

School team-builds celebrating Franco-Ontarian heritage



By Jeff Doner

Students at ESC Renaissance secondary school were lucky enough to spend Thursday outside to celebrate Franco Ontario Flag Day and also take part in the Terry Fox run.

Throughout the day, students from all grades were divided into teams competing in a series of events and activities. The team with the most points at the end of the day won all the bragging rights.

School principal, Martyne Laurin, said the event was met with a positive reaction from students each year.

‘They were pretty excited about today, that’s why you see so many students enjoying this experience together,’ she said. ‘So far the comments have been good and the older kids have really come in charge of organizing the activities and have shown good leadership.’

It was the first year the annual event paired students from all grades together.

‘We wanted to see them interact with each other, because they don’t spend much time together,’ Laurin said. ‘I think the Grade 12s are seen as mentors to the other students, so it’s a good experience and hopefully good school spirit comes out of that.’

She also pointed out that ESC Renaissance has been winning the annual school spirit award out of 10 other French schools in the area.

Sylvie Lessard, chair of the school’s parent council, said the event also serves a larger purpose.

‘Every year there are celebrations on the 25th in line with Franco Ontario Flag Day to have the children be aware of their pride and culture and this year is the first time that we decided to combine it with the Terry Fox Run,’ she said.

To participate in the event, each student in the school of roughly 620 students was asked to bring in \$6. That money went toward purchasing some snacks, refreshments and t-shirts, with the rest going to the Terry Fox Run.

‘All the students have been given green and white t-shirts, which are the same colours as the flag,’ Lessard explained. ‘The green stands for summer, the white for snow, the fleur-de-lis stands for global French and the trillium is the Ontario flower.’

Emily Li Niap Fah, who is the voice of the student body as school council president, said her peers were pumped for the event.

?They have been so excited,? she said with enthusiasm. ?It's our day to celebrate our French culture, to be proud of it and show everyone that we are proud. People have been waiting for this day, especially to not have class, but they are also excited to have the chance to have fun with each other, to talk to other students and party in French.?