

NEWS RELEASE
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June 2, 2011

Ministry of Education

Innovation growing in rural schools

VICTORIA - With projects ranging from Aboriginal performing arts, full-day nature kindergarten, Doukhobor history, renewable energy, and healthy food choices for students, Government is supporting rural schools with a \$300,000 program to enhance learning for rural students.

Out of the impressive 61 submissions from 36 rural districts, a remarkable response to the call for applications, 17 were selected with a focus on their impact on students in rural communities, innovation, and potential for research.

An 18th award, of \$6,000, sponsored by the Eleanor Rix Professorship in Rural Teacher Education at the University of British Columbia, will go to George M. Dawson Secondary school in Masset for their proposal to build an outdoor classroom.

Last March, the Ministry of Education and UBC teamed up to launch Growing Innovation. The provincewide program provides grants to the districts selected so they can bring their innovative ideas to life and enhance rural learning.

Graduate students will support and document research in the districts and in May, 2012 schools/districts and researchers will share information at a symposium at UBC. As well, all districts involved will develop demonstration sites to highlight their findings.

Quote:

Minister of Education George Abbott -

"Rural schools are a vital part of our education system in B.C. and we see this as an important first step in supporting grass-roots educational innovation in these schools."

Quick facts about Rural Education -

- * There are 1,610 public schools in B.C. this year, and 365 of those schools are in rural locations where the needs of local families are changing.
- * This year 64,255 students are attending schools in rural communities.
- * Forty-six districts receive rural factor funding under the unique geographic supplement - \$22.7 million for 2011-12.
- * A small community supplement will provide \$63.2 million to 47 districts in 2011-12.

Learn More:

Learn NowBC's Rural Education Strategy:
www.learnnowbc.ca/educators/Rural_Education/

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Education
250 356-5963

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUNDER
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Rural School Innovation Projects

District: Project Title: Amount Awarded:

1

District: No. 8 (Kootenay Lake)
Project Title: Digital Storytelling Project - Students will document local culture and family heritage through interviews with senior community members and by doing online research.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

2

District: No. 10 (Arrow Lakes)
Project Title: Values of the Doukhobor Community - Students will reach out to Doukhobor elders and produce films and web site material.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

3

District: No. 48 (Sea-to-Sky)
Project Title: Connections Project - Provides opportunities for dialogue between Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal students and the Squamish First Nations' community.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

4

District: No. 49 (Central Coast)
Project Title: Educational Food Innovations - Students will be taught to mill their own organic flour and grains to produce a wide variety of nutrient-rich foods in a project that will encourage them to make better nutritional choices.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

5

District: No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen)
Project Title: Aboriginal Academy 9 - Students will participate in authentic, hands-on Aboriginal activities aimed at enriching their understanding of the local culture.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

6

District: No. 60 (Peace River North)
Project Title: Energetic Learning Campus (ELC) - Will look at how a healthy living environment and personal fitness affects student absenteeism, test scores, collaboration skills, student engagement and school culture.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

7

District: No. 62 (Sooke)
Project Title: Full Day Nature Kindergarten - The district will develop a Full Day Nature Kindergarten program that provides children the opportunity to learn in a natural setting where outdoor exploration is the foundation of all learning.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

8

District: No. 69 (Qualicum)
Project Title: Global Citizens as Renewable Energy Consumers - Students will build positive understandings of renewable energy systems and social responsibility by examining local solar, micro-hydro and wind power projects with area experts.
Amount Awarded: \$10,000.00

9

District: No. 64 (Gulf Islands)
Project Title: Connecting Generations - Building bridges between generations through dialogue and intergenerational learning and relationship building.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

10

District: No. 82 (Coast Mountain)
Project Title: First Nations Assessment Program - Kitwanga Elementary School staff will explore the use of culturally relevant assessment and teaching strategies to more effectively support their First Nations students.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

11

District: No. 85 (Vancouver Island North)
Project Title: Collaboration without Boundaries - will explore ways to encourage greater family participation in education through a wide range of communication tools.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

12

District: No. 51 (Boundary)
Project Title: Community Partnerships - The project focuses on ways to support rural secondary students with special needs.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

13

District: No. 52 (Prince Rupert)
Project Title: Community Revitalization - Grade 9 students will explore the theme of urban development through a community revitalization project for Prince Rupert.
Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

14

District: No. 84 (Vancouver Island West)

Project Title: Transforming school-wide Academic Achievement - Will energize student learning by focusing on purposeful, relevant, real-world experiences.

Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

15

District: No. 57 (Prince George)

Project Title: Place-Based Learning in Mackenzie Schools - Students and seniors will work together to landscape a newly constructed senior housing facility.

Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

16

District: No. 59 (Peace River South)

Project Title: Project Based Learning - Students will be presented with topics for study that address real world problems with the goal of increasing learning relevance.

Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

17

District: No. 74 (Gold Trail)

Project Title: Connected Classrooms - Teachers and students in remote schools will be linked through daily videoconferencing.

Amount Awarded: \$12,500.00

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