

FOCUS

On Learning



LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE FUTURE

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Leslie Lambie
Superintendent & CEO

Once again, the School District is proud to present Focus on Learning, highlighting the engagement of our learners in a wide variety of educational pursuits that extend beyond the parameters of the traditional curriculum to expand the students' school experience.

The District's goal is to first and foremost ensure that every student develops strong foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. However, we are also committed to providing experiences in the visual and performing arts, as well as to sponsoring co-curricular activities to enhance and provide real life applications for concepts developed in science and socials.

With the ongoing transition into the new Ministry of Education curriculum, student learning opportunities are being expanded to include applied design, skills and technologies as well as coding curriculum beginning as early as Kindergarten! We hope you enjoy looking at and reading about examples of all of these as you browse through our annual publication.

Leslie Lambie, Superintendent & CEO

With much of the District's funding being enrolment based, our Finance report usually focuses on enrolment first. The 2016/17 school year surprised us with a relatively low enrolment drop of only 25 students, however next year, we are expecting a drop of over 120 students.

Although Funding Protection prevents us from having our funding drop by more than 1.5% in a given

year, we will still be dealing with a drop of over \$600,000 next year.

Operating in a large northern district presents financial challenges as well, as we try to provide equal access to programs and services to all students. This combined with approximately 17 years of declining enrolment, has caused School District #59 to become innovative at doing more with less.

Gerry Slykhuis, Secretary Treasurer

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Electoral Area II



Sherry Berringer
Tumbler Ridge

Electoral Area III



Tamara Ziemer
Board Chair, Dawson Creek



Richard Powell
Dawson Creek

Electoral Area IV



Wayne Ezeard
Pouce Coupe & Rural Area

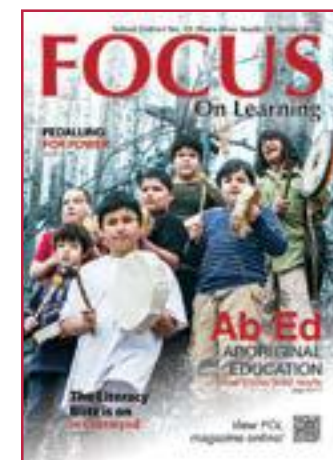


Nicole Soontiens
Rural Area Surrounding

On behalf of the Board of Education in School District 59, I'd like to thank the many talented, dedicated and caring individuals who make our district a provincial leader in 21st Century Education. Over the past year we have had the opportunity to see many examples of innovative and meaningful learning in our schools across the district. We appreciate

the opportunity to visit schools and to connect with students and staff members. It is inspiring to see our many teachers and students continuing to strive for excellence in teaching and learning. We have much to celebrate and we hope you enjoy this issue of Focus on Learning, showcasing Arts and Ingenuity in the classroom.

Tamara Ziemer, Board Chair



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www.sd59.bc.ca

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School District 59
Peace River South



School District 59

TAKING IN CHINA AT A GLANCE



26 Peace River students immerse themselves in the hard-working, historically rich culture of China on a two week educational trip



Standing on a glass boardwalk high above the downtown core, twenty-six Grade 9-10 Peace Region students took in Shanghai. Underneath them sprawled a city of twenty-eight million people, and they could see it all from where they were standing.

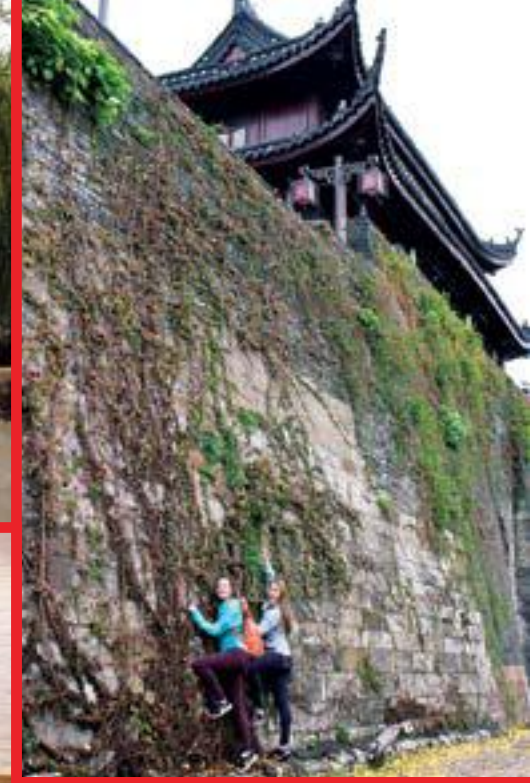
And that was exactly the point of the trip these students had taken: to see as much as they could from their unique vantage point.

Earlier in 2016, School District 59's Vice Principal Brad Booker and School District 60's Principal of Careers and International Education Brian Campbell put their heads together. Their goal was to design and lead a student trip to capitalize on an exciting offer from the Chinese government.

Working through the organization Jiangsu Education Services for International Exchange, the Chinese government had begun funding large portions of trips for North American students. Their goal was to showcase China's academic culture and encourage tourism.

For their part, Booker and Campbell saw a golden opportunity to give Peace Region students a life-changing learning experience. Ultimately, they — and thirteen students from School District 16, thirteen from School District 59, and four adult chaperones — definitely got what they bargained for.

"Some of our students had never left the Peace Region before," says trip chaperone Mathias. "Their minds were definitely blown by certain things. All the students were really struck by cultural differences."



Previous page: Chloe Shea, Mr. Mathias and Jessica Burnell hold a map of China.
Top left: Teachers and students from SD59 and SD60 pose in front of the Administrators Garden in Suzhou.
Top right: Chloe Shea and Jessica Burnell pose at the wall surrounding old Suzhou.
Bottom left: Students take part in traditional drum dance at Yangzi High School.
Bottom right: Administrators Garden in Suzhou.

The fourteen-day trip was a blend of tourism and immersion into the Chinese school system. Students and their chaperones spent three days touring historical sites and learning about Chinese history and culture.

"Any time a student can get out and see the world, it changes their perspective, and their life," says Mathias.

Certainly, the four days students spent living and studying in a Chinese school impacted their perspectives profoundly. Grade 10 student Jessica Burnell says, "Chinese students have a lot more of a course load. They learn in two languages. Most of them are fluent in English, which is insane, since it's one of the hardest languages to learn!"

While these Canadian students were at this school, their day began at 8:30 AM and ended at 4:30 PM.

But the Chinese students started at 7:30 AM and ended at 7:30 PM. Burnell and the other Canadians became aware of the intense performance expectations placed on Chinese students.

While these realizations were somewhat sobering to these Peace Region students, they also noted areas where they felt they had advantages. For example, they noticed how Chinese students were discouraged from forming relationships, and wondered whether this approach could have long-term disadvantages.

"International travel creates life changing opportunities; the students that participated in the China trip have reported a broadened world view, a deeper appreciation for life in the Peace and a desire for future travel," says Brad Booker. "Two of the students are continuing on and travelling back to China in July of this year." ♦

FOCUS On Learning

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We invite your comments, story ideas, photos and questions. Please contact Michael Readman at 250-782-8571.

ON THE COVER:
Donte Peters-Wolovetz





Above left: Clockwise from bottom left: Students rockin' the final pose for Brydie Stewart's *This Girl* choreography with Wyatt Nehring, Peyton Lariviere, Sheridon Funk, Shaylyn Haney, Selah Schmaltz, Layla McPherson, Shawna Wangler and Donte Peters-Wolovetz.

Title image: Left to right: Attitude, partner work and veil magic



The Dance program at Dawson Creek Secondary School teaches youth to move to their own beat, building confidence and teamwork skills along the way



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with Haley McKechnie, Peyton Lariviere, Shawna Wangler, Shaylyn Haney.

Middle image: Donte Peters-Wolovetz.

Bottom right: Donte Peters-Wolovetz, Peyton Lariviere, Sheridon Funk, Shaylyn Haney, Shawna Wangler, Ashley Wangler, Haley McKechnie, Laya McPherson exploring the hand isolation dance style *tutting*.

"I can't do that yet."

It's the credo of Dawson Creek Secondary School's Dance students. And it says a lot about the benefits these newbie hip hop, jazz, bhangra, lyrical, bollywood, and tap dancers get from the program.

Their teacher, Debbie Longley, explains it like this: "My students gain so much self confidence through learning to dance. But in order to learn to dance they need to calm their anxiety. We do that through reframing their experiences, by teaching them to say, 'How can we make this even better?' rather than, 'This is no good.'"

When students join her class, they enter into a space where their ability to collaborate matters much more than their so-called *natural* skill level. Longley works hard to establish a high level of comfort between students from the start.

The class begins by trying out simple dances as a large group; this year they all practiced getting



their groove on together to Justin Timberlake's *Can't Stop the Music*.

Before long, that song title had proven prophetic, with students breaking out into smaller groups to create their own individualized routines.

As a result of Longley's positive style, in the past year her students have shown unusually high levels of focus, organization, and creativity. When it came time to publicly perform what they had learned, the class was able to stage six small group dances, one solo dance, and two large group dances over the course of two performances.

One group featured veil work in their belly dance-inspired routine. Another staged a rousing hip hop interpretation of the Bruno Mars hit *24 Carat Magic*. Another group with a Peruvian student

incorporated a traditional dance called *Festejo* that she had taught them.

In order to pull off the performances they envision, Longley's students need to show excellent commitment — to their team members as well as to their own progress. That means attending class regularly. It means learning to give and receive constructive criticism. And it means taking risks.

"I had one girl tell me that she'd wanted to join the class in the past but her anxiety was too high," says Longley. "She built up her confidence by experiencing success in other classes and felt ready this year to join.

"You do have to take risks to get the rewards of dancing. But the fact is, my students learn to create a positive environment for one another, where they're not going to be judged for the way they move, or the way they express themselves." ♦



THE ART OF FUNDRAISING

McLeod Elementary's students explore creativity and the value of art through their art fundraisers

McLeod's gymnasium had never looked so colourful. Packed from wall to wall with mixed media art pieces, the space was temporarily transformed into an art lover's paradise.

By the time this unique fundraiser wrapped up, community members had happily claimed nearly all the pieces on offer. They took home original work from McLeod Elementary's own students and contributed over \$600 towards the school's art program.

"I organized the first art show about 10 years ago," says McLeod teacher Ann Graff. "The second one didn't happen until last year, so while the next sale we're preparing for will be our third show, it will be the second consecutive one."

Last year, Graff, along with her teaching colleagues Wanda Doeleman and Kristy Doornbos, organized the sale to help cover the cost of specialty items like watercolour paints and paper, brushes, and pastels. It was also a chance to help students, from Kindergarten to Grade 7, explore the value of art.

Preparations for the sale included students producing large amounts of work, and then



GOAL

Bottom left: Dalaney Dunbar and Elizabeth Benterud showcase their Ted Harrison-inspired creations.

Above: Logan Thola and Kianah Sweezey learn about cardinals, sharing what they see and notice, as preparation to start their own masterpieces.

Next page: Gage Christopherson explores watercolour paint, learning new techniques like how to blend colours together.



selecting three or four pieces for sale. The work that different grades created reflected the different artistic traditions and media they were exploring.

As a result, the collection was wide-ranging. Some students painted Georgia O'Keeffe and Ted Harrison reproductions, creating their own vibrant renditions of iconic natural images. Some experimented with blending colours to create realistic feathers and fur on portraits of animals. There were pieces done in oils, pastels, acrylics, chalk, and more.

Prior to the sale, students toured an art gallery so they could get a feel for how different pieces might be priced. They experimented with setting prices for their own work — *just for fun*, says Doornbos, who teaches Kindergarten to Grade 2.

"Going on that journey of creating a work of art, then thinking about how it might be valued based on the energy and materials that went into it was really eye-opening for kids," says Doornbos.

Ultimately, the parents and community members who participated in the sale were advised that \$5

was the suggested donation. But when buyers felt the prices the students had set were fair, they paid them. And some even bartered over particular pieces — which thrilled the artists to no end.

So aside from raising much-needed funds to keep McLeod's art program as well supplied as possible, what was the biggest benefit to the students?

According to the teachers who organized it, it boils down to pride in what they're doing. "The students knew their work wasn't just going to be put away somewhere," says Doornbos. "They were so excited to see that people wanted their work — and that impacts how much care and passion they'll put into their work in the future."

Graff says the sale the students are currently preparing will happen in June. "Each year they get better as we get new ideas and the kids get even better at plying their skills." ♦



TWENTY KILOMETRES TO TEST THEIR METTLE

The Gwillim Lake Adventure Race allows SD59 students to pick up outdoor skills and a healthy dose of perseverance



Top left: Hunter Schafer, Xavier Reeve and Gage Klein scouting the shoreline for the next checkpoint.
Top right: With the sound of the starting pistol, D'Andre Gunning, Destiny Vandale and Austin Lungard run their bikes through the starting zone to begin the race.
Bottom left: McKenna Robertson and Hudson Zatwarniski conquering the hike up to the Mount Meikle checkpoint.
Bottom right: Jake Vanrootselaar.

Next page left: Team *Not Fast, Just Furious* Skye Stribble, Hudson Zatwarniski and McKenna Robertson wear their mud proudly on their homemade shirts.
Next page right: Declen Fraser, Wyatt Simmons.

20 kilometres of canoeing, biking, and backcountry trekking. It's not the way the typical student spends a day, but Gwillim Lake Adventure Race participants do it every year.

"It's a legitimate challenge," says organizer and School District 59 Vice Principal Brad Booker. "When kids finish, they have every reason to feel deeply proud of themselves."

For three years now, students in grades 6-12 in School District 59 have been signing up in large numbers to compete. The race occurs in the district operated by the Pat O'Reilly Outdoor and Environmental Studies Centre on Gwillim Lake. Starting at the camp, teams of three follow the racecourse using maps and receiving stamps at checkpoints along the way. And beyond two student

teammates, they go it alone. No adult accompaniment is permitted on the racecourse.

Many spend the months leading up the race practicing wilderness skills. Seminars educate students on topics of race nutrition and backcountry navigation. Students also receive suggestions on exercises to help them train. One parent reported that their child dropped twenty pounds prepping for the race.

Beyond an incredible test of skill and stamina, the race is a community-building event. Since the Pat O'Reilly Centre is situated between communities, it allows students, teachers and parents from Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, and Tumbler Ridge to spend time together. Students arrive at the camp with their teachers and families on Friday night, and when the kids set out on their race the next day, the adults enjoy a barbeque together.

If the race transforms the way kids see themselves and their own capacity for meeting a challenge, it also undoubtedly changes the way they see each other. Team building over twenty kilometers of rough backcountry terrain is no joke — and it's not always pretty. "Kids get frustrated," says Booker. "Arguments among team members can get heated."

But the positive emotions run just as high, with teams crossing the finish line crying and hugging one another. Booker will never forget the sight of two teams competing for first place — one from Tumbler Ridge and one from Devereaux — who reached the finish line at the same time.

"They stopped before the finish line and lined up so that they all jumped across together." ♦

City of Dawson Creek
The Mayor and Council of the City of Dawson Creek commend the administration and teachers of School District No. 59 for their ongoing efforts to assist our young citizens in realizing their full potential and reaching their life goals.

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Hon. Mike Bernier, MLA for Peace River South

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LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE FUTURE

SD59 is leading the District Coding Project, an innovative program teaching students coding, the language of computers and their key to jobs of the future.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CODING PROJECT ARE:

- Candy Clouthier — Assistant Superintendent
- Mike Readman — District Principal
- Heather McInnis — Crescent Park
- Sue Wakeham — Crescent Park
- Lindsey Norbury — TRSS
- Karine Clark — EFR
- Karen Frederickson — District Resource Centre
- Glenn Roszmann — DCSS-CC
- Janna Duval-Warncke — CSS



Top left: Left to right: Hayden Pointer, Delainey Kassen and Alex Smith program their Sphero robots to navigate through a maze.

Above right: Left to right: Brooklyn Bardonnex, Mrs. Heather McInnis, Darrien Gold and Courtney Watson practice their coding skills using the board game Robot Turtles.

Next page: Left to Right: Hayden Pointer, Alex Smith, Yzabella Moser, Delainey Kassen and Brooklyn Bardonnex connect the Sphero robots to their iPads.

In the future,” says School District 59’s Resource Centre Coordinator Karen Frederickson, “coding will be a language taught in all schools, just like French or Spanish.”

That’s why students in her District are getting a head start on speaking it. Through the District Coding Project, students from Kindergarten to Grade 9 are learning to communicate with computers.

The project is a pilot program that Frederickson and a number of other teachers in Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, and Tumbler Ridge have created. Supporting Frederickson administratively is Candy Clouthier and Mike Readman. Representing the project at Tumbler Ridge Secondary School is Lindsey Norbury, at Chetwynd Secondary School is Janna Duval-Warncke, at Dawson Creek Secondary School is Glenn Roszmann and

at Crescent Park Elementary School are Sue Wakeham and Heather McInnis. Finally, heading up a branch of the project that reaches students at Ecole Frank Ross Elementary via their library is Karine Clark.

These educators and administrators kick-started the project to fulfill the Ministry of Education’s *Applied Design, Skills and Technology* curriculum requirements. In a world dominated by ever-evolving technologies, few would disagree with the Ministry’s assertion that “the ability to design and make, acquire skills as needed, and apply technologies is important in the world today and a key aspect of educating citizens for the future.”

So what exactly does a *Coding Project* look like? Apparently... like a lot of fun.

Ever wanted to program a robot to ride a chariot? Or drag paint along a paper to create an abstract art piece with a team of other robots? That’s the sort of thing the District’s elementary students are getting up to.

These students work with kits that the project creators developed to teach coding in the most enjoyable and hands-on ways possible. Included in the kits are Spheros, app-controlled robots. Spheros are roughly the size of tennis balls and can be programmed, using tools like iPads, to obey simple directional commands.

It’s a simple way for students to start figuring out how it all works. “It’s all about giving computers instructions,” explains Frederickson, “because computers can’t do anything unless they are told exactly how.”

At the secondary level, students explore *Scratch*, an extremely simple coding style, before learning a coding language known as *Python*. Python has them engaging in actual text coding on \$30 computers called *Raspberry Pis*. In other words, at this point, the students are actually able to type in a wide variety of commands to create... whatever they want, really.

“We have our students concentrate on creating video games, but knowing Python code allows them to make so many things,” says Dawson Creek Secondary School teacher Glenn Roszmann. “It’s all about critical thinking and problem solving. If they want to make something jump, they have to think about the little movements that add up to a jump, then account for how gravity impacts it. They’re breaking everything down into steps.”

The students have taken to the project with tremendous enthusiasm. In fact, teachers have noted that the concepts of coding seem to come quite naturally to the children. It would seem

LANGUAGE continued next page...



LANGUAGE continued...

speaking the language of computers isn't such a steep learning curve for kids who have been exposed to digital technologies from a young age.

"They already think like coders," says Frederickson. "They tend to be logical thinkers, able to break tasks down into simple steps."

The creativity students have demonstrated astounds their teachers. One class programmed a robot to greet visitors and lead them to the appropriate place in the classroom. Two students created a tongue-in-cheek game inspired by the infamous *Cincinnati Zoo incident*. In their game, a gorilla must nab as many children as possible while avoiding the bananas human beings are hurling its way.

Currently, the project is being fine-tuned, but its creators are looking forward to the day

when the kits will be finalized and available through the District Resource Centre. That day isn't long off. Frederickson projects that by September 2017, all teachers in the district will be able to pick up kits and introduce their students to this fun, innovative program. Plus, there will be workshops for teachers who feel intimidated by the idea of coding, or just want to learn as much as they can before teaching it.

The benefits of the project are obvious to all the teachers and administrators involved. "We are hearing that there will be 1,400,000 jobs related to computers when these kids graduate and only 400,000 students who are qualified to fill them," says Rozsmann. "We want our kids to be ahead of the curve." ♦



Left: Using the Scratch programming language, Allie Dokken creates a series of commands for her class project.

Above: Mr. Glenn Rozsmann helps students like Gavin Wagar fine-tune their command scripts in Scratch.



DISCOVER ENERGY IN YOUR BACKYARD

Wind energy workshops by Pattern Energy and REcharge Labs

How do we produce energy in our proverbial backyard? That is a great question from students throughout the school district, and Brad Booker wanted to get the answers into our classrooms.

"We wanted to give teachers the tools they need to engage kids in a fun activity related to local energy production," says Booker. "The wind power projects near Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd and Dawson Creek grab your attention and generate lots of great questions in the minds of our students."

Pattern Energy, now building *Meikle Wind Project* near Tumbler Ridge, helped bring a wind power workshop to Dawson Creek and Tumbler Ridge. The goal of the workshops was to train teachers on how to bring knowledge about wind energy into the classroom in a fun, engaging way.

The workshops were about how to teach wind power, but also how to use wind power as a means to drive whatever content teachers might have in mind. "The class could be about mathematics, science or environmental studies," says Booker. "The in class projects are great interactive tools to get kids engaged in all types of learning."

Mike Arquin, co-director of **REcharge Labs**, ran the workshops and brought an element of fun

Top left: Mike Arquin from REcharge Labs describes how the blade design affects power production and demonstrates the inner workings of basic wind turbines.

Top right: Teacher Jackie Da Ros puts her blade design to the test during the workshop in the Energy House at Northern Lights College.

Bottom right: Brad Booker tests a wind power app for your phone.

into daylong training. "We engage and inspire today's K-12 students, educators, makers, and tinkerers to become the innovative renewable energy leaders of tomorrow by offering effective hands-on activities and kits, educator professional development and lesson plans," says Arquin.

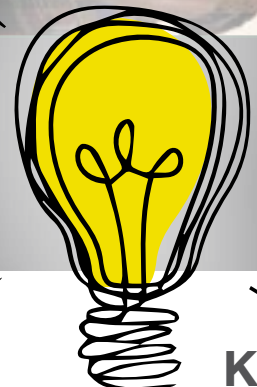
Pattern Energy has also followed up on the workshops by donating to the District's education resources and equipment to help teach the processes behind wind energy.

"Now we have resource kits put together with model wind turbines," says Booker. "Next year we will have a skills competition where kids have to design the best blade configuration to capture the wind and generate the most electricity."

This was a great opportunity to learn about a local resource and then find ways to engage students in learning about wind power. "It's a great way to explore what is happening in our backyard and understand how things work when you drive past our local wind farms. It's also a fun way to get kids involved with learning about wind energy and energy use in general." ♦



WE CAN ALL BE ECO INNOVATORS



Kids are taking steps towards a smarter future

Where does your power come from and how can you use it better? A lot of people will say the power comes from the outlet in the wall, but the full story is a bit more complicated.

Eco Innovators is a program that engages kids in creating real solutions for real environmental challenges. “The focus this year was around energy,” says Brad Booker. “What can we invent that will either reduce the amount of energy we use, somehow create energy through an alternative means or store energy for later use?”

This year, the first Eco Innovator session was in two parts. “The first part was all about how electricity is generated... what I call energy 101,” says Booker. “Part two was about taking

day-to-day devices apart to see how they are made and work.”

Booker started part one by exploring hydro as our primary source of power. “It’s fun to get the kids acting out the different steps we take in generating power. You start with the dam and the water spinning the turbine. You then act out what the turbine is made of and how the energy from the turbine gets turned into the electricity going into your house.”

Part two got kids in a problem solving mindset by taking apart old electronic devices to see how all the different parts work. “This gets them to think creatively and imagine a tangible product that would help us conserve or use energy differently,” says Booker.

Top left: Aaron Smith, Nate Kulak and Logan Bowe from Devereaux Elementary attack the back of a VCR.
Bottom left: Brad Booker and Carter Blaeser inspect one of the components from the old machines.
Main right: Rylan Kulak, Tegan Steckly, Charity Webster and Hollis Mattson from Devereaux Elementary deconstruct a relic of the past — the fax machine.

After that first session, the kids were sent away with the mission to research some issue around energy that they could tackle. “Some of the really cool designs were like water pipes. Why don’t we put a little generator on that so every time we are using water we are creating electricity? The ideas aren’t necessarily practical but cool for the kids to be thinking that way.”

On the conservation side, some students were getting quite technological with ideas about designing apps that would power down your house when your phone left the building. “Some of these ideas are already being done, but when kids in grade four start tossing these ideas around it’s pretty amazing,” says Booker. ♦

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PAINTING LOCKERS

ALLOWS STUDENTS TO SAY "I WAS HERE"

CSS' colourful six-year tradition of students painting lockers builds community in the most eye-catching way possible

It all started with one locker, six years ago. A Chetwynd Secondary School teacher named Linda Garland created the **Locker Makeover**, a draw allowing students to decorate a locker with pictures representing the winner. Over the years, teachers Laura Filgate, Andrea Bradley, Sarah Winstead, and Chandra Kaulbach have worked to keep this creative initiative continuing forward.

Nowadays, when you visit CSS, you walk through hallways punctuated with lockers that have been covered

Left: Functional art fills the halls of CSS.

Below: Grade 12 student Jillian Newman with the locker she painted.

Next page: Grade 11 artists Gracie Winland and Kyana Watson.



with beautiful murals. Each one is a testament to a particular student, to his or her personality and passions.

"Generally when a locker and a student is selected for a mural, the artists choose to paint activities that the student loves: sports, popular movies, all sorts of things," says CSS Principal Chris Mason. "Each is unique because each student is unique."

Six years ago the CSS painted lockers trend began as a draw, now the students are selected via a silent auction. Students bid on empty lockers, ten to fifteen of which are transformed by the school's art department each year.

The proceeds of the auction go to a local or international charity. CSS' *WE Group*, a group of students who are supporting positive change in the world, select the cause each year. In past years, these causes have included the local food bank and charities that provide clean water in Africa.

"When visitors and prospective students come they really get a sense of what our school is like," says Mason. "It's an artistic representation of what our community is."

Indeed, beyond beautifying the school, the tradition builds that community in unique ways. For example, when students win a bid, they get a *tap on the shoulder*, as Mason puts it, and an invitation to move to wherever their newly decorated locker is. Since lockers in CSS are divided between grades, this means students of different ages end up intermingling and building relationships in a non-threatening way.

The tradition has proven so popular that CSS art teachers who end up moving on have started up the locker painting tradition in different schools. As for CSS, what happens when all the available lockers are painted?

"We have 500 lockers and 250 students, so it will take a while," laughs Mason. "But in the future, who knows? Maybe we'll move onto ceiling tiles!" ♦

A CLOSER LOOK AT CSS' PAINTED LOCKERS



When you stroll down CSS' hallways, what types of locker murals will you see, and what do they say about the students who inspired them?

As you might guess, there is as much visual variety as there are different types of students. Mason can list several themes: "Vancouver Canucks, the TV show *The Big Bang Theory*, Robert Munsch books, the movie *Frozen*, a science-related one with a big DNA helix..."

Each mural is carefully crafted by the art department and coated in shellac so the artwork is preserved. But before the shellac coat goes on, the students who have been depicted sign their names on the murals, ensuring they are never forgotten. ♦

MEDIA ARTS

HELPS STUDENTS FACE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE

“I tell my students, ‘I’m not the sage on the stage here,’” says Aaron Mathias, reflecting on the role he plays as Dawson Creek Secondary’s Media Arts teacher. “When they have skills that go beyond my own, they teach me.”

It’s a great attitude for the co-creator and instructor of one of School District 59’s most innovative programs to have. Media Arts is an opportunity for students to interface with cutting-edge media technologies, gaining footholds into tomorrow’s growth industries. It’s a program facing firmly forward — and that means it must harness the (frequently) advanced skills and interests of its students.

Fortunately, the program Mathias and fellow teacher Konrad Langenmaier designed and spent years fundraising for is substantial enough to engage tech-savvy students. The equipment Dawson Creek Secondary has been

able to amass for the program would make any media arts enthusiast stop in their tracks.

Students learn to use, among other things, a Makerbot 3-D printer, Canon Rebel cameras, the entire Adobe Creative Suite, and a DJI Phantom 4 drone. Media Arts at Dawson Creek Secondary is a cornucopia of learning opportunities. 3-D animation? Graphic design? Coding? There’s something for every student.

And that’s part of the strength of the program, explains Mathias. “It’s important to tailor this program to each student’s individual learning plan. Students pick the areas they’re most interested in and their major projects focus on these skills.”

Media Arts is about more than immersion into technology. Critically, it also offers project-based learning opportunities. Students pick up entrepreneurial and project management skills that are sometimes difficult to learn in a school setting.

“When they have skills that go beyond my own, they teach me.”



Main: Mr. Mathias oversees Nick Williams and Josh Webber filming a scene with the 4K camera and the DJI Phantom Drone.



Current Page:

Above left: Colour challenge photography using Adobe Photoshop, created by student TA Nick Williams.

Above middle: Colour challenge photography using Adobe Photoshop, created by student TA Nick Williams.

Above right: Jerome Cardines works towards a career in media presentation.

Next Page:

Bottom left 1: Cupboard filled with Canon DSLR cameras & lens.

Bottom middle 2: Sony 4K production camera for high definition filming.

Bottom middle 3: Aerial view of Dawson Creek capture with DJI Phantom 4 Drone.

Bottom right: Mr. Mathias directing a student to land the drone while Nick Williams films with the 4K Camera.

For example, students create their own production companies with logos, visual brands, and YouTube channels. To promote their companies, students learn pitching skills and practice flexing their entrepreneurial muscles.

Media Arts students also take on real-world projects with measurable benefits for their community.

For example, the program maintains an innovative funding partnership with School District 59. In exchange for a certain level of funding, students produce promotional materials for the District, including short videos.

For the most part, Mathias is providing students with an awe-inspiring first exposure to advanced technologies. But there are others who arrive with an incredible depth of experience.

One student had his own photography company in Grade 12. Another knew so much about coding he was already creating his own video games. In cases like this, Mathias adopts a constructively humble approach.

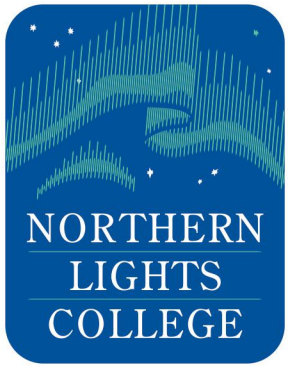
“If a student’s skills surpass mine, I learn from the student,” says Mathias.

In fact, in general, Media Arts makes excellent use of the enthusiasm of students to support learning. The program easily recruits student TAs who often introduce new concepts.

“After all, the world is changing quickly and our program has to reflect that.”

With its innovative funding structure, project-oriented approach, and student-centered philosophy, Media Arts is positioned to do exactly that. ♦

Dawson Creek Secondary’s Media Arts program provides exposure to tech and opportunities to practice entrepreneurialism



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4. Sign the Letter of Understanding and have your parent or guardian sign
5. Complete an NLC Application form and return it to your counsellor, who will forward it to the College with all paperwork completed before your school's deadline.

OPEN HOUSES AND ORIENTATIONS

You are encouraged to attend with your parent or caregiver. Check with your school counsellor about upcoming NLC Dual Credit events in Fall and Winter.

**NLC offers dual credit program options to qualified secondary school students in partnership with School Districts 59, 60, 81 and 87 and Northern Opportunities. Check with your secondary school counsellor regarding your school district's partnership agreement regarding tuition-free dual credit courses.*

QUESTIONS?

Speak with an NLC Student Recruiter!
Call 1-866-463-6652 or email study@nlc.bc.ca



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STAGE 1 Water Conservation Measures from May 1 to September 30



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Did you know the City has designated watering days and times for residents? The City's water conservation bylaws work in stages to accommodate low flows within the Kiskatinaw River.

- **Even-numbered address** watering days: Wednesdays and Saturdays between 4:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M., and between 7:00 P.M. and 10:00 P.M.
- **Odd-numbered address** watering days: Thursdays and Sundays between 4:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M., and between 7:00 P.M. and 10:00 P.M.
- **Hoses for washing** boats and vehicles must have automatic shut-off devices.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR WATER
www.dawsoncreek.ca/water

- **The Kiskatinaw Watershed**
- **Water Treatment & Distribution**
 - **Water Utilities**
 - **Reclaimed Water**
 - **Water Conservation**

If you have questions or concerns regarding the Kiskatinaw Watershed please contact the City's Watershed Stewardship Program:

Toll Free: 1-855-782-1793 or (250) 782-1793

If you are interested in water treatment, distribution or reclaimed water contact:

250-782-3114



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The City of Dawson Creek monitors water quality and quantity in the Kiskatinaw Watershed.

