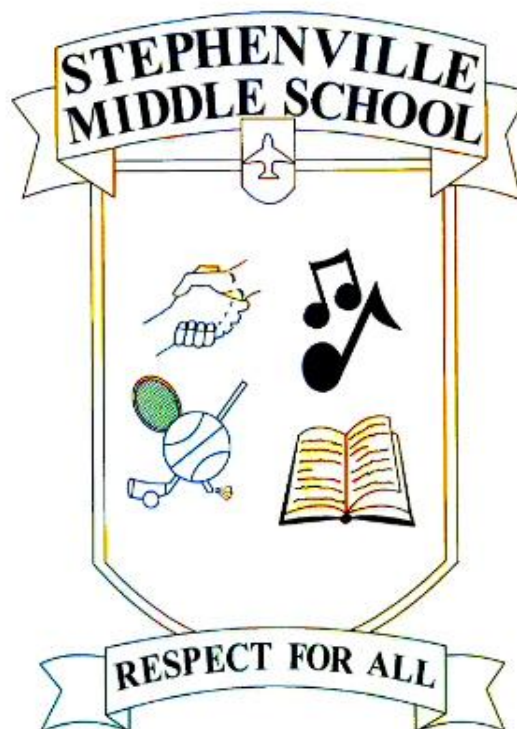


# 2024-2025 Annual School Development Report

## Stephenville Middle School



**Stephenville Middle School is committed to quality teaching and learning that ensures student achievement and meets the needs of diverse adolescent learners in a collaborative and respectful culture.**

**Strategic Issue: At Stephenville Middle School, we are observing low levels of student engagement, a general disinterest in learning, a reluctance to take academic risks, limited involvement from families, ongoing challenges with attendance and punctuality, and the impact of negative peer influence on student behavior and motivation.**

**How did you know this was a Strategic Issue? What evidence did you have?**

**At Stephenville Middle School, we identified a key strategic issue related to low student engagement, apathy toward learning, reluctance to take academic risks, limited family involvement, inconsistent attendance, and the impact of peer influence. This issue directly aligns with our school development goal:**

**“To foster academic growth in students through motivational and engaging learning experiences.”**

**The evidence supporting this strategic issue includes:**

- **Teacher observations indicating a general lack of motivation and enthusiasm for academic success among students.**
- **Notable increases in absenteeism, chronic lateness, and class skipping.**
- **A rise in mental health concerns, more frequent referrals to guidance services, and growing parental concerns around student well-being and school safety.**
- **Daily observations highlighting reduced student engagement, low confidence, and hesitation to take academic risks.**
- **Students arrive unprepared—emotionally, mentally, and without the necessary materials to support their learning.**
- **Data from Review 360, particularly an increase in code of conduct violations, further supporting the presence of disengagement and behavioural concerns.**

**This collection of evidence highlights the need for intentional strategies that re-engage learners, strengthen family-school**

partnerships, and build a more supportive, motivating school environment.

**Year-end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?** (What progress has been made on addressing the identified strategic issue? Have the actions taken moved the school forward in addressing the issue? What evidence have you used to determine this?)

Over the past year, Stephenville Middle School has implemented a variety of strategies aimed at improving student engagement, academic success, and school culture. Notable progress has been made across several key areas:

#### 1. Foundational Skills Development

Students have been receiving targeted small group instruction to help close learning gaps, particularly in core areas. While daily foundational math practice was not consistently applied across all grades, Grade 8 students benefited from focused math routines 2–3 times weekly, resulting in visible progress. In Grade 6, phonics screeners were used to identify spelling needs, leading to individualized instruction that will continue into next year. Regular spelling assessments were also introduced.

#### 2. Peer Support Initiatives

A peer tutoring program was launched to encourage student-to-student support. Although attendance from both tutors and learners varied, there were promising outcomes—especially among Grade 6 students who received musical mentorship from older peers proficient in instrumental music.

#### 3. Learning Beyond the Classroom

Students have regularly engaged in enrichment activities outside the traditional classroom setting. These include clubs such as Chess Club and the Student Leadership Team, as well as special programs like visits from the Royal Canadian Legion, the Little Green Thumbs Garden, and a Hydroponics Garden project. Groups such as the "Respect Team," CYN Youth Group, and "Inclusion Club" have provided students with opportunities to lead and collaborate.

#### 4. Student Choice and Meaningful Engagement

Choice has played a central role in improving student engagement. From hands-on science labs and novel study extensions

to harvesting and preparing meals with school-grown produce, students are taking ownership of their learning. In the library, creative choice boards (featuring Cricut, Minecraft, LEGO, coding, Canva, and more) have significantly increased student interest and participation. Tech classes also offer a wide range of options including woodworking, cooking, photography, careers, and coding.

#### **5. Creating Welcoming Spaces**

Lunchtime at SMS offers a range of inclusive environments to meet student needs and interests, such as the cafeteria, library, CYN, Chess and Games Club, and outdoor areas.

#### **6. Family Engagement & Communication**

Family involvement has been supported through events like the Remembrance Day Assembly, Parent/Teacher Conferences, basketball tournaments, and craft fairs. Daily Facebook posts continue to grow in engagement, offering families a window into daily school life. Regular communication is also maintained through SchoolMessenger emails and phone calls.

#### **7. Improved Student Conduct**

The implementation of a School Code of Conduct—such as restrictions on attending dances following suspensions—has been effective in addressing behavioral issues. Likewise, the Athletic Contract has proven successful in encouraging positive behavior among students participating in extracurricular activities, particularly those considered at-risk.

#### **8. Motivation and Instructional Strategies**

Technology upgrades and the requirement for Grade 7 and 8 students to bring their Chromebooks have served as motivators. In classrooms, teachers are using varied strategies—such as enlarged worksheets and flexible seating—to enhance learning experiences and support student success.

## Next Steps...

As part of our continued efforts to improve student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement, Stephenville Middle School has identified the following next steps for the upcoming school year:

### 1. Strengthening Communication and Access to Information

- The school website will be updated and utilized as a central hub for key information, including staff listings, class schedules, important links, and the Code of Conduct.
- Facebook will continue to be used as a real-time communication tool to connect with families and share highlights, while the website will serve as a more static and comprehensive resource.
- Weekly staff memos will be maintained to support internal communication and planning.

### 2. Continuation and Expansion of Foundational Skill Supports

- Grade 6 phonics screening and targeted spelling instruction will be continued in the upcoming school year, building upon this year's initial implementation and success.
- Grade 6 teachers implemented strategies grounded in the Science of Reading, utilizing assessment tools that provided deeper insight into individual student needs.
- There will be a renewed focus on implementing consistent daily foundational math practices across all grade levels. While progress has been observed in Grade 8, broader consistency is required to ensure system-wide improvement.

### 3. Student Enrichment and Engagement Activities

- Opportunities for academic engagement through school-wide events will be revisited. For instance, alternate activities such as a dedicated "Math Day" are being considered in place of traditional Pi Day events.

- A review of current student competitions aimed at boosting confidence and engagement will be undertaken to determine their continued relevance and effectiveness.

#### **4. Professional Development and Staff Capacity Building**

- Professional learning opportunities focused on developing motivational strategies and fostering intrinsic motivation in students have been identified as a priority. These sessions will be incorporated into next year's in-service schedule to align with our strategic goal of enhancing motivational learning.

#### **5. Peer Support Programs**

- Efforts will be made to increase consistency in the attendance and participation of both peer tutors and tutees in the school's peer support program. Structured scheduling and clearer expectations may support this goal.
- A formal follow-up and evaluation will be conducted on the instrumental music peer support initiative, which paired older students with Grade 6 learners. This will include consultation with program leads to assess the impact and determine future direction.

**Stephenville Middle School remains committed to creating a responsive and engaging learning environment that supports the academic and social-emotional growth of all students. These next steps represent a continuation of our reflective practice and data-informed decision making, aligned with our strategic priorities.**