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Reynolds School students running coast-to-coast distance in new program

By **Jordie Dwyer**
of THE JOURNAL

Schools are always looking for ways of integrating the classroom with technology, and teachers at Reynolds School in Melfort have found an ingenious means of bringing technology into two subjects.

The entire school has become participants in the C2Cfit project, which encourages long term physical activity with a virtual trek across Canada – from St. John's, Nfld. to Vancouver.

Principal Mariette Baker-McDermid found the program's website at www.c2cfit.com and felt it was something that could be implemented into the school's curriculum.

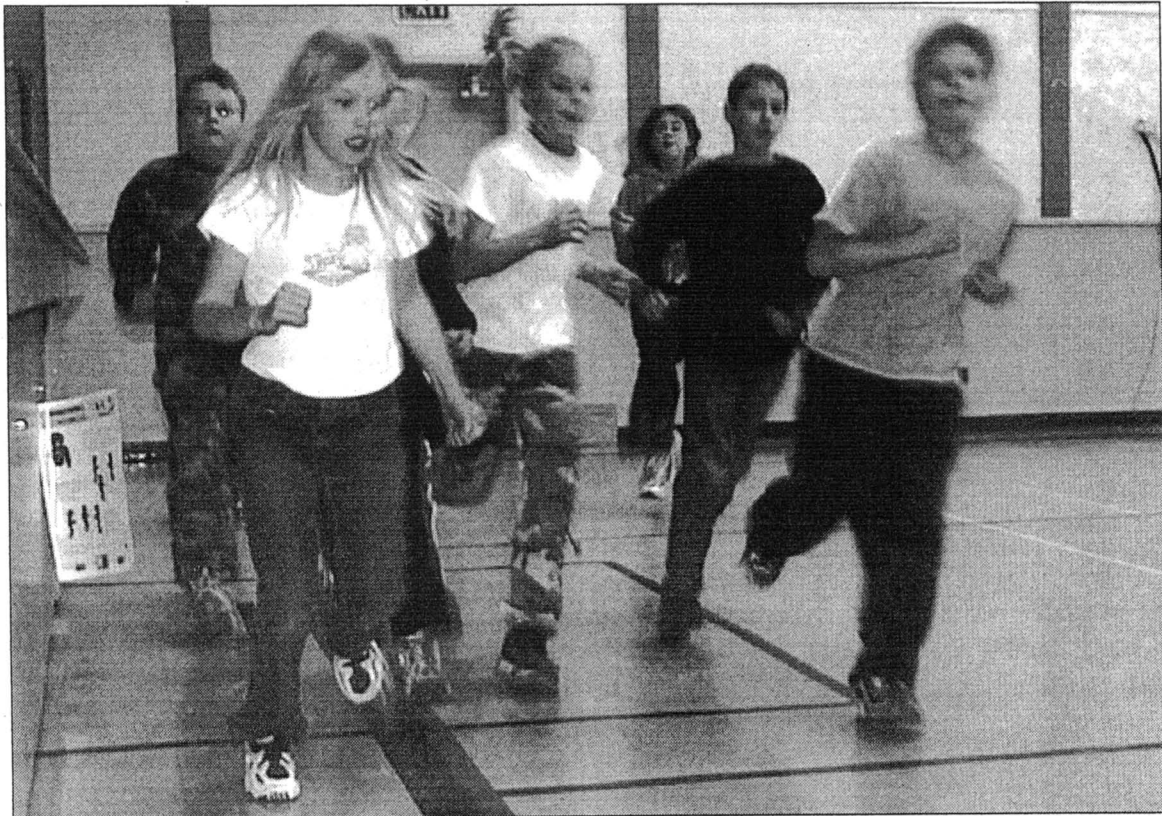
"I thought this would be a great way to connect technology with our core studies, mainly physical education and social studies," she said.

"All of the students run five laps at the start of each of their gym classes and those laps are recorded by the teacher on a sheet in the gym. From there the Grade 5 class takes the list, makes the calculation into kilometres and then logs onto the website to input our total distance for the week.

"The site keeps track of where we are on the trek, giving the Grade 5s a chance to go on virtual tours of cities and areas that we have passed through. It ties in quite well with their study of Canada in class."

It takes a total of 23 laps in the gym to equal one kilometre, which means the school can travel up to 44 kilometres per day if all of the school's students take part.

Presently, the school has travelled nearly 1,700 kilometres putting them almost right on the



Grade 5 students from Reynolds School run their five laps around the gym to accumulate more mileage.

Nova Scotia-New Brunswick border.

The \$37.45 cost of signing up for the project was covered by a grant from the Primary Prevention of Diabetes project.

The project assists with funding of schools for programs that reinforce the importance of a healthy lifestyle upon students.

The C2Cfit program was designed by Lee Downer, a YMCA fitness counsellor in Toronto and began as a personal challenge to walk, bike or run the same distance as it would to cross the country. It grew as friends and

co-workers found out and wanted to join until it eventually got to point where he set up a website.

Downer's purpose is to get people to be physically active for the long term. Studies have shown regular moderate exercise reduces stress, strengthens immune system, increases energy and improves overall health and quality of life. People can complete the 10,529 kilometre (4,000 mile) trek by separately or combining the activities of walking, biking, running, swimming, rowing or by other means.

Everyone can go at their own

pace with the site providing some motivation with prizes and encouraging the people to set some goals of getting to the next city for example.

And once a participant finishes travelling through a province, they are mailed a certificate stating they have conquered it.

At the end, a commemorative T-shirt is sent to the participant.

Other similar websites are in development by Downer.

They include one for the United States, one for Australia and one for those that want to run around the world.