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Subject: GRADE 5 STUDENTS CONNECT WITH OLYMPIC SKIER
Date: February 10, 2011 9:19:26 AM

Media Tips + Leads - from the B.C. Ministry of Education -

GRADE 5 STUDENTS CONNECT WITH OLYMPIC SKIER

Feb. 10, 2011

NELSON - Redfish Elementary students have begun a special relationship with Olympic freestyle skier and ActNow BC Ambassador Kristi Richards.

Kristi is currently competing in international events on the 2011 World Cup circuit.

The Summerland athlete, who just won Bronze in moguls at the 2011 World Championships in Utah, connected with Grade 5 students at Redfish via "Elluminate" video-conferencing to talk about healthy living, the environment, the importance of setting goals and a reflection on the 2010 Winter Games.

The students at Redfish Elementary expressed, with enthusiasm, their memories of the Games. Benjamin along with his classmates reminisces, "I remember going to the Paralympics. It was pretty cool to try out the sit ski and sledge hockey. It was inspiring. My favourite memory is watching a sledge hockey game live! I will also always remember the final goal in the men's hockey game!"

There will be another video-conference with Kristi late February/early March and she will be making an in-person visit to Redfish Elementary this Spring when she finishes the season's competitive events.

A total of nine schools across the province are participating as part of ActNow BC's Athlete Ambassador Program. All but two schools selected were part of the Ministry of Education's Spirit School program during the 2010 Olympics.

In addition, the BC Freestyle Ski Association is connecting with the schools to promote and develop safe and fun freestyle skiing in British Columbia. BC Freestyle's program is supported by legacy funding from the Olympics and is called "Try Freestyle". The provincial sport organization brings in certified freestyle ski coaches to the local ski hills for a weekend to run half-day sessions for young skiers. It's also one more way for kids to get physically active.

To become a Spirit School, schools were asked to take the ActNow BC Healthy Living Pledge, which encourages healthy eating and physical activity, and to participate in 2010 Winter Games Education programs.

Kristi's quote:

"My goal with the ActNow BC Program is to connect with kids and challenge them to reach their true potential in their physical activity and other aspects of their lives. I challenge myself everyday by Creating, Challenging, Caring, and Connecting with others, the world around me, so it is important to give back and hopefully encourage others to strive for their own goals and ambitions."

Redfish Elementary Grade 5 class students' quotes:

Hailey - "I remember the Spirit Day with the mascots. It was exciting to meet the mascots; the skiing demo was fun and the day was fun and exciting! I got to hold the torch when Mrs. Blair brought it in and it made me feel supportive of the Olympics! My favourite memory is watching the mogul events on the big screen at the ski hill. Everyone cheered when Canada did well and it encouraged me to cheer for my Canadian brothers - You feel part of Canada - you feel really good about yourself! Another favourite memory I had was watching the final men's hockey game at my friend's house and when Canada won, their neighbours (who are also my friends) ran out into their yard with a Canadian flag. It felt so cool to be part of it!"

Elaine - "I remember the photo we took of everyone wearing the Olympic ring colours. It made me feel famous when it was published in the paper!"

Kailey - "I liked how we made the Olympic torches and went on the walk through Nelson. It made me feel supportive of the Olympics and inspired."

Nyla - "I liked how Mrs. Blair carried the torch and I got to go see her run and see the torch and then we went to town to see the big stage event. I always remember the first gold medal being won for Canada. It felt really good! My whole family watched the Olympics, even my grandparents came over and when we won, everyone cheered!"

Ellee - "At first I wasn't a big fan of the Olympics and then we started watching the games in class and it was exciting and entertaining! I can remember watching the downhill skiing and someone fell and they got back up and kept going. They showed courage and I was excited for them!"

Ronnie - "I felt good to be Canadian and so lucky to have the Olympics in B.C. and I really wanted to support our team."

Aiden - "I like how Mrs. Blair bought the torch so that everyone could see and hold it. I liked how we got to watch Olympics at school with my friends."

Jasper - "I liked how we came in third and made me feel good that we did so well! My favourite memory was being in town in Nelson and watching the torch and lighting the cauldron. Everyone was cheering and I felt so alive!"

Jenna - "I liked how Mrs. Blair got our class Olympic mittens because it

made me feel a part of the Olympics."

Nyla - "Mrs. Blair also got us Mukmuk key chains. It made me feel good to have an Olympic souvenir. I liked watching the opening ceremonies and the lighting of the cauldron."

Why It Matters:

British Columbia is fortunate to be home to many world-class athletes, who live and train at excellent facilities in communities around the province. Of course, athletes training for Olympic events are very aware of the importance of regular physical exercise and good nutrition, and while their needs as elite competitors are more rigorous than the needs of the rest of us, it is important to remember that they were not always the world champions they are today.

As children, their parents and communities helped them to make the right simple choices every day. Those choices helped get them to where they are now. As Ambassadors for ActNow BC, these athletes are proud to share their experiences with students around the province, and help them make the simple choices that will enable them to realize their full potential.

2010 Olympic School Year:

- * B.C.'s Olympic and Paralympic education program enriched the school year by involving students in educational activities related to sport, culture, sustainability, healthy living and global citizenship, including:
- * Seven student-led Sharing the Dream webcasts for a global audience.
- * 8,000 student welcome cards submitted by 180 schools and 70,000 student welcome cards created for Olympic and Paralympic Games guests.
- * 121 schools participated in Adopt-a-Country.
- * 150 registered Spirit Schools.
- * Thousands of students from more than 100 schools participated in Torch Relay.
- * More than 70 Paralympic School Days held in B.C. schools.
- * 12,000 Student Reporter program online guides downloaded.

Learn More at:

www.kristiski.com/

www.actnowbc.ca

www.sharingthedream.gov.bc.ca

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