



# Minlaton District School

'By Deeds Not Words'



## Nha Marni,

As we reach the finish line for 2024 at Minlaton District School (MDS), it is important to take a moment to reflect on our collective progress as a whole school community.

Midway through 2023, we embarked on a transformative improvement journey to address the mental wellbeing of our students and staff. It became clear that fostering **connection** and **belonging** would have the greatest impact on our ability to thrive as a school. In collaboration with all stakeholders, we revisited and refined our school's vision and values:

**Our vision is to foster a connected school community where every student is empowered to thrive in their academic and personal lives. We are committed to ensuring all students confidently express themselves through eloquent communication and apply numeracy in diverse life situations.**

We reaffirmed our core values:

- Zest for Learning
- Deep Understanding and Mastery
- Transfer of Learning
- Building Personal Capacity
- Close Connections
- Identity and Belonging

All while remaining steadfast to our school motto, "**By Deeds Not Words.**"

## 2024: A Year of Impactful Change

At the start of 2024, we introduced *The Resilience Project*, embedding strategies that emphasise Gratitude, Empathy, and Mindfulness. This initiative equipped our students with a deeper understanding of mental wellbeing and emotional literacy. Additionally, we continued to build on the principles of the *Berry Street Education Model*, ensuring every student felt connected and supported.

A highlight of 2024 was the continuation of Wellbeing Leaders as part of our student leadership program. This provided students with a direct voice in shaping our wellbeing initiatives. Regular review meetings with parents, students, and staff confirmed the positive impact of our work.

Key achievements include:

- **Excellent NAPLAN results** reflecting our academic growth.
- **Improved wellbeing metrics** from student and staff surveys in focus areas and beyond.

## Looking Ahead to 2025

So, why change anything in 2025? The answer is simple: we are not stepping away from our focus on **connection** and **belonging**—we are doubling down! However, 2025 will bring an exciting shift toward enhancing **critical and creative thinking**, paired with fostering a love of learning. Our aim is to instil a mindset where students prioritise meaningful learning and actionable feedback over a sole focus on grades.



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This means **Zest for Learning** will be at the heart of our focus in 2025.

We are also excited to welcome **285 students** next year—an increase that bucks predicted enrolment trends. This growth necessitates an additional middle school class and has enabled us to expand and adapt our team:

- **Primary School Teacher** – Caitlin Roads
- **Middle School Teachers** – Kate Oatway, Charlotte Champion, and Cara Maclay
- **Wellbeing and Inclusion Leader** – Erin Cock
- **Temporary Groundskeeper for Term 1** – Brenton Patten
- **Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer (ACEO)** – Nikki Jackson
- **Aboriginal Education Teacher** – Geordie Cameron.

We take this opportunity to sincerely thank **David Buckley** for his time in the AET role for the last few years. David has worked closely with our first nations families and lead many innovations and projects over this time. He will continue full time in his **Permanent Relief Teacher** role, based here at MDS.

We are particularly thrilled about the ACEO role, which will strengthen the cultural identity of our First Nations students while helping the entire school community engage more deeply with First Nations culture.

## **A Fond Farewell**

Finally, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Nick Gerrie, who will not be returning in 2025. His gentle and calm approach as an SSO has been invaluable, and we look forward to seeing him back with us in the future.

## **Wishing You a Joyful Holiday Season**

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year. I look forward to reconnecting with everyone in Term 1 next year as we embark on another year of growth and achievement together.

Best regards,  
Andrew