

INNOVATIVE INKLINGS

Comox Valley School District Newsletter for Innovation

April 15, 2016



Citizenship

Links
Core Competencies
Quotes
Queeneesh
Therapy
Isfeld
Really?
EDAS

Citizenship Links

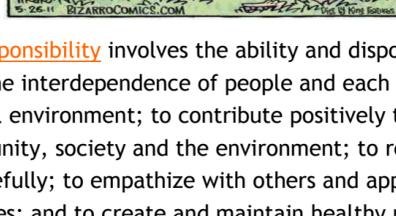
Here is an [article](#) about the recently published [UNICEF report](#) looking at how the richest countries treat/support their poorest children. Warning, we're not doing too well.

[Are we raising good citizens?](#) This is an article from [Psychology Today](#) that provides some good food for thought.

Here is a [blog post](#) that takes a slightly more specific approach and looks at what it means to be a Canadian citizen.

[IDEAS](#) has an interesting site for [Global Citizenship](#).

Here is a short (1:44) [video](#) about global citizenship.



“[Social responsibility](#) involves the ability and disposition to consider the interdependence of people and each other and the natural environment; to contribute positively to one’s family, community, society and the environment; to resolve problems peacefully; to empathize with others and appreciate their perspectives; and to create and maintain healthy relationships.”



“A [positive personal and cultural identity](#) is the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of all the facets that contribute to a healthy sense of oneself.”

“Everyone is stepping up to do what they can with what we have to support every child.” — Queeneesh

“Every landmine I lift means someone else doesn't die.” — Master Corporal Mark R. Isfeld

Around the District

Innovative events and efforts from around our district

Queeneesh Elementary School Review

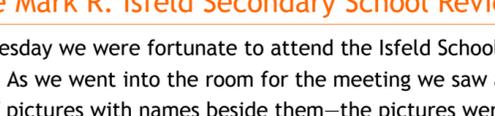
Yesterday we had the pleasure of going to [Queeneesh Elementary](#) for their school review. We were individually met in the foyer by three young ladies in button blankets who introduced us to the Queeneesh version of [Stream of Dreams](#) which involves individually made and decorated whales. One theme transcended the whole review: community. The staff and parents have worked hard to create a real, tangible, sense of community.

We saw examples from their *Identity Day* (an idea from Courtenay Elementary) that had 380 students share projects connected to their identity. One Kindergarten child presented eloquently and with pride about the solar system he built while a grade three boy demonstrated his project about being nice and kind. This approach was echoed in the self-directed Inquiry projects happening all over the school: featured in [Jocelyn Schultz's](#) class and the [Montessori classes](#) (many of which will be on display at next week's [Inquiry Fair](#)).

We heard about their breakfast program that relies on community donations and provides healthy food for the 20-30 children they feed. This has expanded into a lunch program that has focused on providing children with healthy foods. In the mornings the gym is open and children and whole families come in to play before school.

[Eileen David](#) and Strong Start Co-ordinator [Colleen Friendship](#) talked about their PLC that was focused on improved learning through engagement and school connectedness. Much work has been done around attracting parents to the school such as taking coffee to them in the mornings and a very successful Family Games Night.

We heard from several students from the grades 6/7 class that was instrumental in the work around developing compassion that culminated with a [recorded song](#) that is being featured in the [ArtStarts Gallery](#) starting tomorrow. The presentation ended with an engaging grade four student, [Sally Sheehan](#) and [Denise Anderson](#) who briefly demonstrated how learning about residential schools helps build compassion. This is a locally developed project that is receiving provincial accolades (in fact, the team behind it is in Vancouver today presenting in front of School Trustees from around the province).



École Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School Review

On Tuesday we were fortunate to attend the Isfeld School Review. As we went into the room for the meeting we saw a wall full of pictures with names beside them—the pictures were of each student in the school and the names were teachers who had indicated that they knew the student well, beyond the curriculum, and looked out for them.

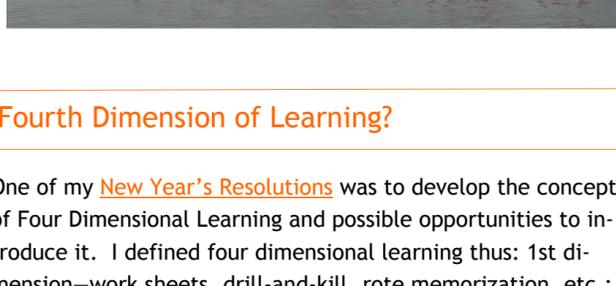
[Jeff Taylor](#) began the presentation by outlining the importance of the ‘4 pillars’ on student achievement and reported many measures of success in each of the areas (academics, arts (fine and applied), athletics, and citizenship). One of the areas receiving the most focus is citizenship as ‘every interaction changes us.’

The school, itself, was named after a [local peacekeeper](#) who died detonating landmines to protect civilians in Croatia. There were many examples of international and local citizenship related activities for students.

Kristin Price and [Gord McMahon](#) talked about the many activities related to aboriginal culture and heritage happening at the school, especially the Multi-cultural day that they participated in with the French Immersion program (presenting French cultures from around the world) and the very active International Program. They also talked about the value of the [Village Workshop](#) that they brought to the school. All activities are guided by the [Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement](#).

In addition to the [International Program](#), lead at Isfeld by [Victoria Mulrooney](#), there are numerous opportunities for students to engage on a global level. We heard about the Isfeld [Interact Club](#) ([Debbie Long](#)) that has consistently raised thousands of dollars for inner city schools they have sponsored in [Honduras](#) (two students are [heading there](#) next week to help and to deliver a cheque for US\$3,500) and a [trip at Spring Break](#), lead by [Carol Jakanovich](#), that took 19 students to [Nicaragua](#) to volunteer in different ways (teaching English, helping clean-up a beach in a turtle hatchery, engaging with children at an orphanage, feeding families at a garbage dump community). International travel is a very powerful tool for developing positive personal and cultural identity, personal awareness and responsibility, and social responsibility. And, those trips connected to social outreach exponentially increase the value of the experience for our students and the global community.

Isfeld Secondary School has also shown leadership closer to home with various projects for [YANA](#), the [Food Bank](#), and community leading efforts in [Relay for Life](#). The latter has very personal importance the school as five staff have had battles with or are currently battling cancer.

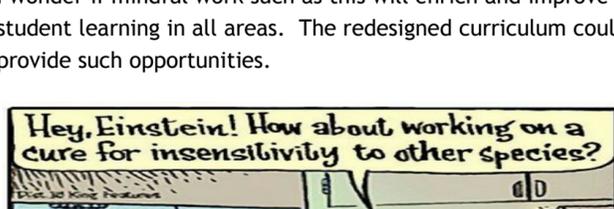


Fourth Dimension of Learning?

One of my [New Year's Resolutions](#) was to develop the concept of Four Dimensional Learning and possible opportunities to introduce it. I defined four dimensional learning thus: 1st dimension—work sheets, drill-and-kill, rote memorization, etc.; 2nd dimension—hands on learning, i.e. manipulatives in Math, experiments in Science, etc.; 3rd dimension—project-based learning; 4th dimension—community centred projects where students identify a need and work to address that need and in the process learn the skills, knowledge and understanding to be successful.

At Christmas time many of our schools are active with a project initiated by [Chantal Stefan](#) and [EDAS](#) (delivering student created care packages to the homeless). But as I have paid closer attention to the work of this group in our district, I am increasingly wondering if it might be a good example of four dimensional learning. There is a teacher created curriculum program that supports the development of empathy and understanding, leadership, organization, and project management. Also, in looking at a number of the projects, I see a lot of links to the skills we want students to acquire, done with meaning as opposed to in isolation. This hit home this week when I saw the effects of the work students from K-9 in Cumberland Community School, École Puntledge Park, and École Robb Road did for the homeless in our community: they wrote 200 letters articulating their care for an individual as a person. These were handed out at the Soup Kitchen on Tuesday. Free haircuts and hearing exams were also available for our homeless.

I wonder if mindful work such as this will enrich and improve student learning in all areas. The redesigned curriculum could provide such opportunities.



Thank you for taking the time to read this and please direct any suggestions, questions, or inquiries to me directly: Gerald.Fussell@sd71.bc.ca