

Sixth-grade students bond over activities in Canons Park

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The sixth-grade went to Canons Park for bonding day on September 16. The day was filled with activities and games, although there was also arguing amongst the advisories.

Sixth-grader Scarlet Garcia Jones said, “I really liked being able to spend time with friends for a day and make new friends. But a lot of people were arguing over leading activities, and I thought there was definitely more arguing than bonding moments.”

Zoe Kowall, Grade 6, agreed with Garcia Jones, “I really liked all the activities, and I enjoy just being able to sit down with my advisory.” Switching sides to the flaws in bonding day, she said, “I think there could have been rules that could have been clearer, and there are too many arguments. So, if there were less arguments, it would have been more interesting, and maybe there would have been more activities and more time to do them.”

Dawson Erdei, Grade 6, even said,

“Bonding day was boring because there was arguing.” Most students thought that bonding day was fun, although it seemed many students thought there were things to be fixed in later years.

Some students felt that bonding day was an experience that could be improved on, but most students thought it should continue next year, as it helped students become close to their advisory and make new friends.

Although students had negative views on bonding day, teachers had a different view. “I thought that bonding day was a great way for our students to practice the ATLs of being collaborative and resilient. There were many activities that were very challenging,” Sixth-grade social studies teacher Ms. Angela Vintner said. “Sometimes students got frustrated and even wanted to give up. But it gave everyone the chance to work together and keep on trying. I think most students felt a sense of pride when they accomplished each task. It was also fun to get outside and do something active in the fresh air.”



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Twiest

Grade 6 students work in teams to walk on giant skis and race to the finish line. These students are from Mrs. Twiest’s advisory. This was one of the many activities sixth-graders did during bonding day.

In Aberdovey, Wales students engage in Outward Bound experience

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Normally, students spend the first few weeks of school getting settled in; creating a steady routine, making friends, learning where all the classrooms are, etc. However, this year, after the first three days of school, eighth-grade students were thrown onto a five-day journey, where they were faced with tough excursions as well as different bonding experiences in Outward Bound, which is based in Aberdovey, Wales.

Outward Bound is a nonprofit organization that provides people of all ages with challenging learning experiences. For the past thirty or so years, eighth-grade students have been going on this exciting trip. This year, students left on September 5 and returned on September 9.

The first day was mostly spent traveling, however, at the center some students participated in

a short jog and dip in the ocean, while others participated in a short hike. They also had time to get to know the staff and the area. Every night students had the opportunity to have hot chocolate in the game room, which allowed them to socialize with friends outside of their advisory.

Each day, students engaged in different bonding activities, some of which included camping, hiking, gorge scrambling, canoeing, and rock climbing.

A lot of students found the activities tough, yet, as Maddie Kotesen said, for future students going to Outward Bound, keeping a positive attitude throughout the experience was important. “Obviously you didn’t want to do everything,” she said. “So it was like, just not complaining and staying positive while doing things that I don’t like.”

Many believed that the hike was the most challenging activity of all. Even though every advisory went to different locations, experi-



Photo courtesy of Mr. Boodey

Eighth-grade student Jacoby Yousey falls back into the stream during gorge scrambling, as Outward Bound instructor Mr. Boodey watches over him. While gorge scrambling, students had many opportunities to participate in these ‘mini challenges’ if they wanted to. Students found that it made the experience more entertaining.

enced different lengths and terrains, one thing they all had in common was that it was not an easy journey. The hike led to their camping site, where the students spent one night sleeping in tents.

“It’s not as bad as you think,” said eighth-grader Marley Pringle. “It was hard, but it was worth it because you look back on it, and you’re like, wow, that was a really cool experience.”

Many students believed that the trip was successful, as they left feeling closer with their advisories. “I really liked how we did everything with the advisory,” eighth-

grader Conrad Cestar said. “We connected more.”

English teacher Mr. Mike Boodey said that the trip had become quite a long-standing tradition, as students have been going to Wales for decades. However, over the years, the activities have differed slightly. “They fluctuate depending on what the student needs are,” he said.

If there could have been a few changes on the trip, science teacher Mr. Max Fox said that he would’ve liked longer expeditions. “I love camping, and I would be happy to spend more than one night out.”



Photo courtesy of Mr. Boodey

Students participate in a short hike down the mountain, in Aberdovey Wales during their trip to Outward Bound. They had to wear helmets as there were loose rocks, and they needed the protection. Many left feeling closer with their advisories.



Photo courtesy of Mr. Boodey

Eighth-grade student Khady Sao attempts to make the hike easier by walking up the hill backwards. Many students found this technique helpful, as it allowed students to put in less effort into walking up hill.