

October 28, 2014

GIVING THANKS, THE WINDSOR WAY

This year, Windsor Elementary School celebrated their fourth annual Thanksgiving. It began as an opportunity for students new to Canada to try some traditional Thanksgiving dishes, including turkey and pumpkin pie. In the spirit of gratitude students and staff come together as one, write grateful messages on the table runner and share a moment of silent appreciation before digging in to the feast that they make together. Special thanks to the teachers who contribute both their time and funds to make this happen and to Save-On Foods for their support.

OPENING MINDS TO THE FORBIDDEN CITY

On October 17, students from Cascade Heights and Forest Grove Elementary Schools travelled back in time to China's Forbidden City. Through an interactive presentation, entitled, *We all live in the Forbidden City*, that was presented by The China Institute, students learned what it was like to live in ancient Beijing and how it compares to today. The China Institute is a non-profit educational and cultural institution that advances a deeper understanding of China. They believe, as we do, that cross-cultural understanding strengthens our global community.

FROM ME TO WE

As a kickoff to their Leadership Club students from Gilmore Community School joined 800 students and staff from 38 Burnaby schools at "We Day" on October 21. They were inspired by the many speakers, singers, and celebrities who use their talents, skills, and passions to make a difference in this world. The students were keenly interested about all the issues that they can help address. The word of the day was "Empowerment" and they indeed felt empowered to make a difference. One of their favorite takeaway quotes was, "*You can't do everything, but you can do something. Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.*" And with that, Gilmores' Leadership Club is set to roll up their sleeves and get to work!

HAPPY SCHOOL LIBRARY DAY

As a reminder of how important reading and our school libraries are, on October 27, Burnaby Schools celebrated National School Library Day. Many schools had D.E.A.R. time - where students and staff "Dropped Everything And Read" for twenty minutes - on their own, or with a buddy. Some schools, like Twelfth Avenue Elementary brought in special guest readers, like Trustee Hayes. Other schools like Stride Avenue Community School hosted a family reading night. Whatever way that our students and staff celebrated school library day, we are sure that a great read was had by all.

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WITH THE SWISH OF A PEN

Chinese calligraphy dates back over 5000 years. In China, every young person learns this traditional form of communication. On October 23, Grade 7 students at Taylor Park Elementary School were excited to be able to try this skill out. Their visiting teacher, Mr. Yan, kicked off their Social Studies Civilization unit, by leading them through some calligraphy exercises. Students were introduced to the characters for "Love," "Forever," "Dragons" and many more. In no time at all they were swishing their pens and crafting some beautiful characters. Sharing cross-cultural knowledge builds friendship and harmonious relationships and helps to make Canadian culture richer and more colourful.

CONNECTING AT MONTECITO

Montecito Elementary is one of 4 schools in BC to be awarded a \$5,000 grant from DASH BC and the School Centred Mental Health Coalition. It recognizes their excellent work in giving students a sense of belonging to the school, and as a result they are more engaged in learning. At Montecito this "school connectedness climate" is achieved through passion development, where each student identifies a passion such as team sports, choir, skipping, art or volunteering, and they are provided the opportunity at school to pursue it. Additionally, each student identifies two adults in the school that they are comfortable going to. The schools that received these grants will soon be sharing their experience throughout the province to encourage school connectedness in even more BC school communities.

MAKING MATH FUN

The goal for Burnaby South math teacher Mr. Amos Lee's is to make math a fun learning experience instead of a burden. He counters the question of "When are we ever going to use this?" by showing the link between math and real world applications such as business and sales optimization and the use of infinite geometric series in cellphone chip development. It's a teaching style that resonates with his student – and the head of the country - for Mr. Lee was recently recognized by the Prime Minister's office for teaching excellence, and was awarded a Certificate of Achievement Regional Award. BC educators won 22 awards out of 37 nominations from the province. Across Canada, 224 educators were nominated, and 54 were recognized with Prime Minister's awards.