



School District No. 54 (BULKLEY VALLEY)

“To empower all learners to live the challenges of a diverse and changing world.”

Education Forum Report Wednesday, June 5th, 2013

The final presentation of the Education Forum, for the 2012/13 school year was held at Walnut Park Elementary. The agenda for the evening consisted of reports on our Achievement Contract, educational change, student/teacher presentations, and student reporting.

Achievement Contract

Superintendent Van der Mark discussed student progress and current District trends. This included FSA results, even though they are only a snapshot, and part of the total picture. He discussed the growth of all our students and pointed out the discrepancy between our Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. He stressed the need to have better and varied teaching techniques and the efforts the District and teachers are making to achieve those goals.

Educational Change

Many District teachers and support staff have been attending workshops and seminars to address the changing needs of our students and to adopt strategies and techniques that deal with these diverse needs. We are attempting to produce a more flexible and individualized educational system to help our students achieve the skills necessary to be successful.

Presentations

To highlight changing classroom strategies, three teachers presented projects that demonstrated learning can be individualized, flexible, and fun.

Ms. Jennifer Moroz had several of her grade 5 students do an excerpt from a musical presentation regarding early Canada and the lives of the “Métis” people. When questioned, the students thought it was much better to do a play about the era rather than read about it. They were aware of the knowledge they had gained, enjoyed the unique experience, and learned many new skills.

Mr. Matthew Monkman discussed his Distance Learning program, which takes place at Smithers Secondary School and enables any District high school student to take a course that he/she is unable to fit into his/her schedule at their present school. Not only can students take courses, otherwise unavailable to them, they can also receive teacher assistance. This enables students to work at a slower pace, if they need the extra time, or to finish early if they so desire. They can work at their own pace. This is a very flexible program for those students who need it!

The last presentation was by Ms. Nicole Davey, who took her elementary students to the Bulkley Lodge to partner with residents, interview them, and then write and present a biography. The many stories that she told showed the warm and caring relationships that were formed by her students and the senior residents. It touched my heart to read the student comments regarding their new friendships.

Student Reporting

Assistant Superintendent Mike McDiarmid led audience discussions regarding changing student report cards. They discussed what information parents and students received from report cards, what they wanted to see in the future, and the relevance of letter grades/marks. This is all part of a provincial consultation to look at present report card practices and make possible changes.

Respectfully submitted by,
Trustee Les Kearns