



Grande Yellowhead Public School Division's Superintendent's Youth Council (SYC) affords students opportunities to build positive working relationships with others across the division, lead by example in their schools, provide valuable input on education initiatives, and participate in leadership opportunities. This is the second year for the SYC, under the leadership of Carolyn Lewis, Superintendent of Schools.

The 2018 - 2019 SYC included student and teacher members from each of five high schools and The Learning Connection. There were both new and returning members chosen from those who demonstrate a diverse range of interests, identities and perspectives, are passionate about and willing to share experience knowledge and skills, and are interested in leadership opportunities both at the division and school level.

This year's members had the opportunity to participate in three meetings with Superintendent Lewis. Agendas included a literacy activity, budgeting and planning information, an opportunity to provide student feedback on the pilot calendar and other education initiatives, facilitation skills practice, and the Making of a Leader activities. Teacher advisor, Jan Wiens shared that, "being able to ask their Superintendent questions and have Ms. Lewis value student-input, motivates students to be change-agents and continue to lead their school communities forward in the best interests of ALL students."

Student and teacher members expertly facilitated the Community Engagement Sessions in Evansburg, Edson, Hinton, Jasper, and Grande Cache and proposed Health and Wellness initiatives for their schools.

Selected members also participated in leadership opportunities outside of the school division including both the Fall and Spring Public School Board Association Student Voice Conferences in Edmonton and Red Deer, a week-long conference in Ottawa with *Encounters with Canada* at the Terry Fox Centre, and the first ever Provincial Youth Mental Health Summit In Red Deer.

Dana Labiuk, a student member, expressed her "appreciation in the emphasis put on mental health, and excitement to learn more about how she can make a difference in our community".

The GYPSD Superintendent's Youth Council engages students as leaders for change within their communities and Grande Yellowhead Public School Division. Superintendent Lewis remarked how much she "values the input of our students. Their voice makes a significant difference and truly informs my decision making."