



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Elementary School Teacher Recognized with National Award for Providing Inclusive Classroom for Children with Special Needs.

Elaine Fitzpatrick of Parkhill Elementary School awarded National Inclusive Education Award.

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Vancouver, B.C. February 18, 2009 – A teacher at Parkhill Elementary School in Dawson Creek will be receiving a National Inclusive Education award from the Canadian Association for Community Living and the British Columbia Association for Community Living, for creating an inspirational example of what a truly inclusive classroom looks like. The award ceremony will be held in Victoria in June, 2009. Elaine Fitzpatrick has been recognized, along with three other individuals and organizations in B.C., as part of National Inclusive Education Week, celebrated from February 15 to 22, across Canada.

Over the years, Mrs. Fitzpatrick - a kindergarten/grade one teacher at Parkhill Elementary - has not only welcomed children with special needs into her classroom but has provided each student with the support to be fully included into school life. This has resulted in enriching the lives of all students within the school system in Dawson Creek.

Bryan Harman, a parent of a child with special needs was impressed with Ms. Fitzpatrick's willingness to learn more about his daughter's unique learning style:

"Our daughter was fully included in her classroom and we always felt the focus was on building her strengths... she (our daughter) developed real lifelong friends that she has today."

National Inclusive Education Week provides an opportunity to acknowledge and recognize the commitment and effort of teachers, administrators, students, and families who contribute to successful inclusion of students in schools and classrooms throughout Canada.

Inclusive school practices help provide quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, including students with a developmental disability.

We know inclusive education works. Children who learn together in school also learn to live well together as adults and are better able to create communities where everyone belongs.

For more information on Inclusive Education week, visit www.bcacl.org.