

Success Story

ROYAL HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY
Surrey, BC



Action Schools! BC

Royal Heights Elementary, a Surrey school of 240 students, has been registered with Action Schools! BC since 2005. Action Schools! BC is a framework for action, providing diverse physical activity, physical education and healthy eating opportunities in six Action Zones.

Shortly after registering, the staff booked an Action Schools! BC Classroom Action (Physical Activity) Workshop to learn creative, alternative physical activities that can be integrated throughout the school day.

The teachers embraced the activities learned wholeheartedly and identified a unique way in which the resources and equipment provided could be used to increase students' daily physical activity while building school spirit. The idea, simply dubbed "Action Schools", was to coordinate a near-daily physical activity session for primary students lasting 30-40 minutes. It has been a fixture most mornings at the school ever since. The school's 80 grade 1 to 3 students and their teachers gather in the gym and the workout begins when an Action Schools! BC dance DVD or CD is put on. Representatives from each class are selected to stand beside the TV to demonstrate the moves. Not only are the dance sequences popular (cardio funk is a favourite), but the healthy living messages dispersed throughout the DVDs are a huge hit as well. The dancing is followed by activities using equipment like bands and grippers from the Action Schools! BC Classroom Action Bins. After that, the group heads outside for a tag game or run around the school – grade 1s lap the school once, grade 2s twice, and grade 3s three times – followed by a 10 minute stretch. Everyone then returns to their classrooms energized and ready to focus. Students voice their enjoyment for "Action Schools" and don't want to miss their morning



activity, even on the monthly Student Council sponsored Spirit Day. A recent Spirit Day had all 80 students doing "Action Schools" in their pajamas!

Hedy Black, a grade 2/3 teacher and champion of the "Action Schools" activities has noticed significant changes since beginning the morning workouts. Students' fitness levels, overall health, and desire to be active have improved dramatically. Students are noticeably more confident in

physical education and other physical activity settings resulting in an increase in active play during recess and lunchtime.

Physical activity opportunities are integrated into other areas of school time, as well. All students participate in daily physical education and many teachers use the bins of equipment in their classrooms. Each of Ms. Black's students has an Action Schools! BC gripper in her/his desk and is free to use the gripper throughout the day for stress relief or to strengthen the hand muscles needed to improve handwriting. Students

also enjoy throwing, catching and coordination activity breaks throughout the day.

Healthy eating is part of the school culture at Royal Heights, as well. Staff and parents have organized a healthy Hot Lunch Program and promote vegetable and fruit consumption. Pop is not allowed and unhealthy foods are discouraged.

Royal Heights has become a healthier, more active school since registering with Action Schools! BC and the dedicated and enthusiastic staff have become healthy living role models for the students. By taking advantage of all that Action Schools! BC has to offer, Royal Heights is excelling at integrating healthy living into the fabric of their school community in unique and creative ways.

