

New Brunswick students participate in national Paralympic School Week

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FREDERICTON (CNB) – Education Minister Roland Haché has endorsed the Pan-Canadian Paralympic School Week program and is encouraging all schools to participate in Paralympic School Week, held between Nov. 2-6, 2009.

“With Canada hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, we have a unique opportunity to not only highlight athletic excellence, but, here in New Brunswick, to celebrate inclusiveness in our schools,” said Minister Haché. “New Brunswick is a leader in inclusive education not only in Canada but around the world, and the Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic games are a worldwide example of what inclusion can be in all aspects of life.”

This is the second year that Paralympic School Week has been held across Canada. Its goals include:

- building awareness among Canadian students and educators of Paralympism, the Paralympic movement and values, and the Paralympic Games;
- building awareness of the challenges encountered by persons with disabilities;
- recognizing as role models persons with disabilities engaged in sports, culture and sustainability; and
- and generating interest and pride in the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Games.

While schools are encouraged to hold events this week to celebrate along with schools across the country, they are not limited to this specific week.

Different events are being held around the province. For example, School District 2 in the Moncton area, has organized a district-wide *Initiation to Track and Field Day* for students with exceptionalities on Nov 6. Students from across the District will be bussed to the Athletic Building at the Universite de Moncton for a day of events that include a guest speakers Earl Church, former national paralympic coach; and Barry Patriquin, paralympic medallist at the 2000 Sydney Olympics; videos of paralympic events; and participation in some of these events. District 2 also plans on adding paralympic events during their annual Track and Field Championships held in June.

Organizer and Physical Education Teacher Peter Stuart said, "The event will expose our students to role models, give them the opportunity to try the different events and encourage them to see themselves as capable of competing in sport for fun and for personal satisfaction. These types of initiatives are important to the exceptional student as it broadens their awareness of their capabilities."

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