) Is there anything else you would like to add? |
### Quantitative Data

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<tr>
<th>What are you collecting? (Annual reports, Attendance, grades, etc.)</th>
<th>What are you analyzing? (Attendance, grades, etc.)</th>
<th>Where/who are you getting the data from?</th>
<th>Timelines for the data (e.g. pre, six months, one year)</th>
<th>Delivery Date</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
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<td>Mission Measurement</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Grad support</td>
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<td>RAD assessments</td>
<td>When they start to current Literacy, Numeracy etc.</td>
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<td>Retention Rates</td>
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<td>Behavioral data – incident reports</td>
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### Other

- Annual Reports