

Principal Profiles



At Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, we are proud of the individuals who lead our schools and share their passion and innovation with the staff and youth they interact with on a daily basis. A strong school leader is someone who leads and models learning, supports a collaborative and reflective learning community, and one who makes child-focused decisions. Here is a peek at those strong leaders in your community!

2022/2023



Steven Ripkens

Niton Central School
JK to Grade 9



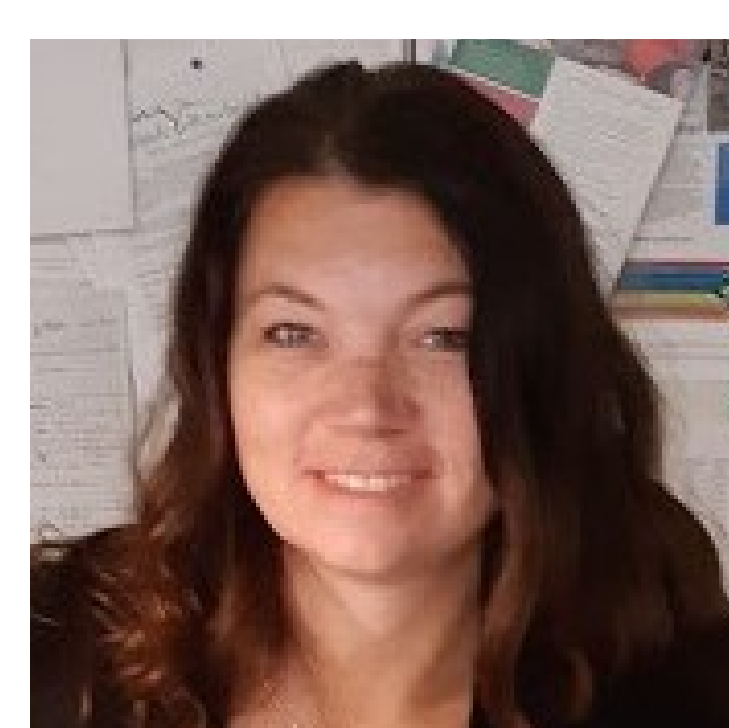
Stuart Graham

Wildwood School
JK to Grade 6



James Randall

Evansview School
JK to Grade 6



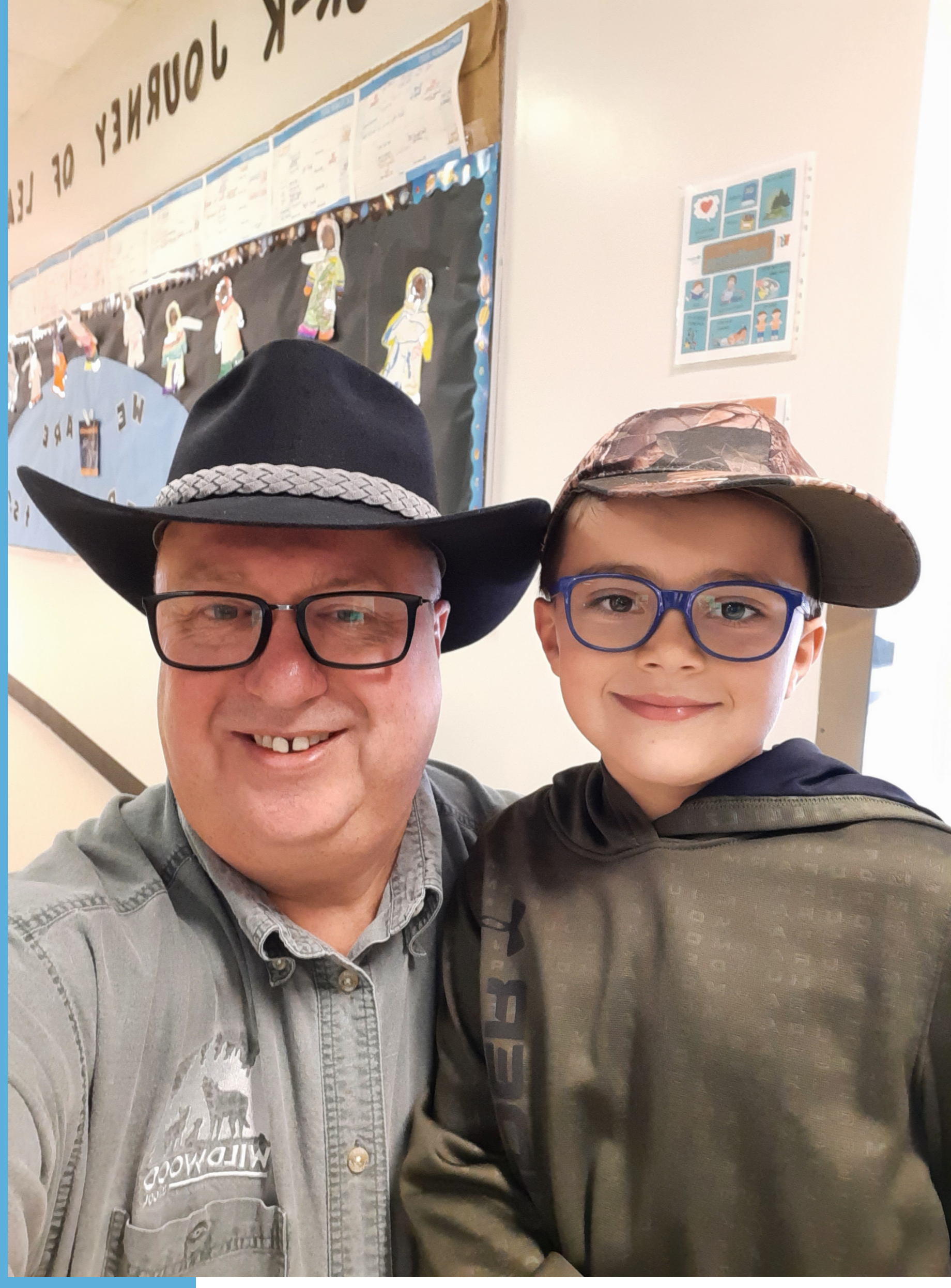
Heidi Zadderey

Grand Trunk High School
Grades 7 to 12
The Learning Connection
Grades 1 to 12



Steven Ripkens

Steven became the Principal at Niton Central in 2022. He was previously a Learning Services Supervisor at central office, but had been assigned as Acting Principal for Niton Central for the second half of the 2021/2022 school year. In 2018, he moved to Edson with his wife and two sons for the position of Assistant Principal at Parkland Composite High School. He also was the Assistant Principal at Niton Central for the 2019/2020 school year. He completed his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Alberta in 2008, specializing in Social Studies and Physical Education. In 2017, Steven completed a Master's Degree, also from the University of Alberta, with a focus on leadership and school improvement. He is a strong believer in a well rounded educational experience, by providing students with a broad range of learning opportunities to support their core studies. He is committed to creating a learning environment where every student feels welcome, and achieves to the best of their ability.



Stuart Graham

Stuart started his career in 1993 as the Cooperative Education Coordinator for GYPSD. In 1996, he opened GYPSD's first outreach school and, over the next 15 years, he established, and was the Principal, of outreach schools in Hinton, Jasper, Grande Cache, and Evansburg known as The Learning Connection (TLC). During that time, Stuart was involved with many initiatives ranging from the divisional level to the provincial and national levels. In 2019, Stuart was seconded to Alberta Education to the position of Complex Behaviour Needs Manager and he worked in that role until his return to GYPSD as the Principal of Wildwood School. Stuart has a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta and in 2017, completed his Master of Education from the University of Calgary. Stuart has a firm belief in the importance of building strong connections with students, parents and the community. Stuart's philosophy of collaboration and working within a team approach, leads to shared leadership opportunities for staff and students. Transparency and open, honest communication are cornerstones to Stuart's approach and ensure strong relationships with all stakeholders, while always focused on students as the first priority. Stuart enjoys working in his garage and quality time with family and friends.

James Randall

James started his career in 1994 working at Wildwood School. He left to work in southern Alberta for one year and then returned to GYPSD. He has worked in Niton Central School in Niton Junction, Pine Grove Middle School in Edson, Wildwood School and is currently the Principal of Evansview School. James is entering his 12th year in school administration and has been a Principal at the elementary and middle school level and spent two years being Principal of two elementary schools.. He earned his Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta and his Master of Education degree, focusing on School Administration, from the University of Calgary. James believes and promotes a team approach in the school environments that he works in and encourages input from all stakeholders. Working in collaboration with parents, students and staff provides the optimal learning environment and achieves the strongest outcomes for students. Communication is key and providing honest and open communication allows all of the team members to understand and set the direction of the school and achieve the goals they set to ensure students are the ultimate winners. In his free time, James likes to play golf, work in his woodshop, and be with his family.



Heidi Zadderey

Heidi began her teaching career in Golden Hills School Division and then moved to GYPSD in the fall of 2008 at Wildwood School where she was the AISI lead, Assistant Principal, and Learning Support Teacher. Heidi transferred to Niton Central School to teach her own daughter in junior high where she continued in the Learning Support Teacher role. Heidi then began her principalship at Evansview School in January of 2017. She loved the year and a half with Evansview staff and students and then became Principal of Grand Trunk in the fall of 2018 where she was able to continue the relationships with students and families from both Evansview and Wildwood schools. Heidi received her Bachelor of Education at the University of Alberta and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree, focussing on Interdisciplinary Studies, from the University of Calgary. She strongly believes that the culture of school impacts learning, and with a positive and innovative outlook, dives into new experiences for students with a collaborative team approach, encouraging input from all staff, students and community members. Strong relationships with all stakeholders are key for student success and open, honest, communication with a strong focus on students adds to the successful school culture. When not at school, Heidi can be found travelling to her children's and students' sports events, spending time near the ocean or mountains, and taking part in outdoor hiking adventures.