

Students strive to get active, healthy in Maynooth



Grade 2 Maynooth Public School student True fills his lungs and shouts his best "warrior call" as he sprints past Bancroft OPP Const. Philippe Regamey. Regamey hosted the run and yell station as a part of the school's culminating Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification. / SARAH SOBANSKI Staff

By Sarah Sobanski

Maynooth Public School is celebrating its **Ophea's Healthy Schools Certification**.

The certification recognizes the school's efforts to enhance and support the health and well-being of students, staff and the community, according an announcement by Hastings Prince Edward

District School Board. The school was one of four recognized in the board.

Maynooth Public School received silver status after holding daily physical activities, having older students lead "active play" during recess and having "various outdoor learning activities in all seasons." The school celebrated the announcement June 22 by hosting an Amazing Race for Heart activity day with local businesses across Maynooth's main street.

The race featured eight stations to get students moving and their hearts pumping:

North Hastings Fire Service and fire prevention officer Matt Musclow hosted a fire and rescue obstacle course complete with a child-sized dummy to save and target practice with a fire hose.

Students found their zen through gardening and yoga behind Memories Bakery and Tea Room thanks to owner Chris Hass.

Bancroft OPP Const. Philippe Regamey had students running and yelling "like warriors" as he clocked their speeds on radar.

Highlands Hot Tubs' Nancy Chapstick and Hastings Highlands Councillor Tracy Hagar helped students rehydrate before hosting a rock, paper, scissors, chicken competition.

Maynooth Gas's Bob van Balenwaller hosted a soccer station.

North Hastings High School students Jenny Moffitt and Magnolia Golzlin helped kids through an obstacle course in the Hastings Highlands gym.

That's not to mention a Jump Rope for Heart at the rink and parachute games in the school's yard.

Katy Garrett, a key organizer and Maynooth Public School teacher, said a big part of going out for the certification was to get the community involved with the school.

"We really wanted to do something that was more out there," she said of the race in particular. "The idea for the Amazing Race came out of the idea of going from place to place and having the opportunity to try something different at each of those places."

Garrett said the stations included "physical challenges that students might not normally do and enjoy as well."

This was the school's first year participating with Ophea. Garrett said she wanted to see the program run smoother in the years to come as it irons out the kinks.

"We were pretty proud, we were pretty excited about it," she said of learning the school had been certified. "We did it all within a short amount of time so we were really excited that we were able to get the silver designation because each time you work on something through the Ophea checklist it's worth points."

Garrett would like to see the school get gold next year. That's the goal, she said.

"As a school we're working towards the emotional and physical wellness of our students. We're not just trying to teach the academics in the school, but also the emotional and physical part just to keep the whole child happy and educated as well," she said.

According to the board, "Ophea is a not-for-profit organization and is led by the vision that all children and youth value and enjoy the lifelong benefits of healthy, active living. Since 1921, Ophea has been working to support the health and learning of children and youth in schools and communities through quality programs and services, partnerships, and advocacy."