

Wednesday, March 7th, 2018.

Dear Teacher and Students,

This letter has to be prefaced with a HUGE apology for the delayed response.

I am truly sorry for how long the Teacher and the Students of ZSO nr. 4 had to wait for the letters and the bookmarks.

There are many reasons for why it happened, but I wanted to say that your bookmarks travelled almost all the way across Canada in the process! From northern Alberta, through southern and northern Ontario, and ended up in northern Manitoba a little known place called God's Lake Narrows First Nation.

Briefly about the community. God's Lake Narrows is a First Nation and Métis community. The Cree that live here are called Swampy Cree and they are part of Treaty 5 (adhesions to that treaty from 1908 to 1910) between the First Nations and the Government of Canada. Some people follow the traditional path – the 7 Teachings, the smudging, the rights of passage, but there are others who converted to Christianity and either choose to blend the two ways or reject the traditional ways. Our school has a daily routine of playing the Canadian national anthem and then students recite "Lord's Prayer" - this is agreed upon by the Board of Education members. The community has a local grocery store called "Northern" and several small convenience stores, a restaurant, an arena, a social building, an airport, an RCMP detachment, a nursing station, and a school. The services provided cover the very basic needs of the local population and people have to travel to Thompson or Winnipeg for more specialized services.

The school serves about 400 students ranging from Kindergarten to gr 9 (elementary level goes from gr 1 to gr 8, and high school from gr. 9 to gr. 12, only one type of high school is available for the publicly funded schools, after high school students can choose vocational schools, college, or university). Local students have to move to another community to attend grade 10 through 12.

Our school does not have a library at the moment (and there is no library in God's Lake Narrows), but we have books in individual classrooms and we have a chance to read them during class time or borrow them to read at home.

This is the first time that our school has participated in the International Bookmark Exchange. We were very excited to see what books you have read and happy to find we know some of them. We have mostly chosen books that we read in class. Our teacher asked us to draw important information from the book we chose and write something about it or about ourselves. Several of us also wrote letters (which are attached).

We hope you enjoy the bookmarks and our letters. If you are interested, please visit our website <https://www.godslakenarrowsschool.com/>.

Warm regards,

Agnieszka Marszalek and the students of God's Lake Narrows School

P.S. There is a separate envelope with bookmarks from students of Mishkeegogamang, Ontario. This was part of the journey.