

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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STUDENTS HEAR FROM OLYMPIAN AND ENGAGE IN SOCIAL ISSUES

Students from local middle and secondary schools had a unique opportunity to have their say about social issues in the Township of Langley and hear from an Olympic medalist who shared his advice on how to rise through challenges.

The Township of Langley and the Langley School District co-hosted a full-day workshop at the Langley Events Centre on Wednesday, November 21 for more than 60 youth in Grades 8 through 12 involved in district leadership programs. The workshop was part of the Township's public engagement program for the creation of a Social Sustainability Strategy that will help ensure current and future generations enjoy the best possible quality of life by providing the groundwork for Township actions on social issues over the next decade.

The students, who ranged in age from 13 to 17, took part in facilitated exercises that explored the issues of housing, transportation, and mental health.

"Youth play an important role in our community and are our future," said Township Strategic/Social Planner Patrick Ward. "This was an excellent opportunity to not only get them involved in the Social Sustainability Strategy process, but to gather their ideas and input. Their voices really do make a difference and the information we received from these youth will help inform the preparation of the Strategy."

"It was great to see Langley students provide constructive comments and feedback on local social issues, offering a different lens in developing creative strategies," said Lenny Yun, District Leadership Teacher.

"It was truly a valuable and rich learning experience for all students involved. Some have already come forward and asked to be a part of the next steps for this process," Yun added.

The students' input builds upon the hundreds of thoughts and ideas that were provided by local residents and stakeholders earlier this year during the initial phases of the project. The Strategy is expected to be completed in early 2020.

The workshop also included a presentation from Mission, BC-born Olympic swimmer Brent Hayden, who competed in Athens in 2004, Beijing in 2008, and won bronze in the 100m freestyle at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Hayden spoke to the students about the importance of resilience and perseverance, how to fail successfully, and how to think like an Olympian.

Funding for the workshop was provided by PlanH, a partnership between the BC Healthy Community Society and the BC Ministry of Health.

For more information on the Township's Social Sustainability Strategy, visit [**tol.ca/socialsustainability**](http://tol.ca/socialsustainability).