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Local Government



Top of the class in web page design

By Teresa Bird

Students in Mr. Mollinga's class have fewer excuses for not doing their homework.

Ron Mollinga, a Grade 4/5 teacher at Sunset Elementary School, maintains a class website that includes each day's homework assignments.

"I would say there are two reasons why I designed the site," explains Mollinga.

"The first is I enjoy website designing a great deal. The other, more important reason, was it is another way of keeping in touch with parents and students and other teachers."

Mollinga designed the site two years ago, and spends about two hours at home each evening updating and maintaining the site. He also makes changes over the weekend and during school vacations.

"I do it every night so if a student forgets their planner at school, parents can check the site."

The site offers more than homework assignments however.

Mollinga has included class pictures (with parental permission and no names), the class schedule, the week's spelling words, newsletters to parents, a class handbook, a fun page of games, as well as links to educational sites.

While Mollinga does most of the work, students have input as well.

"They have a certain say in the things they like or don't like," says Mollinga. "It includes their way of thinking, but I must say I have to correct their spelling."

Beyond his own class, Mollinga teaches all the computer labs for Grades 1 to 7 at Sunset and teaches a select group of students web page design about an hour a week.

"I use it as a learning process," says Mollinga, who teaches his computer club students to design their own site. "We look at other sites and talk about the dos and don'ts. You learn from looking at others."



Teresa Bird photo

Teacher Ron Mollinga shows Grade 4 student Kendra Sharpe some finer points on surfing the web. Mollinga teaches computer skills to students in Grades 1 to 7 at Sunset Elementary.



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People have been looking at Mollinga's site as well. The site earned a Busy Educator's Award from the authors of The Busy Educator's Guide to the World Wide Web, and are considering the site for their next book.

Kathy Lynn of Parenting Today has emailed Mollinga to praise the site, as has the Premier and the Minister of Education.

"The ones I like the best are the ones from parents," says Mollinga, of the many emails he's received.

Although simpler than Mollinga's website, School District 85 is also on the web, as are four schools--North Island Secondary, Port Hardy Secondary, Fort Rupert Elementary and Sea View Elementary Junior Secondary School. The sites offer basic information about the school, courses, activities and staff.

Mollinga doesn't limit his web page design skills to school. He also designs sites for companies and does consulting.

"I've done it (web page design) all over the place," says Mollinga, "but I mostly like to help companies in this area because this is where I live." Despite a full schedule, Mollinga is finding time to design a new, larger site for his class that he will take about a month to complete.

"It all comes down to time," reflects Mollinga about his passion for web page design. "If you love it, you put time into it."

Mollinga's class website is at www.island.net/~sunset/. The school district site, with links to North Island schools, is www.sd85.bc.ca.

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