

Success Story

RANCH PARK ELEMENTARY
Coquitlam, BC



Action Schools! BC

Ranch Park Elementary, a Coquitlam school of more than 200 students, has been registered with Action Schools! BC since 2004. Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living while achieving academic outcomes. The school staff, supported by principal Don Hutchinson, appreciates the widespread benefits that physical activity and healthy eating have on the students and integrate them into each school day in many creative ways.

Staff has had the opportunity to attend several Action Schools! BC physical activity workshops over the years. These workshops share daily physical activity ideas and are accompanied by complimentary bins filled with teaching resources and equipment. Teachers were particularly inspired by a recent workshop on circuit and station ideas and converted two multi-purpose rooms into circuit rooms – one for K to 3 students (the “Move Your Body Room”) and one for grades 4 to 7 students (the “Action Schools! BC Circuit and Station Room”). The rooms were designed with several stations, each with equipment or resources from the Action Schools! BC bins or the gym room – the Move Your Body Room’s stations with scarf juggling, hopscotch, yoga, a balance beam, and more; and the Circuit and Station Room with the Get Strong 101 DVD circuit (an Action Schools! BC resource showcasing 101 strength and conditioning moves), as well as the Kids Into Action circuit CDs. The rooms have been used by all grades, and are especially successful with full day kindergarten.

Students also participate in a morning school-wide workout. All staff and students meet in the gym for an activity from the Action Schools! BC Classroom Action Resource: aerobics, yoga, Head-to-Toe Stretch, dance, or a workout from the 6 Fit Kids’ Workouts DVD. Students love this morning routine and head to class energized and ready to focus.

Ranch Park uses local, provincial, and national programs, services and facilitators to expand students’ access to sport and physical activity opportunities. During teacher collaborative time each Monday, students meet in the gym for 30-60 minutes of Physical Education focusing on fundamental movement skills (FMS) based on PHE (Physical and Health Education) Canada’s FMS Series, BC Athletic’s Run Jump Throw Program, and Gymnastics BC’s Kids CanMove Program. Staff also use the Premier’s Sport Awards Program (p.s.a.p.) manuals and crest skills challenges to teach sport skills to students in Physical Education and recognize their achievements.

The school also engages experts from the community to make presentations (e.g. a four week cricket program that included a Family Cricket Night), lead after school programs (gymnastics, judo, rugby, cycling, and a multi-sport club), and take part in the school’s Sports Day, which was part of the national Sports Day in Canada event. At Sports Day, students rotated through stations run by local athletes, parents, or other community members and learned skills in sports like tennis, golf, ultimate, field hockey and lacrosse. Other active events include the annual Terry Fox Run and Jump Rope for Heart fundraisers, and a monthly themed school-wide run (e.g. a pumpkin run in October and a poppy run in November).

Staff are not the only ones to promote physical activity. A group of student leaders participated in Action Schools! BC Student Leadership Training in which they learned how to lead outdoor games during recess and lunch. Hopscotch and four square are very popular, and made easy by the multiple permanent diagrams painted on the school’s tarmac.

By taking advantage of the services offered by Action Schools! BC, Ranch Park Elementary is excelling at integrating healthy living into the fabric of their school community in unique and creative ways.



Yoga in the Move Your Body Room.

