

# The Talking Stick Aboriginal Education in School District No. 42 May, 2011

*Students at each high school are making their own large button blanket this year to have on display at the annual awards ceremony. Here is Garibaldi's Button Blanket.*



## Aboriginal Education - A Time of Change



The 2010-11 year has been a busy year of growth and success. As we approach the end of another school year, we take pride in sharing with you some of the activities happening around the district and the accomplishments of our students. The end of another school year brings change to many – our grade 12s are graduating and moving on, as are three members of our Aboriginal Education Team.

At this time we would like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Clayton Maitland for his contributions to the Aboriginal Education Team this past year to connect community and

learning within the Aboriginal community in particular. We wish him success as he continues to lead the Environmental School Project in its first full year of operation in 2011-12, confident his leadership will positively impact the way learning happens in our district.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Quentin Harris (Super Q) for all that he has done to make our department and district as successful as it is as he moves on to new challenges. Quentin has provided a level of knowledge and cultural leadership and mentorship that has helped us all learn and grow, and we are eternally grateful for his teachings. A personal message from Super Q is included later in this newsletter.

Being the Principal of Aboriginal Education for these past five years has been an amazing privilege and a considerable pleasure. Our students, parents, staff and community partners have provided me with wonderful opportunities, support and friendship, however it is now time for me to move on to my next adventures as well. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Chief and Council of Katzie First Nation and Kwantlen First Nation as well as the Fraser River All Nations Aboriginal Society, Métis Nation BC, and the parents and caregivers of all our Aboriginal children for the work you do to create a better life for all Aboriginal students. I would like to acknowledge and thank the employees of School District No. 42 for the support you have provided to Aboriginal Education over the past five years. And I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Aboriginal Education Department whose dedication and commitment is making a positive difference in the life of every child you work with. On behalf of the entire Aboriginal Education Team I would like to congratulate all of our students, families and staff on a successful year. I wish you all continued success on our common journey of enhancing the lives of others as we enhance our own. It has been an honour!

*Dr. Doug Hoey  
Principal, Aboriginal Education*

## Fourth Annual District No.42 Aboriginal Achievement Awards

Our third Aboriginal Achievement Awards last year brought together over 600 students, family members and school district staff to celebrate the success of our Grade 8 – 12 Aboriginal youth.

Tuesday, May 31, 2011  
Dinner 5:00 pm  
Awards 6:30 pm  
Thomas Haney Centre Gym  
and Rotunda



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## Dates to Remember

- May 23 - Victoria Day
- May 31 - The Fourth Annual District No. 42 Aboriginal Achievement Awards
- June 6-9 - Fourth Aboriginal Annual IGNITE Academy
- June 21 - National Aboriginal Day
- June 29 - Last day for students

## National Aboriginal Day - June 21

Several events and activities are being planned again for this year's National Aboriginal Day on June 21. Take the opportunity to find out what is happening at your school and in your community that day and celebrate your culture!

## School District No. 42 Aboriginal Career Fair

We will be hosting our third annual School District No. 42 Aboriginal Career Fair this fall at Maple Ridge Secondary School where all grade 10, 11 and 12 Aboriginal students and their families will be invited to meet and speak with representatives from numerous post-secondary programs and institutions from across British Columbia. The information will specifically focus on programs and supports for Aboriginal students. We have had a great turnout in the last two years and hope even more of our Aboriginal students and families will take advantage of this great opportunity. Watch for more information in the Fall newsletter.

## Aboriginal Education Forum and Winter Advisory

In follow up to the community and school district education forums, we held our own Aboriginal Education Forum on February 7, 2011 at Meadow Gardens where over 120 members of the Aboriginal community gathered to discuss how to improve education for our Aboriginal youth. Keynote addresses were provided by Her Honour, Mrs. Gwen Point and by Ms. Vicki Kelly from Simon Fraser University. These were followed by an interactive sharing session to provide answers to three questions. This feedback was condensed into the 'Wordles' you see following each question on the back page of this newsletter. They illustrate how often each word was used in the answers – the larger the word, the more often it appeared in the answers. This information was taken forward to our Spring Aboriginal Advisory meeting to try to determine some specific actions or initiatives to bring these Forum recommendations to life. It will, we believe, give an Aboriginal voice to the future direction of learning in our schools and our community.

## 'Super Q' reflects on his time with Aboriginal Education



It's true. This will be my last year working for the Aboriginal Education Department. My family and I are moving to a small village called Esperanza ([www.esperanza.ca](http://www.esperanza.ca)) on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Naturally, I will be continuing to use my artistic and cultural teaching skills to reach out to First Nations families in need. I envision myself holding a lantern, showing the way to an enriched and meaningful life to those who are lost and stumbling in the darkness. It is a road that will be challenging, but the Creator has lovingly prepared the road ahead for me. As

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step."

It has been a dream to wake up Monday morning to a class of enthusiastic students who rejoice at my teachings. The AbEd Department dared to think outside the box and made dreams become reality. Totem poles have been initiated, district wide projects and programs have been a yearly success, hungry newspapers now ask us for inspiring stories. There are many. More and more students every year are becoming aware of, and involved with the AbEd Department. The dreams and aspirations of how we can connect on a deeper level of education never stop in our department. The dream could only be possible with a stellar team. Dr. Doug Hoey has been the courageous leader of our department – leading us into uncharted victory. Each team member efficiently accomplishes their tasks, but is also encouraged to inject their own gifts and talents, resulting in a meaningful and growing relationship with our students. Give your AbEd team member a high-five today!

We have a dream, an awesome team and a theme. We have a lot of themes. We are proud of our students. We believe in the best for our students. We are continually amazed (although we shouldn't be!) at the strength, intelligence, success and power of our students. In short: We love our students.

As sad it is for me to leave this great team; I know there is a rock-solid foundation in place that will go forth into greater successes.

*All my relations – Quentin Harris*

## Aboriginal Achievement Awards Logo Contest

In our Fall newsletter we invited secondary students to submit an original drawing to represent this year's design theme "Power of the Four Directions". We asked Grade 4 to 7 students to submit logos this year as well. We received a number of excellent entries from both groups and the district awards planning committee had a difficult time selecting the winners. The Grade 4 - 7 level was so difficult that the judges selected two winners. They are Rylan Frith (Grade 7, Albion Elementary) and Natalie Hamelin (Grade 7, Whonnock Elementary). Both of our winners will receive an invitation to this year's awards ceremony at which time they will be presented with their prize. The winner of the 2011 Secondary Awards Logo Contest is Jessica Marlo Harnett of Thomas Haney Secondary School. Jessica's logo will be used on the official ticket and program, and she will be the recipient of the \$200 cash prize to be awarded at the ceremony. Thank you to all of the students who entered for the significant time and effort you put into creating your designs.

### What My Picture Means

*The Four Directions are very important to First Nations across Canada. The North is represented by the Inuit, the Inuksuk, and the wind element. The South is represented by the Métis, the Métis sash and the fire element. The West is represented by the Northwest Coast Nations, the salmon and the earth element below. The East is represented by the Iroquois, their flag, and the rain element above. The eagle symbolizes the Great Spirit, power, and freedom. In the middle is a picture that shows hands linking together, which represents the nations coming together. There is a picture of a medicine wheel just below, which represents many things, such as power, insight, and inner strength. All of the images on the paper are organic to the traditions of the nations. Before I started drawing, there was an image in my head of what I should put on the paper, a beautiful image. My name is Jessica Marlo Harnett, I'm 14 years old and proud to be Aboriginal.*



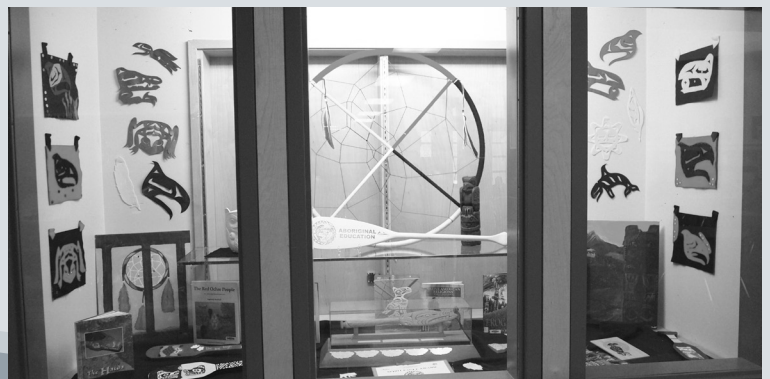
## IGNITE Academy

The Aboriginal Education Department will offer our Fourth Annual IGNITE Academy in June, 2011. IGNITE stands for IGNiting Interest in Technology and Engineering. Launched as part of IBM Canada's national Aboriginal strategy, the academy is modeled after IBM's successful EXITE camps that encourage youth to pursue careers in technology. The challenging hands-on science and engineering activities are designed to provide Aboriginal youth an opportunity to build confidence in their technical abilities.

This year the IGNITE Academy for Grade 6 aboriginal students will be extended from four to five days (June 6-10) and include a one day field trip to the Science Alive program at Simon Fraser University. Information and application forms have already been distributed to the Grade 6 students. Unfortunately it must be limited to 40 students. If more than 40 students submit the signed application and parental permission form, the 40 participants will be selected by a random draw.

### IGNITE Academy Alumni

Students who have attended the Grade 6 IGNITE Academy in previous years have been asking for a follow-up opportunity in Grade 7, and this year we are able to provide one. The alumni from last year's academy have been invited to take part in a one-day field trip to the Science Alive program at Simon Fraser University on June 1, 2011. We hope this provides them with an enjoyable experience and a vision of what they may want to do after they graduate.



*The library at SRT created a wonderful display of Aboriginal reading, art and culture this year to promote a greater awareness. Thanks to Adria Williams, librarian at SRT for all her work and her support.*

