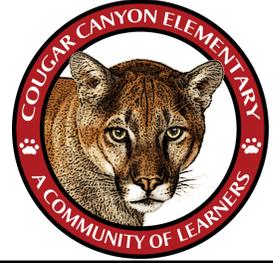

Cougar Canyon

Elementary School



<http://schools.deltasd.bc.ca/cc>

(604) 591-8676

Wednesday, June 23, 2010

Newsletter # 18

Passing the Baton

After 31 years in education and 15 years as a principal in Delta, I find myself writing my last newsletter. It seems to have come very quickly. I have so many great memories from those years and have met so many wonderful people. I feel particularly privileged to have been part of the Cougar Canyon community for the past four years. Our students are such a respectful group of people, they get along well and they do their best. I will miss our friendly interactions as we pass each other throughout the day.

No wonder our students are so great ... take a look at our parent community! Thank you, parents, for placing such a high value on the education of your children. You support at home what our teachers do at school and that makes a powerful difference. You also give generously of your time and resources to the school and share in our pride of being an excellent school. And, when something goes wrong, you approach us in a constructive way so we can solve the problem together. We couldn't ask for more from our parents!



Cougar Canyon has an enviable reputation among Delta teachers. It's a place where many wish they could work and, once here, it's tough to leave. That's because our staff work so well as a team. We support and care for each other. Our teachers and support staff also continuously strive to be their very best. They continually take courses and self-directed professional development to strengthen their teaching skills. They have earned my total respect.

I know you will welcome Mr. Jiwa to our school in September as warmly as you welcomed me. Mr. Jiwa has been the principal of Heath Elementary for three years and has done an excellent job there. He is energetic, caring and will be actively involved in every aspect of the school.



I look forward to spending more time with my family (meet my grandson, Julien!), wearing out my camera, riding the motorcycle and much more. I feel very fortunate to be able to transition to a new lifestyle with good health and the support of family and friends.

Thank you all for the past four years. And remember, stick to the *High Road!*

Dennis Ducklow
Principal

A Community of Learners

We say good-bye to our students for the last time on Tuesday June 29th at 10:25 AM. They will be coming home with report cards, many memories from their year and smiles about the summer ahead. Some of the Cougar Canyon staff who helped to shape many of those memories will, unfortunately, not be with us next year. We would like to use this space to honour them. Please note that many of our Educational Assistants are on term-specific contracts that expire in June. And some of our teachers, who are early in their careers, have been laid off and expect to be reassigned within the District in the near future.

Mrs. Barker

After teaching at Cougar Canyon for two years, Mrs. Barker is excited about the arrival of her first baby this summer. She has coordinated our grade 7 ski program each of those years and coached basketball and track. Her students appreciate her kindness and effective teaching. She will be missed!

Miss Binz

Miss Binz has done an outstanding job of teaching one of our two resource room classes all year. After getting her start with teaching at Cougar Canyon four years ago, and then serving us so well this year, we're just waiting for the good news that she will be back again.

Mrs. Caplan

Teaching on Wednesdays with Mr. McGrory's Grade 6 class, Mrs. Caplan was delighted to return to Cougar Canyon after teaching with us two years ago. We're thankful for her caring ways and wish her every success in securing a new position next year.

Mr. Shantz

Teaching four days each week with Grade fours, Mr. Shantz has created a year of challenge and excitement for his students. We will miss him and wish him every success with his new son and teaching journey.

Mrs. Stewart

She only worked at Cougar for two years but after 37 years in teaching, Mrs. Stewart has decided to ... teach some more! Her retirement plans include teaching piano next year but she'll also have time for photography and travel. We thank her for making us laugh every day and sharing her love of music with us all.

Mrs. Wuitschik

Every time Mrs. Wuitschik arrives at school, she brings a smile and a love of teaching. Her Grade 4 students have enjoyed it all, including the Math Club and special seasonal celebrations. Unfortunately, a back problem prevents her from continuing. We wish her the very best with her many interests in the future.

Mrs. Beaton

Working in our primary resource room all year, Mrs. Beaton has been a dedicated member of the team. Her students will miss her encouragement and friendly ways.

Mrs. Gardiner

Famous for her electric moves in the *Red Mitten Dance*, Mrs. Gardiner, who worked with grade 3s this year, has tons of energy and love for her students and the school. "Mrs. School Spirit" has made a big difference with her students this year.

Mrs. Klashinsky

Our resident tech expert is taking a leave from her duties next year as an Educational Assistant. Mrs. K supports a number of students and shares her extensive knowledge with teachers and parents. Her experience combines behavior management and technology and makes her irreplaceable.

Mrs. Philip

Working as an Educational Assistant in a number of classrooms and supervising on the playground this year, Mrs. Philip has helped many students make significant progress with their learning. We thank her for dedication and the success she has brought to our students.

Mrs. Schmidke

Spending all her time supporting children in the kindergarten, Mrs. Schmidke has helped students to make tremendous progress this year. She has an expert ability to anticipate a situation and turn it into a positive. We are thankful for her support all year and hope it continues to next year.

Mrs. Silveri

Two days per week in a grade one classroom isn't much but has been enough for Mrs. Silveri to help students make substantial progress with their learning. We thank her for her significant help and will miss her calm way of connecting with students and helping them to make the right choice.



Year-End Assemblies

We are looking forward to our final assemblies on Monday, June 28, at 1:15 PM at Seaquam Secondary theatre for students in Grades 3 - 7. At this assembly, we will recognize our Grade 7 students as they move on from their elementary school.

There is a separate assembly in the Cougar Canyon gym for students in Kindergarten, Grades one and two. Both assemblies will include a slide show to celebrate our year.

Sports Day



What a great Sports Day we enjoyed last week. The weather, so questionable of late, turned out perfectly for us.

Thanks to the hard work of our grade 7 students and their teachers, we had a most wonderful day of fun. The Grade 7s really showed their leadership as they invented creative challenges for the students and explained them patiently. A number of staff members worked hard behind the scenes on the planning committee to make the day a success and we'd like to express particular appreciation to Mrs. Macleod, Miss Johnson and Ms. Pannu.

Anger and Dismay

Those were some of the feelings most of us felt when we arrived at school on Monday morning last week to see that one of the new trees, planted one year ago next to our four new picnic tables, had been completely destroyed by vandals. There's just no way to comprehend such a senseless act.

Our students shared in the anger and dismay. The occasion created an opportunity to discuss vandalism, peer pressure and how they might handle a situation like that in the future.

The picnic tables and trees were a project completely funded by our PAC last year.

If you have any knowledge about this act, please contact the school or the Delta Police.

What's Happening?

June 2010

- 24 Grade 7 Year End Luncheon & Dance
- 25 Splashdown Park for Grades 4 - 7.
- 28 Year-end assemblies:
 - Grades 3 – 7 at Seaquam Theatre, 1:15 pm
 - Grades K – 2 at Cougar Canyon gym, 1:15 pm
- 29 Final day for students. Dismissal at 10:25 AM.

August 2010

- 30 School Office re-opens

September 2008

- 6 Labour Day
- 7 First day of school. Students dismissed at 12:00 noon.
- 8 Regular school hours begin.

Visit the Cougar Canyon Website!

<http://schools.deltasd.bc.ca/cc/>
School Supply Lists will be posted.

PAC News

It is with sincere appreciation that we acknowledge Dionne Hunger and Cheryl Mason, our PAC chairs for the past four years. Dionne and Cheryl have led all PAC endeavors faithfully together. Their support of the school has been incredible. They have many successes to be proud of, including our excellent Carnivals of the past few years. They have been continuously available to parents and staff and have put the interests of students first in all their decisions. On behalf of our parents, staff and students, we **THANK YOU** for your generous gift of time, energy and commitment.

Taking over the leadership of the PAC are Julie Barrett and Jenny Peters. Both Julie and Jenny have considerable experience with our PAC and will continue the excellence we are used to. Congratulations!

Our PAC is a group of parents who work hard on behalf of the school and become connected to the school in the process. You are always welcome to join them.

A Very Special Visitor

At the conclusion of our recent Canada Quizathon, we had a special visitor to the school. Although he came to talk a little about his pride in being Canadian, you can see from the Grade 6 student comments below that he made quite an impact. Walt Lawrence was signed to play hockey with the Detroit Red Wings at the age of 17. Just before reporting to training camp, he took a dive on a hot day into an Okanagan lake. Failing to check the depth of the water, he hit the sandy bottom and broke his neck. Ever since then, he has been paralyzed from the neck down.

He demonstrated his wheelchair for the students, explaining that although his arms and legs are strapped in, he can operate it by blowing in a straw. While some of our students thought the wheelchair was pretty cool, of much greater significance was Walt's message that we all, no matter what our abilities, have much to offer. Walt has worked for a number of years as a counselor for people who have gone through similar trauma and are learning to adapt to their new lives. And he offered lots of encouragements to our students that they truly can do anything they want.

Thanks to the students in Mr. McGrory's class, some of whose letters are excerpted below.

You have inspired me by showing and telling me what you went through to get used to you new life. The one sentence that inspired me the most was, "Even though my future of playing hockey was changed, I still have a wonderful life."

Thank you Walt, for telling me that everyone goes through hard times and all you have to do is accept and go with the positive and make the best out of everything.
Jacqueline

When you had your dream taken away from you, you could have given up on life, been grumpy, mean, selfish, and angry. But you stayed and helped others who were just learning how to care for their disability. You said that everyone was a different piece in a puzzle, that made me realize that I had to stand up and be different. You were very inspirational and I hope to see you again.
Kevin

You inspired me when you said that we are all like a puzzle, and if I were not here, or if someone else were not here, the puzzle would not be complete. And that inspired me because I am new to Cougar Canyon and some days I fell like I have no friends,

so I just don't want to be here but like you said, if I weren't here, the puzzle would not be complete. And, that taught me to never give up, and it made me feel valuable. Thank you, Walt!
Rachel

I am very inspired by you because, even though you lost your hockey career, you still have a very positive attitude towards yourself and others. What I learned from your experience of life is that "No matter what you look like or have disabilities you can do the things normal people do, but just in a different way."
Rebica

You inspired the whole school, not just me, but all of us!
Michael