

North Vancouver School District  
**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

April 22, 2008

**1. International Baccalaureate Programme**

I am very pleased to announce that we received exciting news today from the North American office of the International Baccalaureate Organization. They have officially granted Candidacy Status to Carson Graham Secondary School! Congratulations to the Carson Graham Team of teachers, support staff, administrators, and parents.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the work done by District staff— Renee Hislop, Mark James, Larry Johnson, Steve Garland, Phil Marshall, Dave Pearce, Lisa Upton and many others. They have put a tremendous amount of work, energy, and commitment into bringing the IB Programme to North Vancouver School District.

**2. International Connections**

The North Vancouver School District has a long-standing tradition to support the cross-cultural understanding and supporting the international advancement of education. This spring we have proudly hosted a number of delegations from a variety of countries including Japan, England and Spain's Canary Islands.

*Japan*

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, a delegation from Obu, Japan began a five-day visit to Windsor Secondary. The delegation includes the principal, vice principal, one teacher, two trustees and a community representative from Obu High School. Windsor and Obu have already taken steps to promote cross-cultural understanding and friendship: the schools have exchanged "day in the life" videos and a student at Windsor is teaching Japanese classes at lunchtime.

The visit marks the beginning of a "sister school" relationship between Obu and Windsor. As part of their North Shore itinerary, the delegates will attend one of Windsor Secondary's presentations of the musical "Oklahoma!"

Twenty Grade 9 students from Handsworth Secondary will complete the 18<sup>th</sup> annual exchange with students from Inage High School in Tokyo this April. The 2007/08 exchange began in the fall, with Handsworth families hosting Inage students. Beginning April 15<sup>th</sup>, the exchange comes full circle with Handsworth students traveling to Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Hiroshima, Himeji and Takayama before arriving in Tokyo for a week with their Inage host families.

*United Kingdom*

In March, Ken Neale, District Administrator, Safe and Caring Schools, was approached by the B.C. Network of Performance-Based Schools to coordinate school visits for a group of educators from Thurrock, England. The group was particularly interested in social inclusion strategies and social responsibility. During their visit to North Vancouver, they visited the Social Responsibility Support Program at Boundary School and the Positive Behaviour Support Program at Ridgeway School. Students at Ridgeway provided the tour for the visitors.

One of the most significant differences the group recognized between B.C. schools and their own is the focus on individual learners and independent learning skills. The group was impressed by our students' empowerment and ability to work independently, self-assess, and collaborate with their peers.

#### *Canary Islands*

On May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, the North Vancouver School District is hosting a delegation from the Ministry of Education of the Canary Islands. Their visit is a result of international recognition of North Vancouver School District's *Firm Foundations* and *Reading 44* curriculum resources. The Canary Islands visitors have requested the opportunity to see how teachers in North Vancouver School District teach reading and utilize programs that improve reading comprehension. Barb Mathieson, our District Elementary Literacy Facilitator, is coordinating their visit.

### **3. Community Consultation**

#### *Towards the Future of Schools meetings at Argyle and Handsworth*

Following the very successful community meeting on February 21, 2008 in the Seymour / Inter-River region of the School District, we continued our outreach to the communities of the Argyle, Sutherland, Balmoral, Carson Graham and Handsworth families of schools. During April, we hosted two information and input sessions for the central and western regions of the School District. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, approximately 125 people attended the Argyle/Sutherland/KLASS community meeting. The following night, more than 140 people attended the Handsworth/Balmoral/Carson Graham meeting at Handsworth Secondary. Parents of both elementary and secondary students were well represented at both meetings and written feedback was collected for consideration. The next stage of this community consultation process involves Study Group meetings that will be taking place in each of the three geographic regions of the School District.

#### *Potential sale of former Monterey Elementary School Site*

The purpose of this meeting, hosted in the Monterey School gym, was to seek community input with respect to possible future uses of the site. The meeting was well attended with approximately 60 people present. A questionnaire distributed at the meeting has already received 40 responses, and we will keep consultation open until the end of April.

#### *Lonsdale and Queen Mary/School District Administration Offices redevelopment project*

The School District hosted its fourth set of meetings in a series of public consultations on April 15<sup>th</sup> and April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008 to continue to communicate the evolution of this project. We expect these to be the final meetings in the consultation process before the formal presentation and public hearing on the rezoning request goes before Council at the City of North Vancouver.

### **4. Stephen Lewis at Seycove Secondary**

On April 2, 2008, in a rare speaking engagement on the North Shore, Stephen Lewis, former special envoy to the UN Secretary-General, delivered a personal update to students on the global fight against AIDS and the eight Millennium Development Goals.

The Seycove gym was filled to capacity with the school's senior grades. Seniors from Carson Graham and Windsor were also in attendance, many of them representing their school's global citizenship clubs and projects. In thanking Mr. Lewis, Rob Olson, a counsellor at Carson Graham Secondary, presented a cheque for \$3,750 raised by students for the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

## **5. Windsor Coach Nikki Carroll Celebrated at Provincial Legislature**

As part of the Ministry of Education's "Education Month", Windsor Secondary teacher/coach Nikki Carroll joined 15 of the province's leaders in education for recognition at the legislature on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Named the 2006/07 female coach of the year by B.C. School Sports, Nikki Carroll's recent achievements as a coach include leading the Windsor Dukes gymnastics team to two consecutive provincial championships, including the 2008 competition held in March in Powell River.

## **6. District Writing Symposium**

The North Vancouver School District is widely recognized for its literacy programs. Many of these programs begin on the initiative and innovation of our teaching staff. Recently, Lisa Ottenbreit, the District's Later Literacy Facilitator, coordinated a District Writing Symposium for students in Grades 7 to 12. Over 60 aspiring writers from schools and programs across the School District had the opportunity to attend a full-day creative writing workshop with two local writers, Brendan McLeod, a word artist, novelist, and musician, and Jen Sookfong Lee, a poet and author.

For the first hour, participants heard each of the authors read aloud from their published works. During a lively question and answer period, the authors shared their personal experiences with writing, getting started, and getting published. The students then broke out into their respective poetry and prose workshops for most of the day to generate ideas, create original drafts, and share out their works. During this workshop time, students also benefited from the opportunity to have an individual conference with their presenters to garner further suggestions and encouragement. At the end of the day, both groups gathered once more to read aloud to the entire group. So many students stood and proudly shared their freshly created pieces aloud – the atmosphere was one of support and enthusiasm for the writing process and the remarkable talent of the group! Finally, Brendan and Jen offered suggestions for youth publications and encouraged the students to set their work out into the world. It was a very inspirational, successful day!

"Outstanding, fantastic, impressive, valued, fabulous, inspired" are some of the words of praise from students, parents, and fellow teachers. Thank you, Lisa, for creating and coordinating this opportunity for student writers.

## **7. An Innovative Solution**

In August of 2007, the North Vancouver School District's Information Technology department began exploring ways to expand on its Wide Area Network (WAN) bandwidth in order to meet the demands of the 17,000 students and 2,200 staff who communicate and collaborate online. Streaming video, Internet access and other applications were rapidly consuming bandwidth and challenging our server centralization project. Through a WAN optimization program developed by Silver Peak Systems, the School District was able to maximize its bandwidth through its existing WAN infrastructure. The result has dramatically improved performance of applications including file access, email, and conferencing at a fraction of the cost of buying more bandwidth. We're proud to have an IT department that "thinks outside the box"!