

ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



January 2008

Contact:

2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 4M7
Telephone: 604-851-4585
Fax: 604-504-7629 e-mail
info@experienceabbotsford.ca
website: www.experienceabbotsford.com

Sino-Canada School - China



**Sino-Canada students
at Lynn Valley Suspension Bridge**

The Abbotsford International Program has had the privilege of hosting a group of 12 Grade 12 students from the Sino-Canada School in Shanghai China for 3 months.

They arrived at the end of August, just in time for the District International Student Orientation, and were individually placed with their homestay families. They participated in the 3-day orientation, as well as the school based orientation, where they were assigned their previously requested courses. All 12 students are on a BC curriculum at Sino-Canada, and therefore needed to take very specific courses while in our Program to enable to complete these, when returning to China.

An International Assistant was assigned to monitor their well-being and to visit each of their schools regularly, as well as keep regular contact with host families. As a collective group, the students participated in several Field Trips i.e. Victoria, Vancouver, UBC (University of British Columbia), Anthropology Museum, Lynn Valley Suspension Bridge, UCFV (University College of the Fraser Valley) Tour and Information Session, and participated in several school based activities as well.

Our teachers have had the opportunity to see 'first-hand' some amazing talent. This cultural exchanges has 'no-doubt' been a positive experience for all.

On November 22 we had a special 'farewell' celebration for the group, with host families and school administration represented. We reminisced with a picture slide show of all their activities and

we were delighted with special presentations by the students. Unfortunately, we had to say good-bye on November 24, although we are certain some good friendships have been formed, with host families and peers. We wish them well in their last year at Sino-Canada.

FIELD TRIP TO VICTORIA

The International Program staff organized a field trip to Victoria again this past November, for their international students. Three buses full of energetic teens were able to venture out to Victoria, the BC capital, for the day. An hour and half ferry ride, and a short bus ride later, we arrived at the Craigderoches Castle where we learned about a prominent Victoria family who lived there many years ago. Many pictures were taken and questions answered by very helpful staff. The students were then dropped off at a central location in downtown Victoria where they had lunch at the local mall, and afterwards had a chance to choose from several local activities, such as a whale watching tour, visit the wax museum, visit the BC museum, take historical self-portraits, undersea garden, or simply walk along the beautiful downtown scenic waterfront seawall. The day was sunny but cold, and most students chose indoor activities. After a full day of this once-in-a-lifetime trip for many, it was time to head back to the ferry where they could choose to have a snack or dinner, and also do some on-board shopping for souvenirs. The ferry ride is always one of the highlights aboard the newly renovated, very comfortable vessels, as it gives students from different schools a chance to relax and get to know each other. By the time they all arrived in Abbotsford, host families were already waiting.



AT THE FERRY TERMINAL WAITING TO GET HOME

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

**All information in this article is taken from the IB Information Booklet and Pamphlet, as well as from an interview with Shelly MaximitchJohnston - The IB Programme Coordinator in Abbotsford.*

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, which has operated out of Abbotsford Collegiate for the past 25 years, offers a unique way of graduating from high school. This is a two year Diploma Programme (Gr. 11 and 12) that is recognized internationally and earns first year university credits that are recognized world-wide. The IB Diploma Programme originated in 1968, with the purpose to facilitate the international mobility of students, by providing schools with a curriculum and qualification recognized by universities around the world. There are three levels of IB Programmes: The IB Primary Years (ages 3 to 12), The IB Middle Years (ages 11 to 16), and The IB Diploma Programme (ages 16 to 19). While Abbotsford Collegiate has offered the Diploma Programme for many years now, this past September the District introduced the IB Middle Years Programme at Abbotsford Middle School, starting with Grade 6 and with the intention of adding grade 7 in 2008-2009 and grade 8 in 2009-2010. Students currently in Grades 9 and 10 Honours courses and all IB students participate in the Honours/IB Club (HIB Leadership), which involves regular meetings and field trips that focus on CAS (Creative, Action, Service) activities. Grade 11 and 12 students will either complete the IB Diploma programme (6 academic courses, Theory of Knowledge, CAS, and Extended Essay) or select IB Courses in order to earn an IB Certificate.

The International Baccalaureate Programme, a student's passport to a global education offered right here in Abbotsford, promotes international understanding and raises awareness of global issues, as well as encourages students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners; all this, to help foster attitudes of respect for cultural diversity, while getting a jump on university education. The IB student typically develops strong social skills, learns how to stay focused and learns how to work well under pressure, contributing to a higher success rate in university.

The Programme is divided into 3 components over the 2 years, explained Ms. MaximitchJohnston: Creative (50), Action (50), and Service hours (50). Some of the Field Trips that the Abbotsford IB students have participated in this year, are: the Canterbury Tales play at UCFV, the IB World Music Conference at Britannia Secondary, which involved half a day of physical activities and an afternoon of workshops, counting toward their creative hours; and the Handel's Messiah Oratorio at the Vancouver Orpheum. The IBBC sponsored a program called 'Pay It Forward', where students are given \$1,000.00 to be spent in their own community. The Abbotsford IB students decided to spend the money in the following ways: \$250.00 was presented to the Street Hope organization in Abbotsford. \$250.00 was given to the Global Harvest Centre, \$250.00 to the Zajac Ranch in Mission, and the remaining \$250.00 was given to the Women's Shelter on Peardonville. All these activities take place on weekends and evenings, outside of school hours.

Plans for the remainder of this year include a fundraiser for the Liberal Party in June, where students will be volunteering at a Maple Ridge Golf Course, running activities, selling 50/50 tickets, serving food, etc. as well as 2 more bottle drives in February and May. They also plan on going to see a few more UCFV plays,

and a trip to visit the Vancouver Art Gallery. Way to go Abby IBs!!



IB students just before delivering the cheques

JANUARY INTAKE ORIENTATION

January 28, 29, and 30 were very busy days for new international students in Abbotsford. Together with four teachers, eight International Assistants, and the Program Coordinator; 65 new students were assessed for their language ability, and given a lot of very pertinent information to starting school this semester. The main objective for the three-day orientation is to ensure that each student is fully prepared for the first day of classes so that they can confidently start school-life in Canada. Another important objective is for the International Assistants to ensure that students have a full understanding of homestay life in Canada, therefore the three days are dedicated to making the students feel comfortable and confident in their new venture.

Before students begin classes, they have a tour of their respective schools, and secondary students have an interview with a school counselor to help them with their course selections. On this day, secondary students have a chance to walk about the hallways of their school, find their classrooms, and try their locks at their leisure, so that when classes start, they feel ready!

