

Winfield, Alberta



On May 27th, students, staff, and parents at Winfield Elementary School in Winfield Alberta gathered in their school gym to take part in the 2009 Canada Games Day Challenge.

This five hundred student school certainly demonstrated their patriotism and Canada Games spirit by taking part in a fun-filled and well-planned event.

The day began with a brief welcome and a grade three student leading the group in the singing of O Canada, before the athletes paraded around the gym to “*Power of a Dream*” by Celine Dion. In preparation for the day, students had been divided into Provincial and Territorial teams and a flag bearer was chosen for each group. Following the Parade of Athletes, participants watched the Canada Games Council video *Inspiring Dreams and Building Champions*, which provided further inspiration to get the athletes motivated. To promote school spirit, teams were given the opportunity to create team mascots and cheers.

“The mascots and cheers were awesome,” said Elaine Young, Teacher and event organizer. “The students really had fun creating them, a very authentic looking torch also added to the great atmosphere.”

Students participated in: high jump, standing long jump, running long jump, ball throw, 50M, 300M, 600M, basketball shoot, target toss, golf putt, and relays. Standard color coded flags were used for the events, and all students received ribbons for their efforts. To promote fun and physical activity, students participated in all events and if they got tired running in some of the longer races, they walked around the track.

A barbecue lunch and goodies were provided by the Winfield School Parent Council, after which students were taken back inside to compete in swimming and rowing activities from the Canada Games Day package with further assistance from parents and staff.

“Students wore their school t-shirts, as well as Canada Games tatoos on their faces and arms, and some were even sporting red hair!” said Young. “Team cheers could be heard throughout the day on the playing field with Canada Games Day decorations including red and white balloon bundles, Canada flags, and banners. Part way through the day, a bundle of red and white helium balloons were released to a great response from the enthusiastic crowd.”

All participants received a small prize at the Closing Ceremonies, where there was another Parade of Athletes to the song *Time* by Chantal Kreviazuk. The athletes were led by the torch bearer from the grade one team, and the other teams joined in at the end of the line. The group then enjoyed student poetry about the day, and a dance presentation by some grade 5/6 students. Students were presented with award certificates provided in the Canada Games Day package and each team was given a bag filled with sports equipment for their classroom.

I think we can safely say this school caught *the Spirit* of the Canada Games they are certainly a good example of what can be done.