



MAIN OFFICE : 522 SECOND ST. E., FORT FRANCES, ON, P9A 1N4 Telephone: (807) 274-9855 FAX (807) 274-5078 Toll Free 1-800-214-1753

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Discovery of old penny sparks inquiry-based learning

The discovery of a Canadian one-cent coin dating back to 1915 by a Kindergarten student at Donald Young School launched an inquiry-based learning session in Kim Bolen and Laurel Armstrong's classroom recently. Paige Seguin found the coin while digging outside on the playground at recess. Once they had cleaned it and learned what it was, the students were very curious and had many questions. That is when Ms. Bolen and Mrs. Armstrong decided to leave their planned classroom lesson on plants and follow the students' interest in the coin.

Ms. Bolen brought in a metal detector and allowed the students to do some treasure hunting outdoors. Inside the classroom, they also took part in other investigations based on their inquiries. Many of the lessons were able to tie into the Kindergarten curriculum in a variety of ways. In science, the students investigated magnets, predicting, testing, and recording their findings, while, in math, students sorted magnetic and non-magnetic items. They also learned the names and values of Canadian coins and practiced mapping and orientation by making treasure maps.

"It was really exciting to see the students so engaged and eager to learn," Ms. Bolen said. "I can certainly see the value of inquiry-based learning."

Research suggests students are more likely to develop as engaged, self-directed learners in inquiry-based classrooms. Teachers across the Board have been focusing on this approach, particularly in mathematics and science, to deepen students' conceptual understanding in authentic ways. They strive to provide opportunities to nurture their students' natural inquisitiveness and engage in lessons that the students find truly interesting.

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Media Contact:

Kelly Forbes, principal, Donald Young School (807) 482-2271

Reference:

Heather Latter, Communications Officer, Rainy River District School Board (807) 274-9855 ext. 4989

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